

# **MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

## **THE DISCIPLINED USE OF EMERGENCY VEHICLE LIGHTING DEVICES AT TRAFFIC INCIDENTS**

### **WHEREAS:**

The use of emergency-vehicle lighting devices is essential at traffic incidents, particularly in the early stages, for the safety of responders, persons involved in the incident, and highway users approaching the incident scene. Emergency-vehicle lighting, however, provides warning only and does not provide traffic control. Multiple flashing emergency lights are often confusing to highway users, especially at night.

Motorists approaching a traffic incident from the opposite direction on a divided facility are often distracted by emergency-vehicle lighting and slow down, sometimes abruptly, to look at the traffic incident as they pass, posing a hazard to themselves and other travelers. The lingering effect of this distraction contributes to increased congestion and resulting delay.

Emergency-vehicle lighting at a traffic incident scene can be reduced once effective traffic control has been established. This is especially true for major incidents with multiple response vehicles. Response agencies can perform their tasks on-scene with minimal emergency-vehicle lighting when good traffic control is established through the use of warning signs, arrow boards and traffic cones to alert and re-direct traffic.

### **THEREFORE IT IS HEREBY AGREED:**

#### **That Public Safety and other Traffic Incident responders will:**

- **Examine their policy and actual practice for the use of emergency-vehicle lighting;**
- **Set a goal of reducing the number of emergency lights at secured incident scenes; and**
- **Give special consideration to reducing or extinguishing all forward-facing flashing or wig-wag emergency lights, especially on divided highways.**