



VCMLA Newsletter

Issue 10

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Newsletter Edition 10 – November 2009

Welcome to edition 10 of our newsletter for the Victorian Construction Materials Laboratory Association, November 2009.

It is our second issue of the current year and as editor I would like to continue to ask our members to submit any articles, they may consider of interest to us all.

Inside This Issue

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AS Test Methods CE009 committee, SRA updates

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Aims of the Association – *(always a timely reminder)*

Message from the President:

The association has gained a bit of momentum off the back of the Vic Roads forum recently held at Leonda in Hawthorn. It was good to see a large turn out of laboratory personnel from a diverse group, although it was disappointing a few of the big geotechnical companies chose not to attend. The feedback I received in the days following the forum was all positive and many felt we had suitably expressed the laboratories situation in the current market place. I got the feeling that almost everyone agreed all four sectors are to blame for the current state of affairs and it is not just one sector's problem. There are deficiencies in all areas of the process in delivering a finished road pavement.

It was evident the key to many of the issues is training and education and the way forward is to somehow put measures in place to make it all happen. This is the challenge ahead for the four parties, NATA, Vic Roads, The CCF and the testing industry in 2010.

We the VCMLA need to voice our opinion in the development of this process so that we are not complaining in the future about unreasonable demands from the other bodies. All testing labs need to be involved and express an opinion. The VCMLA will be holding a workshop early in the

New Year to create a pathway forward for our industry. We will be setting a basic framework for the workshop and depending on numbers we may even split into sub groups to work on issues who will then present back to the other groups. We need to get this right the first time so get involved.

Regards



Ernie Gmehling
Chairman

Industry News:

Recently the association was represented, along with other interested parties, at a recent forum on materials testing and your President is supplying here his report on the findings. (As a staff member of VicRoads your editor here steps back.)

The Dynamic Cone Penetrometer and Occupational Health and Safety

(article courtesy of Mr Peter Bell – Managing Director Production supplies Pty Ltd)

The Dynamic Cone Penetrometer (DCP) has been a standard tool within the construction industry for a long time and for most of that time there have been incidents.

Workers have been injured due to a variety of causes ranging from ignorance, bad technique and carelessness, amongst others.

Employers have sometimes been lacking in knowledge of how to reduce the numbers of these incidents.

Manufacturers have often been totally unaware of either the frequency or the seriousness of these problems.

It is well past time for all who work in this industry to minimise the risks, to protect ourselves from the associated physical, psychological and financial costs.

Pro-lab Australia has been manufacturing Dynamic Cone Penetrometers for 25 years and has utilized a design which allows for an operating technique which reduces the risk of an incident occurring. The design is a classic dog bone shape featuring a reduced section which incorporates a finger groove for lifting of the hammer, encouraging the use of the **Pro-lab** recommended technique. Additionally, the hammer has a sticker attached highlighting the danger of the pinch points.

Pro-lab Australia recommends that managers ensure their employees are trained in how to use the DCP and that technicians use this technique so that together we prevent incidents which cause pain, loss and financial costs.

If you have any questions regarding this OHS issue or training requirements, please contact us on 61 3 9795 6011 or email pro-lab@productionsupplies.com.au
Peter Bell, Managing Director, Production Supplies Pty Ltd

NATA & VicRoads Training courses:

Please review the web sites of both these organizations for some of the very useful training courses that are supplied. NATA courses are mainly arranged around those attributes that are required for your continual knowledge in maintaining accreditation. The courses, of which, include internal audits, ISO 17025 etc. are based at the NATA Melbourne Offices.

Technical training is offered through VicRoads on courses mainly based around such subjects as Pavement Technology, Construction and Geotechnical etc. and one particular one to consider is *Fundamentals of Road and Bridge Site Investigations (12/02/10)* the courses are found on VicRoads web site (click on Technical Consulting, then Technical Training) and are based at either the East Burwood or Camberwell Offices.

Test Method updates

SRA Updates

(Article supplied by - Mr. Andrew Walker Manager Construction Materials VicRoads Technical Consulting)

RC 316.14 – Moisture Ratio Determination for Assessment of Dry-Back of Granular Pavement Materials. Assessment of Dry-Back of Granular Pavement Materials (new method)

RC316.14

The moisture content of crushed rock prepared for surfacing has previously been difficult to measure. Classical oven-drying moisture testing has wanted samples to be taken from the prepared road surface, to a depth of around 100 mm, an activity unacceptable to road authorities.

Other impact or penetration methods may have success with experienced users but are difficult for inexperienced operators. VicRoads has now developed a process, using a nuclear gauge to measure or assess the reduction of moisture content (dry-back) of the uppermost layer of granular pavement materials prior to application of bituminous surfacing. The method relies on the same nuclear gauge being used both for compaction acceptance testing and testing for moisture dry-back.

The method requires that a moisture intercept is determined in accordance with AS 1289.5.8.1, Appendix B, during compaction acceptance testing. The moisture ratio test at dry-back assessment then uses that intercept, the actual moisture count readings, and the calibration equations to provide moisture content. These calculations are done by spreadsheet, using raw data.

The moisture content for each dry-back test site is calculated as a percentage of the average dry density for a number of compaction acceptance test sites, determined at a previous testing event.

The moisture content is then used to calculate a Moisture Ratio as a percentage of OMC, determined using modified compactive effort, for the pavement material. Finally, a mean Moisture Ratio for the test lot is calculated.

VicRoads is able to present to VCMLA on the method at a general meeting, and a spreadsheet to prepare reports is available.

Industry Interest & Trivia:

It is hoped to place in this section a number of items of an ad hoc nature (feel free to send in your items).

Equipment suppliers – Please contact either Ernie Gmehling or Mick Di Meglio for placement of ads in the newsletter.

Rates \$50.00 for half page made payable to VCMLA.

Buy, Swap & Sell

Members - Do you have any old equipment you want to sell why not place a free advert in the newsletter? You may even be chasing something unique, why not ask our members.

Nuclear gauge Requirements:

The Department of Human Services is currently visiting labs and carrying out audits with particular checks on swipe tests and radiation levels as well as reviews of your radiation management plan.

The VCMLA has had discussions with Australian Radiation Services Pty. Ltd and have secured a discounted rate for swipe test kits and the assessment of the swipe.

All you need to do is contact Genelle Jones and advise her of your VCMLA membership number to get the discounted rate. See below for the rates. Genelle contact details are set out below.

Physical Address:

22 King Street
Blackburn VIC 3130
Australia

Mailing Address:

PO Box 3103
Nunawading VIC 3131
Australia

Phone: +61 3 9877 4898

Fax: +61 3 9877 8272

Email: genelle_jones@australian-radiation-services.com.au

Website: <http://www.australian-radiation-services.com.au>

Suggested Prices:

Wipe Test Kits	Quantity	Price
1 wipe	1	\$10.00
2 wipes	1	\$45.00
5 wipes	1	\$80.00
Box of 250 wipes	1	\$180.00
Analysis of surface contamination wipes Assessment of wipes by gross counting (alpha/beta/gamma)	1	\$53.00

Something of history:

Karl von Terzaghi
The Father of Soil Mechanics



Born: October 2, 1883 in Prague

Died: October 25, 1963 in Winchester, Massachusetts

He won the Norman Medal of ASCE four times (1930, 1943, 1946, and 1955).

He was given nine honorary doctorate degrees from universities in eight different countries.

He started modern soil mechanics with his theories of consolidation, lateral earth pressures, bearing capacity, and stability.

VCMLA Committee news:

Ernie Gmehling – chairman

Tom Seymour – Vice Chairman

Alastair Catton – Secretary

Dom Meadley – Treasurer

Bob Body – committee member (newsletter)

Michael de Meglio – committee member (assist newsletter)

Meeting News – 26th October

The VCLMA Committee, meeting, agreed that a General Forum for all members should be held.

Provisional discussion topics are:

- Training as set out in NATA Note 26
- Future involvement with the CCF (Vic Branch)
- RTA's way of dealing with Testing Company's
- Vic Roads Surveillances

It is hoped that the meeting be followed by a social event. More details will be made available in our next newsletter. Current members will be notified by e-mail. We are currently making arrangements to hold meetings at Box Hill Institute of TAFE in their conference rooms.

2010 is already shaping up to be an interesting year with the forum planned for Jan / Feb, a soil classification workshop Feb / March and a possibly some product demonstration and speakers March / April.

VCMLA Loan Test Sieves

This process has continued to be used by many of our members and is to be expanded to include a set of gauges for use in calibrating 'punched plate' sieves, which includes a calibration report

Remember our offer to members:

It is now a NATA requirement (as of 1 January 2008) that all labs accredited for Particle Size analysis comply with new requirements of calibration on plate and wire woven sieves. Just to remind you the VCMLA committee has purchased a complete set of 2.36mm down to 75um sieves for this purpose to be loaned out to its members for a small fee. The cost per use is \$ 50.00 and is based on the collection and return to Ground Science at Factory 11, (8-20) Brock Street Thomastown. Upon collection a conditions report will be completed by both the receiving party and the dispatch person. The same process will occur upon return. If the condition of the sieves is unacceptable a clean charge of \$15.00 will be incurred. If a sieve is damaged the cost of replacement may be born by the loan company depending on the age of the sieve. It must be emphasised, that the loan period is for one week only to allow all members the opportunity to use them.

AIMS OF THE ASSOCIATION (*a reminder*)

The aims of the Association are to:

Improve the standard of testing in Victoria through training and other means

Advance the status of testing laboratories to the construction industry

Communicate changes in standards and technology to the laboratory industry

Provide a code of ethics by which members operate

Represent the views of the Victorian testing laboratories to peak bodies such as NATA, Standards Australia, Austroads, etc.

Inform the construction industry of the benefits of good laboratory services

Assist members in the development of suitable proficiency and inter-laboratory testing programs
Conduct activities such as meetings, conferences, technical and social events for the benefit of its members