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Dated, the 29th June, 1992

To

All CEs of State PWDs and UTs (Dealing with National Highways), Director General (Border Roads),  
Director General (Works) C.P.W.D.

Subject: Guidelines for Design of Median Openings on Divided National Highways

On divided highways, medians are being provided with the objective of segregating the two directions of traffic for improving safety against vehicle crossing and overtaking maneuvers. The width of such medians is governed by clause 6.6 of IRC:73-1980 "Geometric Design Standards for Rural Highways" which inter-alia recommends a minimum desirable width of 5 metres on rural highways. Median width could however be reduced to 3 metres where land is restricted. In urban areas, even less width is accepted occasionally.

2. In general, the medians would be continuous except at intersection. However, a certain number of openings in the medians are necessary at intervals at mid-block locations for U-turns or diversions of traffic from one carriageway to the other in the case of accidents or maintenance operations. Normally, such openings between intersections should be provided at intervals of about 2 km, but depending on local circumstances, the distance could be closer at times as necessary.

3. At present, there are no standard guidelines for median openings. Considering this need, the Ministry has prepared a type design for such opening as regards length and width of the opening to be adopted see Fig. 1. Ends of the median at opening should be bullet-nosed as shown (radius - one metre). Height of curb at the opening should be the same as adopted for the median in the general cross-section for the work.

4. In addition to geometric details as given in the Annexure, it is important that road reflectors and pavement markings of appropriate design should be provided at the nose points. Requirements in this regard are explained in the Annexure. It is also necessary that tapering portion of the median (as marked in Annexure) should be kept free of any obstructions like railings, bushes, signs etc. to ensure proper visibility for turning vehicles.

5. It is requested that this design may be followed for all median openings on the National Highways henceforth. In the case of existing openings, modifications may be made immediately as per the enclosed type design to ensure uniformity and safety. Instructions to this effect may please be issued to all officers of the PWD concerned with National Highways. Receipt of the circular may please be acknowledged.