
STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

2016 No. 362

The Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2016

PART 1

THE TRAFFIC SIGNS REGULATIONS 2016

Citation, commencement and extent

- 1.—(1) This Part of this Instrument—
- (a) may be cited—
 - (i) as the Traffic Signs Regulations 2016, and
 - (ii) together with Part 2, as the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2016; and
 - (b) comes into force on 22nd April 2016.
- (2) Subject to paragraph (3), these Regulations extend to the whole of Great Britain.
- (3) Provision about the school crossing patrol sign extends only to England and Wales⁽¹⁾.

Interpretation

- 2.—(1) In these Regulations—
- (a) “the 1984 Act” means the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984⁽²⁾; and
 - (b) “the 1988 Act” means the Road Traffic Act 1988⁽³⁾.
- (2) Schedule 1 contains other definitions.

Prescription of signs

3.—(1) A traffic sign for conveying a warning, information, requirement, restriction or prohibition of a description specified in these Regulations is of a prescribed size, colour and type if it complies with all applicable requirements provided for in these Regulations.

(2) A school crossing patrol sign is a prescribed sign within the meaning of section 28(4) of the 1984 Act if it complies with all applicable requirements as to size, colour and type provided for in these Regulations.

(3) The Parts of a Schedule specified in column 2 of an item in the table contain provisions about signs of the class specified in column 3 of the item.

(1) For provision about the school crossing patrol sign in Scotland, see the School Crossing Patrol Sign (Scotland) Regulations 2008 (S.S.I. 2008/4).

(2) 1984 c. 27.

(3) 1988 c. 52.

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<i>(1)</i> <i>Item</i>	<i>(2)</i> <i>Schedule</i>	<i>(3)</i> <i>Purpose of nature of signs</i>
1	Schedule 2 Parts 1 to 7	Signs that warn of hazards and signs for bridges and other structures
2	Schedule 3 Parts 1 to 4	Upright signs that indicate regulatory requirements for moving traffic
3	Schedule 4 Parts 1 to 5	Upright signs that control waiting, loading and parking along a road
4	Schedule 5 Parts 1 to 4	Signs that indicate parking places and areas subject to parking controls
5	Schedule 6 Parts 1 and 2	Upright signs for red routes
6	Schedule 7 Parts 1 to 6	Road markings and miscellaneous upright signs that indicate stopping, waiting, loading and parking controls
7	Schedule 8 Parts 1 to 4	Signs indicating the entrance to and the end of, a pedestrian, or pedestrian and cycle, zone, and signs for charging schemes
8	Schedule 9 Parts 1 to 8	Regulatory signs at junctions and miscellaneous regulatory signs
9	Schedule 10 Parts 1 to 3	Signs for speed limits
10	Schedule 11 Parts 1 to 6	Signs that give information, are advisory or guide traffic
11	Schedule 12 Parts 1 to 28	Directional signs
12	Schedule 13 Parts 1 to 11	Signs only for use in temporary situations
13	Schedule 14 Parts 1 to 5	Signs for traffic control by light signals, signs for crossings, and signs for lane control
14	Schedule 15 Parts 1 to 4	Matrix signs and light signals for the control of moving traffic on motorways and dual carriageway roads
15	Schedule 16	Variable message signs

<i>(1)</i>	<i>(2)</i>	<i>(3)</i>
<i>Item</i>	<i>Schedule</i>	<i>Purpose of nature of signs</i>
	Parts 1 to 7	

(4) Where in these Regulations provision is made that to convey a warning, information, requirement, restriction or prohibition of a description specified, a sign must comply with certain requirements as to size, colour and type, that provision is without prejudice to different requirements elsewhere in the Regulations in relation to the same description.

Authorisations

4. Nothing in these Regulations limits a power of the Secretary of State, the Scottish Ministers or the Welsh Ministers to authorise a sign under section 28(4) or 64 of the 1984 Act(4).

Letters, numerals and other characters

5.—(1) This regulation applies to the letters, numerals and other characters used on signs provided for in these Regulations (but not to the extent that more specific provision is made elsewhere in these Regulations for a particular sign).

(2) Paragraphs (3) to (12) apply to letters, numerals and other characters used on signs except those used on road markings and those used in Scottish Gaelic words or phrases.

(3) Paragraphs (4) to (10) are subject to the exception for variable message signs at paragraphs (11) and (12).

(4) On a background which is—

- (a) black;
- (b) blue;
- (c) brown;
- (d) dark green;
- (e) green; or
- (f) red,

letters, numerals and other characters must have the proportions and form, and be of the colour, shown in Part 1 of Schedule 17 (see paragraphs (6) to (8) for exceptions).

(5) On a background which is—

- (a) orange;
- (b) white; or
- (c) yellow,

letters, numerals and other characters must have the proportions and form, and be of the colour, shown in Part 2 of Schedule 17 (see paragraph (10) for an exception).

(6) Paragraphs (7) and (8) apply to the placing of a motorway route number or a compass point directly on the blue background shown at item 1 of the sign table at Part 2 of Schedule 12 (see paragraph (9) for an exception).

(7) Where brackets are not used, the letters, numerals and other characters must have the proportions and form, and be of the colour, shown in Part 3 of Schedule 17.

(4) For the transfer of functions applicable to authorisations in Scotland and Wales, see [S.I. 1999/1750](#) (in relation to Scotland) and [S.I. 1999/672](#) and the Government of Wales Act 2006 (c. 32) (in relation to Wales).

(8) Where brackets are used the letters, numerals and other characters must have the proportions and form, and be of the colour, shown in either Part 1 or Part 3 of Schedule 17.

(9) An exception to paragraphs (7) and (8) is that where the route number or compass point is part of a legend provided for at item 8 of the sign table in Part 3 of Schedule 12, letters, numerals and other characters must have the proportions and form, and be of the colour, shown in Part 1 of Schedule 17.

(10) When used for indicating a route number or compass point on a sign with a yellow background which is temporarily placed on a motorway, letters, numerals and other characters must have the proportions and form, and be of the colour, shown in Part 4 of Schedule 17.

(11) Paragraph (12) applies to a variable message sign where the construction or method of operation of the sign does not permit the use of letters, numerals and other characters of the proportions and form shown in Part 1, 2, 3 or 4 of Schedule 17.

(12) Letters, numerals and other characters may have the proportions and form shown in Part 5 of Schedule 17 (and be of the colour provided for in Part 1, 2, 3 or 4 as applicable).

(13) Paragraph (14) applies to letters, numerals and other characters incorporated in road markings provided for in these Regulations.

(14) A letter, numeral or other character of a height referred to in column 1 of the table in this paragraph must have the proportions and form, and be of the colour, shown in the Part of Schedule 17 at the column 2 entry applicable to that height.

<i>Height of letters, numerals and other characters</i>	<i>Applicable Part in Schedule 17</i>
from 280 mm to 700 mm (inclusive)	Part 6
705 mm, 1035 mm, 1600 mm	Part 7
2800 mm	Part 8

(15) For the purposes of interpreting Part 7 of Schedule 17 where the road marking is 705 mm or 1035 mm, the reference in the diagram in Part 7 to “1600” is to be read as “705” or “1035” as appropriate and the spaces between the grid lines reduced proportionately.

(16) Letters, numerals and other characters used in Scottish Gaelic words or phrases—

- (a) when appearing on a brown or dark green background, must have the proportions and form, and be of the colour, shown in Part 9 of Schedule 17;
- (b) when appearing on a white background, must have the proportions and form, and be of the colour, shown in Part 10 of Schedule 17.

(17) In Schedule 17, in Parts 1 to 4, 9 and 10, the height of the rectangular backgrounds on which the letters, numerals and other characters are shown is eight stroke widths.

Expressions of time and distance and for parking restrictions

6.—(1) A reference in these Regulations to the inclusion on a sign of a “time period” means the inclusion of a period of time that complies with the requirements of Part 1 of Schedule 18.

(2) More than one period of time may be included in a sign if appropriate for conveying the meaning of the sign.

(3) A reference in these Regulations to the inclusion on a sign of a “permitted parking expression” means the inclusion of an expression that complies with the requirements of Part 2 of Schedule 18.

(4) An expression of distance on a sign must be in imperial units and comply with the requirements of Part 3 of Schedule 18.

(5) The provisions of this regulation do not apply where more specific provision in relation to a particular sign is made elsewhere in these Regulations.

Dimensions and design of signs

7.—(1) This regulation is about the measurements specified in the Schedules for dimensions of signs, and elements of signs, and about overall design of signs provided for in these Regulations.

(2) All measurements specified in a diagram in the Schedules are in millimetres (“mm”) unless stated otherwise or the context requires otherwise.

(3) If more than one measurement is specified for the same dimension, any of those measurements may be used for that dimension.

(4) If minimum and maximum measurements are specified for a dimension, the dimension used must not be less than the minimum or more than the maximum.

(5) Dimensions chosen for each element of a sign must correspond with one another so that the overall shape and proportions of the sign are, so far as reasonably practicable, as shown in the diagram, or as otherwise provided for, in the Schedules.

(6) The requirement at paragraph (5) does not apply to the signs provided for at—

- (a) items 5, 6, and 7 of the sign table in Part 4 of Schedule 7;
- (b) items 5, 12 and 13 of the sign table in Part 6 of Schedule 9;
- (c) items 23, 25, 27 and 36 of the sign table in Part 4 of Schedule 11; and
- (d) items 32, 33, 34, 48, 49, 50, 52, 53, 55, 56 and 57 of the sign table in Part 2 of Schedule 14.

(7) Any dimension given in millimetres in respect of a sign, other than a road marking, is to be treated as permitted if it is varied, to be either greater or less than the dimension given, by up to 5 mm.

(8) Paragraph (7) does not permit a dimension to be less than a specified minimum nor more than a specified maximum, except where the dimension relates to the height of letters, numerals or other characters.

(9) Any dimension (not being specified as a maximum or minimum) given for a road marking is to be treated as permitted if it is varied in accordance with the following table.

<i>(1)</i> <i>Item</i>	<i>(2)</i> <i>Dimensions shown in road marking diagram</i>	<i>(3)</i> <i>Permitted variations</i>
1	3 metres or more	(i) Up to 15% of the dimension where the varied dimension is greater than the specified dimension; or (ii) Up to 10% of the dimension where the varied dimension is less than the specified dimension
2	300 mm or more, but less than 3 metres	(i) Up to 20% of the dimension where the varied dimension is greater than the specified dimension; or (ii) Up to 10% of the dimension where the varied dimension is less than the specified dimension
3	Less than 300 mm	(i) Up to 30% of the dimension where the varied dimension is greater than the specified dimension; or

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<i>(1)</i> <i>Item</i>	<i>(2)</i> <i>Dimensions shown in road marking diagram</i>	<i>(3)</i> <i>Permitted variations</i>
		(ii) Up to 10% of the dimension where the varied dimension is less than the specified dimension

(10) Where a dimension denoting the length or width of a road marking is varied in accordance with paragraph (9), and there is a space between two parts of the marking, the dimensions of that space may be varied as required to accommodate the variation of the length or width of the marking, provided that the character of the marking is maintained.

(11) Where the dimensions of a signal which displays an arrow or symbol are varied in accordance with paragraph (7), the dimensions chosen for the arrow or symbol must maintain the shape and proportions shown in the diagram in which the signal is shown.

(12) Any variation of any angle is to be treated as permitted if the variation does not exceed 5 degrees.

(13) Paragraph (12) does not permit an angle which is less than the minimum, or greater than the maximum, given.

(14) Where—

- (a) overall dimensions are given for a sign (other than a road marking); and
- (b) the sign displays a legend or symbol which is varied or added in accordance with these Regulations,
the overall dimensions, the number of lines filled by the legend, or both, may be varied so far as necessary to give effect to the variation or addition.

(15) Where these Regulations provide for a sign to be made up of a number of elements (including legends) but do not indicate where those elements are to be placed on the sign, regard is to be had, when deciding where to place those elements, to the purpose of the sign, in particular the nature of the message to be conveyed.

Illumination of upright signs and associated plates

8.—(1) Paragraph (2) applies to an upright sign unless elsewhere in these Regulations in relation to a particular sign—

- (a) requirements are imposed as to the illumination of the sign; or
- (b) provision is made that the sign need not be illuminated.

(2) The upright sign must be—

- (a) illuminated throughout the hours of darkness by internal or external lighting; or
- (b) reflectorised.

(3) If provision is made elsewhere in these Regulations that an upright sign need not be illuminated, it may be illuminated in accordance with paragraph (5).

(4) Paragraph (5) also applies to an upright sign which must at certain times be illuminated under these Regulations during those times when it is not required to be illuminated.

(5) The upright sign may be—

- (a) illuminated by internal or external lighting; or
- (b) reflectorised.

(6) Where these Regulations provide for a choice of methods of illumination for an upright sign (including where at least one method must be used), more than one of those methods may be used.

(7) The same method used to illuminate an upright sign must be used to illuminate an associated plate (and where more than one method is used, all those methods must be used).

(8) The same source of lighting used to illuminate an upright sign may be used to illuminate an associated plate provided it is adequate to do so.

(9) If an upright sign is not illuminated, any associated plate must not be illuminated.

(10) Where retroreflecting material is used on any part of an upright sign or plate, all other parts, other than any parts coloured black, must also be reflectorised.

(11) In paragraph (10) “part” means any part which is uniformly coloured and bounded by differently coloured parts.

Illumination – road markings

9.—(1) A road marking may be reflectorised.

(2) Paragraph (1) is subject to provision made elsewhere in these Regulations in relation to particular types of marking.

Height of road markings and size of studs fitted with reflectors, retroreflecting material or a light source

10.—(1) No road marking may project above the surface of the adjacent carriageway more than 6 mm at any point except where a provision to that effect is made elsewhere in these Regulations.

(2) A depressible stud must not project more than 25 mm above the surface of the carriageway.

(3) A non-depressible stud must not project more than 20 mm above the surface of the carriageway.

(4) Paragraph (5) applies to a stud which, in accordance with these Regulations, is fitted with reflectors, retroreflecting material, a light source or a combination.

(5) The part of a stud which is visible when the stud is in place must have—

(a) an overall length in the direction of travel of traffic of not less than 35 mm and not more than 250 mm; and

(b) an overall width of not less than 84 mm and not more than 190 mm.

Diagram Colours

11.—(1) The colours prescribed for signs must conform to British Standard BS EN 12899-1:2007(5).

(2) Paragraph (1) does not apply—

(a) if alternative provision is made elsewhere in these Regulations in relation to a sign; or

(b) to the extent it is provided that part of a sign may be of any, or any contrasting, colour.

Mutual recognition of standards

12. Any requirement in these Regulations to comply with a specified British Standard is satisfied by compliance with—

- (a) a standard or code of practice of a national standards body or equivalent body of any EEA State,
- (b) any international standard recognised for use as a standard or code of practice by any EEA State, or
- (c) a technical specification recognised for use as a standard by a public authority of any EEA State,
which requires a level of performance equivalent to that required by the specified British Standard.

Revocations

13. The Regulations specified in the table in Part 1 of Schedule 19 are revoked.

Transitional and savings provisions

14.—(1) Paragraph (2) applies to a sign—

- (a) where the sign is in place immediately before the coming into force of these Regulations; or
- (b) where the sign is referred to in paragraph (4) and is placed within a period of 12 weeks beginning with the day on which these Regulations come into force.

(2) A sign to which this paragraph applies and which is of a size, colour and type prescribed, or treated as prescribed, by the Traffic Signs Regulations 2002(6) (“the 2002 Regulations”) is to be treated as being of a size, colour and type prescribed by these Regulations.

(3) A sign shown by diagram 2919.1 is not to be treated as being of a size, colour and type prescribed by these Regulations on or after 30th January 2022(7).

(4) The signs referred to in paragraph (1)(b) are those shown by, or including as an element—

- (a) diagram 515.2, 530, 532.2, 532.3, 574, 618.2, 618.3, 618.3A, 618.4, 629, 629.1, 629.2, 780A, 780.1A, 780.2A, 826, 826.1, 864.1 or 953.2;
- (b) where the arrow symbols are of the maximum dimension permitted by the 2002 Regulations, diagram 868, 868.1, 872.1, 873, 874 or 875; and
- (c) where the lower case letters are of the maximum height permitted by the 2002 Regulations, diagram 876,

or any of those diagrams varied in accordance with the 2002 Regulations.

(5) The Zebra, Pelican and Puffin Pedestrian Crossings Regulations 1997(8) (“the 1997 Regulations”) are to be treated as remaining in force in relation to Pelican crossings (within the meaning of those Regulations) established—

- (a) before the coming into force of these Regulations; or
- (b) within a period of six months beginning with the day on which these Regulations come into force.

(6) In their application to Pelican crossings for the purposes of paragraph (5), the 1997 Regulations are modified in accordance with paragraphs (7) and (8).

(7) The exceptions to the prohibition imposed by regulation 12(1)(c) and (d) of the 1997 Regulations (about proceeding beyond a stop line when a steady amber or red signal is showing)

(6) S.I. 2002/3113, amended by S.I. 2005/1670, S.I. 2006/2083, S.I. 2008/2177, S.I. 2011/1040 and S.I. 2011/3041.

(7) Diagram 2919.1 shows the distance ahead to a service station and information about that service station. A similar diagram (2919.2) was substituted for 2919.1 by S.I. 2011/3041 (which came into force on 30th January 2012) but that S.I. included a ten year saving for signs already placed.

(8) Part 1 of S.I. 1997/2400, amended by S.I. 1998/901, 2003/2155, 2004/3168, 2005/2929, 2011/935, by S.S.I. 2006/129, 2013/119 and by the Crime and Courts Act 2013 (c. 22) section 15(3), Schedule 8, Part 4, paragraph 190.

are those at paragraph 5(4) to (6) of Part 1 of Schedule 14 to this Instrument and not those at regulation 12(1)(e) to (ec) of the 1997 Regulations (with the reference in paragraph 5(4) to the prohibition in sub-paragraph (3) treated as being instead a reference to the prohibition in paragraph (c) or (d) in regulation 12(1)).

(8) The exceptions to the prohibition imposed by regulation 20 of the 1997 Regulations (about stopping in a controlled area) in regulation 21(c) to (e) of those Regulations do not apply and instead the exceptions set out in paragraph 4(2)(d) of Part 5 of Schedule 14 to this Instrument apply.

(9) In this regulation, a reference to a diagram number is to that diagram number in the 2002 Regulations⁽⁹⁾.

Provision for review of these Regulations

15.—(1) The Secretary of State must from time to time—

- (a) carry out a review of these Regulations;
- (b) set out the conclusions of the review in a report; and
- (c) publish the report.

(2) The report must in particular—

- (a) set out the objectives intended to be achieved by the regulatory system established by these Regulations;
- (b) assess the extent to which those objectives are achieved; and
- (c) assess whether those objectives remain appropriate and, if so, the extent to which they could be achieved with a system that imposes less regulation.

(3) The first report under this regulation must be published before the end of the period of five years beginning with the day on which these Regulations come into force.

(4) Reports under this regulation are afterwards to be published at intervals not exceeding five years.

Signed by authority of the Secretary of State

16th March 2016

Andrew Jones
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State
Department for Transport