

**Minutes of the National Sign Advisory Work Group  
Headquarters, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
Tuesday and Wednesday, 15 – 16 July 2008**

Minutes by Steve Logan on 15th and Jack Nichol on the 16<sup>th</sup>.

**Attendees:**

Karl Anderson, Office of Safety and Occupational Health, HQUSACE (attended 15<sup>th</sup> only)  
Adele Braun, National Sign Standards Mandatory Center of Expertise, St. Paul District  
Duane Johnson, Sacramento District, South Pacific Division  
Michael Kidby, Navigation and Operations CoP, HQUSACE  
Steve Logan, Mobile District, South Atlantic Division  
Rick Magee, National Sign Program Administrator  
Jeff Mangum, New England District, North Atlantic Division, Chair of SAWG  
Jack Nichol, Huntington District, Great Lakes and Rivers Division  
Kimberly Rea, St. Louis District, Mississippi Valley Division  
Debra Stokes, Natural Resources Management CoP, HQUSACE Sign Proponent  
John Tennery, Tulsa District, Southwestern Division  
Greg Malon, HQUSACE, CAP program (attended 15<sup>th</sup> only)

**Tuesday, July 15<sup>th</sup>**

**Introductions & Headquarters Perspectives:** Jeff welcomed the group. John Tennery from Tulsa District representing SWD attended his first meeting and was welcomed by everyone.

Mary Coulombe, Chief, Natural Resources at HQ shared her viewpoint to the group. Due to flat funding there will be future changes in our environmental stewardship and recreation programs. She reminded us about the recent memorandum from Mike Ensich, Chief, Operations at HQ regarding the new recreation strategy. A nation-wide assessment of recreation areas will be conducted to facilitate how we manage our programs in the future. A part of the strategy will be to communicate our program on a local, state, and national level. Signs are a key to that.

Debra brought up the status of user fees signs. The group consensus was to stick with the most recent decision for the sign to change from Golden Age... to a more generic term - "Federal Recreation Age/Access Pass – Half Price.

She handed out a memorandum, subject: USACE Sign Standards Revision and the Corps Communication Mark which basically stated that all projects must have their standard ID signs with the Corps mark on them by 30 September 09. [Note: suspense subsequently changed to 31 December 2008 on final memo.] Also, OPM's are encouraged to do the same for directional signs. Debra shared with the group examples of recognition signs – signs that recognize our partners for their work with a particular area or project. All were good and she will coordinate making up mock ups and writing up guidance to send out.

Rick recommended that a new sign section be developed to handle these types of signs. Adding a new section would be much easier than editing an existing section.

**Waterway Signs:** Mike reminded the group about the glare issues some users have with Corps signs around lock areas. The problem is that pilots lose their night vision momentarily and this could be very dangerous. Adèle stated that at St. Paul District, they are removing the non-required signs and attempting to relocate/redirect the required ones. The question of changing the grade of reflective sheeting came up, but are their legal concerns if that happens? Mike shared a copy of the June 17, 2008, memorandum, subject: Glare from Waterways Signs. It requests a list of glare problems be developed from Corps navigation staff and that work is being conducted by the national sign group to seek resolution.

**Water safety sign or poster?** Water safety “signs” or posters were discussed as to how the work group views them and how they should be handled in the sign program. It was the consensus of the group to treat these as non-signs.

**ANSI standards:** Since Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards for safety signs are now obsolete and superseded by standards of the American National Standards Institute (ANSI), should we adopt or incorporate ANSI standards into our sign program? The look of the ANSI standards for safety signs is much closer to the existing Corps standards for Safety Signs than were the OSHA safety signs. This situation is similar to the traffic control signs where the decision was made to go with the Federal Highway Administration’s Manual of Uniform Traffic Control (MUTCD) rather than to develop distinctive Corps signs as a part of the program. After much discussion, the decision was made to investigate the history of why the program evolved as it did (Rick), do a mock up of what the chapter would look like (Rick, Jeff and Karl) and at a later date evaluate the ramifications of a possible change with Office of Counsel (OC).

**Unexploded Ordnance Signs:** (Blanca Roberts from USACE Safety Office also participated in this topic.) Since the Corps of Engineers is the one part of the Army with sign standards, the National Sign Manager was asked by a representative of the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Environment, Safety and Occupational Health Support to provide feedback regarding proposals for signage warning of unexploded ordnance (UXO) at U.S. Army facilities worldwide. The goal is to create a new, easily recognizable sign meeting ANSI/ISO standards that will successfully deter people from entering areas posted for UXO. The group reviewed a variety of existing and proposed signs and messages that attempted to convey warning/danger due to UXO. Rick will respond with comments and suggestions from this team, and provide any further proposals from the Pentagon to the SAWG for further comments.

**EXIT signs:** Rick recommends that we eliminate these signs from the Interior sign section of the manual. The Exit signs described do not meet our safety standards or the ANSI standards. Debra asked that we evaluate with Safety Office and OC. Karl will seek out direction from OC and National Fire Prevention Association, NFPA.

**Workplace safety signs:** Jack advises that the current definitions of danger, caution, and notice signs should be reviewed and edited as necessary to be better guidelines for Sign Managers. Interpretations by individuals are driving the decision on which sign to use. Karl volunteered to review this.

**Security signs:** ER1130-2-500, chapter 6 - SIGN STANDARDS PROGRAM FOR CIVIL WORKS PROJECTS reads:

- e. When implementing baseline security posture (BSP), Headquarters Homeland Security Office has determined that Corps Civil Works projects should comply with the Sign Standards Manual EP 310-1-6a and 6b rather than the sign guidance in AR 190-13 and FM 3-19.30.

Rick reported that some district Safety Officers ask what authority we have to countermand AR 190-13 with Corps sign standards. Those people involved in Homeland Security who helped develop this policy have all moved on from the Corps. We will request the new provost marshal to further investigate.

**Fall protection signs:** Approval of sign request from Mobile District is pending a few last minute details.

**Sign posts:** Rick advises that there is a problem with pressure treated wood posts bending. The metal product, Telespar®, was brought up and Duane volunteered to test this product and report back to the group.

**MUTCD:** There are new reflectivity guidelines. Rick encourages the group to inspect signs for reflectivity.

### **Wednesday, July 16<sup>th</sup>**

**Sign Standards Manual, Volume 1:** Rick led by informing the group of the changes made to Volume 1 since the last meeting as listed on the agenda. Debra hopes that the changes in Volume 1 can be reviewed and made to the Manual by the end of the calendar year.

**Section 2:** Missing language on page 2-11 needs to be restored.

**Section 4:** The name of the inventor of the Helvetica typeface is misspelled. It will be corrected. Also, the Sign Standards Manual refers to the “Corps Signature” as the brand element used on Corps signs. The current Graphics Standards now refers to the Signature as the wording under the Corps Mark, or Castle, and the combination of the Signature and Mark as the “Corps Communication Mark”. Replacing “Corps Signature” with the longer “Corps Communication Mark” would require reformatting pages throughout the Manual. It was proposed to amend section 4 to refer to the Corps Communication Mark, but state that for the purpose of the Sign Standards Manual the term “Corps Signature” would be used.

**Section 6:** Pages dealing with Approach Directional Signs (APRDIR) have been extensively reworked in light of changes in policy to promote the use of the Corps Communication Mark on these signs. Rick will ask Don Meeker, the contractor responsible for the original manual, why we have two different sizes of symbols on APRDIR signs. On certain signs the manual calls for icons to be A=1.5, on others A=2.0.

**Section 7:** The team agreed that the ENT-02 Campground Fee sign should remain without mention of National Recreation Pass program. ENT-05, Day Use Fees, has changed to reflect the recent changes in the names of the passes accepted. A suggestion was made to use “fee sign” format for trailhead information signs, replacing the fee area symbol with the appropriate National Recreation Trail symbol. Regarding the page on Electronic Signs, Rick will look for ideas to provide improved guidance (send any ideas you may have to him). A draft page of additional information has been prepared to provide information/guidance concerning use of white on blue Notice signs for recreational areas.

Jeff questioned the .25x left margin on recreational sign grids. He is of the opinion, shared by many, that this is too large. Rick will ask Don Meeker about the .25x margin and if it serves a significant purpose in increased readability.

**Section 12** concerning adding guidance for Security signs was mentioned previously.

**Section 13** has a couple of minor corrections needed in the Interpretive Sign section.

Proposal was made to consolidate all safety signs in to one section the next time a major revision is made. No decision made at this time.

## **Volume 2**

No plans or money for updating it. If we get money, Rick will need your help determining what we need to change and update. Please review and respond with comments.

Per MCX (Adèle), information needs to be updated for Waterway signs. Sign mounting section needs to be looked at between now and February so if Rick gets money he can proceed.

## **Corps Sign Pro**

**Changes:** Rick informed the group of several changes to SignPro since the last meeting. Rick will provide a spreadsheet of all the changes.

- Spy glass icon added
- Reports - create summary reports (will count signs)

Rick showed other new features, i.e., links to pages in the manual.

**Directional Sign arrows:** Debra wants to see hierarchy of arrows for directional signs. Rick will ask Peter to add something that will do it.

**Sign Orders in SignPro:** User can save sign order to PDF and can be emailed as an attachment to UNICOR. User can send link to sign order to other Corps users such as district sign managers. On orders, the district sign program mangers must approve orders by entering name and phone number. Request a way to disapprove some signs, and to change approval status at a later date.

To keep from having an overwhelming list of sign order for each district, the program will create an archive every 3 + years.

**Other signs:** Created a new category for “other” Corps signs created to capture signs that are not in the current program. Examples include signs that meet Corps standards as to color, format, font, but do not fit into existing sign categories such as street names, (disk) golf course signs

**Barricade and Object Markers** have been included in sign plans in the past and could be added to the other or to the traffic categories. Debra has some concerns about including them. These other signs must “not” be included in OMBIL tally of total signs.

Debra wants list of items like barricade markers, etc., that folks want to put into the sign plan that are not in the manual. She wants to take this list to Office of Council to discuss. Please send to her by the end of the month.

**Import Function:** Rick needs help with import of signs from Sign Manager (SM) into SignPro. He needs to know your recent results and if it has worked for you. Need to let him know by the end of August. Each rep should canvas their division to see if anyone has been successful in importing their signs into SignPro from SM and find out if there were any problems. Jeff commented that he heard from Peter that 50% import rate from SM into SignPro is good due to the many changes in the sign program between the old and new systems. Also find out and think about whether we even need to do the importing. It may be better for several reasons for signs to be reinventoried and entered into SignPro from scratch. Please report back to Rick by the end of August.

**SignPro Training:** Rick has done some SignPro training for different districts (Portland, Savannah, Kansas City, Omaha, and Wilmington) and has done short sessions (MVD, St. Paul District, and the Corps Natural Resource Conference in San Antonio) He is willing to work with others if they wish to also host the training. Call him with any questions or comments.

**User Comments:** Rick indicated he got some good comments from SignPro users although there are still a few glitches.

**ACE-IT Support:** Rick does not know what support we would need or will get for SignPro from ACE-IT yet.

**Official Launch:** As far as an official launch of SignPro, Rick is ready except for the import issue. Rick will send Debra copy of draft SignPro rollout memo.

**Sign Program Manager Workshop:** If money is available Rick would like to have another District Sign Program Manager's meeting. Duane will check out rates and locations in Hawaii. Jeff will do the same for some locations in Massachusetts.

**NRM Gateway:** Rick went over new items.

**Good Enough To Share items.** Several of these "GETS" have been added in the past year. Rick encouraged all to send good items in to add to this section.

**Safety signs:** Off the Project Sign Management page is a list of all safety signs approved for use at Corps facilities. It is sorted by text. Also there are pages for all Caution, Danger, and Warning signs that have been approved but do not appear in the most recent edition of the Manual.

**Historical Data:** There was a discussion about adding historical data to the Gateway to reflect decisions made regarding the sign program. Jack and Jeff will look at different ideas for a matrix for recording historic knowledge for the sign program.

**Sign Program POCs:** Let Rick know about any changes for district or division reps, so the POC list on the Gateway can be kept up to date. Recent addition is Lynn Neher, new division sign program manager for MVD.

**General Meeting Comment:** Debra indicated that when you get legal inquiries about the sign program, you should contact Rick or Debra and be sure to get OC involved before sending any information.

**Other Agency Manuals:** Rick has access to some of them if needed (BLM, BOR, NPS, USFS)

**Compliance:** SignPro and OMBIL will be used to check up on standard ID sign compliance.

**The Sign Post:** A new edition is ready to go. It awaits final appearance of the new version of the ENT-05 in SignPro and official notification of the policy regarding encouraging the use of the Corps Signature on APRDIR signs. Rick will be doing interviews for future editions. Contributions are always welcome.

**Membership and Future Meetings:** Jeff wanted to discuss length of memberships and future meetings. Unlike some other National teams, the SAWG does not have term limits. Debra wants to continue annual face to face meetings. We may consider another location. No one had difficulty with funding travel to meetings. Debra said Jeff would continue as Chair.

**Self Evaluation of SWAG:** Doing well with current leadership; quote from Jeff, “I am just Duane’s puppet. I always sit beside him.”

**Mike Kidby** will be retiring on 30 January 2009 after many years of significant contributions to building and refining the Waterways section of the sign program. His expertise and cooperative attitude will be greatly missed.

The work of the note takers, Steve Logan and Jack Nichol, to record the proceedings of the Sign Advisory Work Group is greatly appreciated and gratefully accepted.

Respectfully submitted,  
Rick Magee  
National Sign Program Manager