

An evaluation of performance of signalized crosswalks in Dar es Salaam

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Pedestrians are provided with crosswalks that offer them convenient locations to cross to their destinations. One of the ways to enhance pedestrians' safety is to signalize crosswalks. The Ministry of works in Tanzania has long used 1.2 m/s as the recommended walking speed to be used in the design of pedestrian facilities. This value was adopted from the Federal Highway Administration in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices. This study evaluated the performance of the recently installed signalized crosswalks along the criterial roads in Dar es Salaam. Data related to pedestrian behaviours were recorded using video camera, traditional methods and questionnaire. The findings of the study suggest that there is a significant difference between the observed speed (0.88 m/s) and recommended crossing speed (1.2 m/s). the findings also indicate that all sites have inadequate crossing time, thus, 0.88 m/s should be considered for designing signalized midblock. Moreover, the pedestrian compliance rate is low and the drivers' compliance rate is high at all the crosswalks. The literature also shows that the sensors had positive impact on pedestrian behaviour than the recently installed push button switch. The performance of the recently installed signalized midblock crosswalks in Dar es Salaam is not satisfactory. Thus, the design of pedestrian facility should be based on the characteristics of Tanzania pedestrians, rather than adhering to standards established in other countries. The existing signal timing should be retimed according to the observed results. However, use of sensor is to be preferred rather than push button switch provision of adequate information for new facilities is very desirable.