



Figure 1.

### UNDERSTANDING INDUSTRY SPECIFICATIONS

Current software industry specifications for TrueType<sup>1</sup> and PostScript<sup>2</sup> format fonts assumes that every character will be positioned within a bounding box and the bounding box will be assigned a fixed value (see Figure 2). Within the bounding box, each character will have some amount of "white space" to its left, right, top and bottom. This allows software to place bounding boxes side by side, top to bottom, or line by line without needing to worry about the shape and size of the character or object (see Figure 3).



Figure 2.

Line space is controlled by a separate function in most software and is normally added in an increment of measure specified by the user. What's important to know about line space is a correctly designed font will have some amount of line space built into it to prevent succeeding lines of characters from crashing into one another.

<sup>1</sup>TrueType refers to Microsoft's industry standard font format description and specification.

<sup>2</sup>PostScript refers to Adobe's industry standard font format description and specification.

### UPDATING THE STANDARD ALPHABETS

In this Edition, a new specification for using the Standard Alphabets For Traffic Control Devices is presented. The new specification will make the alphabets adaptable to current industry software requirements. It is important to note that every effort has been made to maintain the same properties of the existing 1966 and 1977 Standard Alphabets. A uniform stroke width has been adopted for all letters and numerals. Following is the specific criteria that was used to prepare this edition of the Standard Highway Alphabets For Traffic Control Devices.

#### Criteria

1. Develop a method of spacing that will work for both English and metric measure.
2. Retain the letterforms basic shape, stroke weight and proportion. Make slight changes where necessary to ensure

consistency of stroke weight and optical balance from letter to letter.

3. Maintain overall existing spacing of Standard Alphabets to ensure an easy transition in the field as it relates to the design and fabrication of new signs.