A Simulated Route Code

FRANK J. MAMMANO, Office of Research and Development, U. S. Bureau of
Public Roads

•THE Bureau of Public Roads and Philco Corporation have cooperated in developing a
machine-adaptable technique for the nonambiguous designation of a vehicle's exact
position within a system of roads as well as a selected route to proceed to any other
point in the system (1). To demonstrate this technique a manual visual example for
route following was developed.

This paper describes and illustrates the example. It uses a simulated route code
which was developed for the Pentagon network, and a matrix to direct a vehicle to its
destination by a selected route. The matrix may be used to direct the driver of a
vehicle to any selected destination within the matrix by a route selected according to
minimum distance and safety of required maneuvers.

CONSTRUCTION OF MATRIX

The network of roads surrounding the Pentagon is very complex. Many people have
made wrong turns believing they were going in the right direction. For the most part
one can see his destination, but getting to it can be quite difficult at times, especially
when one is not familiar with the Pentagon area. A map was studied in detail showing
all the roads immediately surrounding the Pentagon (Fig. 1). The test site was in-
spected, a number was assigned to every interchange and a list of every possible move-
ment and command necessary to fulfill the movement at each interchange was compiled.
On the average one or two commands were necessary at every decision point, and there
were about 16 different selected commands for the entire network (Fig. 2). Symbols
were substituted for these commands for ease in handling the matrix. From the infor-
mation obtained from this inspection, a matrix (Figs. 3, 4, and 5) was constructed. This
matrix shows the symbols for the selected commands at every point or destination.
On the figures are decision points (present position points) 1 through 75 used as "in-
route" destinations on the horizontal rows; the vertical columns show decision points
1 through 75. The horizontal rows are doubled back for convenience.

In the matrix every decision point (present position point) can also be a destination.
However, these points are not suitable for stopping since they are interchanges (perhaps
these points may have use by emergency vehicles). Therefore, six primary destination
points 76 through 81 were selected so that a vehicle could stop without obstructing
traffic flow (Fig. 6). It can be seen from Figure 6 that the matrix is greatly simplified
if one is only concerned with these six primary destinations. If one wanted to proceed
to another destination he would simply drive in the direction his automobile is pointed until
he reached a decision point, at which time he would receive instructions to his destination.

APPLICATION TO ROUTE FOLLOWING

Before testing the system a few explanations are needed about the symbols in Fig-
ure 1. The dashed circled numbers are used because at some locations the decision
points are very close together and it would be impossible to give two different instruc-
tions and allow for a decision. Therefore the instruction for the second point is com-
bined with the preceding point. For example, at points (34) and (34), if one was going
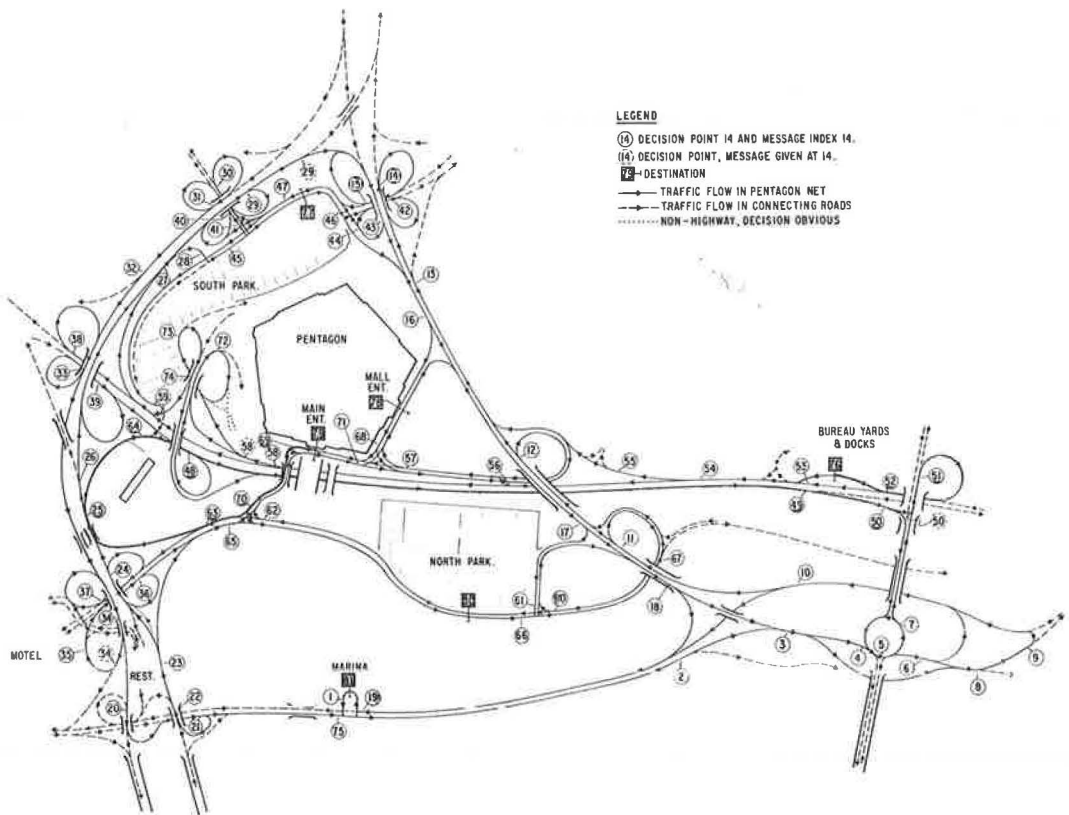to the motel or points in that direction at node (34) he would receive the message "keep

Figure 1. Decision points and destinations for Pentagon network.

SYMBOL	PHRASE	SYMBOL	PHRASE
A	KEEP RIGHT	J	EXIT RIGHT
B	KEEP LEFT	K	EXIT LEFT
C	USE CENTER LANE	L	EXIT FIRST RIGHT
D	YIELD	M	EXIT SECOND RIGHT
E	THRU	N	FOLLOW ONE
F	MERGE RIGHT	O	GO RIGHT
G	MERGE LEFT	P	GO LEFT
H	TURN RIGHT	—	(NO DECISION POINT)
I	TURN LEFT	X	(SAME AS DESTINATION)

EXAMPLE: AJ = KEEP RIGHT, EXIT RIGHT

Figure 2. Route code phrases and symbols.

Figure 3. Matrix showing destination points 1–25.

Figure 4. Matrix (continued) showing destination points 26–50.

Decision Points (Present Position Points)

Destination

Figure 5. Matrix (continued) showing destination points 51-75.

Figure 6. Matrix (continued) showing primary destinations 76-81.

Decision Points (Present Position Points)

Destination

right, exit first right, exit second right" (ALM from Fig. 2).

To illustrate how this technique operates, pick a destination and a present position point and using the matrix (Fig. 6) attempt to reach the selected destination. Specifically, to go from present position point 6 to the main entrance of the Pentagon 79 , select the destination 79 on the matrix and follow the instructions indicated by the symbols. The instruction at node 6 is "keep left." The symbol associated with this instruction is "B." After executing this instruction, the next instruction is received at node 10. The symbol at 10 is "A," and the instruction is "keep right," and so on:

> 11 - E - thru
> 12 - AJ - keep right, exit right
> 57 - E - thru
> 79 - X - same as destination

Using this technique it is impossible for the driver to ever get lost if he makes the wrong maneuver at any one or more than one of the decision points. If at node 12 he had gone through instead of exiting right he would still be guided to his original destination from the next node which becomes his present position point. For example:

> 13 - E - thru
> 14 - AJ - keep right, exit right
> 15 - L - exit first right
> 43 - E - thru
> 16 - AJ - keep right, exit right
> 68 - H - turn right
> 79 - X - same as destination

Thus "getting lost" becomes an impossibility because every decision point will guide one to his destination or to any other point in the system.

REFERENCE

1. Emery, Raleigh H., Grayum, John Z., and Mammano, Frank J. A Technique of Highway Coding for Route Recognition and Position Description. Presented at the 46th Annual Meeting and published in this RECORD.