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ENGINEERING INSTRUCTION

NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

SUBJECT: CRITERIA FOR USING RIGID MEDIAN BARRIER

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The purpose of this Engineering Instruction is to liberalize the use of Rigid Concrete Median Barrier. It has become apparent that maintenance of the flexible median barrier has been very difficult, very expensive and has resulted in an appreciable amount of time when the barrier has been unusable.

The attached criteria modifies the criteria found on Pages 10-19 and 10-20 of the Highway Design Manual. It should be used beginning immediately. The Highway Design Manual will be modified as soon as possible to incorporate this revised criteria.

CRITERIA FOR USING RIGID MEDIAN BARRIER

Although the flexible energy absorbing barriers are superior to the rigid median barriers under most cost and safety conditions, the use of rigid barriers is warranted where only very flat angle impacts are anticipated and the advantages of the flexible system are outweighed by the problems associated with a high frequency of impacts. Based on experience, the following factors are important influences:

1. Loss of protection during "down time".

2. High maintenance costs.

3. Increased accident potential created by maintenance vehicles encroaching in travel lanes during repair operations.

Therefore, the policy for the use of concrete median barriers will be as follows:

Whenever a median barrier is required on a freeway, expressway or parkway with a free-flow operating speed of 50 mph or greater, a rigid barrier of approved type may be used if the horizontal clearance from edge of travel lane to barrier is less than 10 feet and the highway operates at or below Level of Service C during average daily peak hours.

For further information, refer to the AASHTO "Guide for Selecting, Locating and Designing Traffic Barriers".