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Long life for flexible pavements

A well constructed flexible pavement built above a defined minimum strength should have a long structural life provided that cracks and ruts at the surface are dealt with before the integrity of the road is affected. So concludes research sponsored by the Highways Agency, Quarry Products Association and the Refined Bitumen Association, and carried out by TRL.

According to the research, deterioration in well constructed asphalt pavements is confined to the uppermost layers of the asphalt. Good construction practice and materials are required to ensure long life; while regular monitoring and timely remedial action are essential to prevent surface deterioration affecting the structural integrity of the pavement.

Overall objective of the research was to review current design prac-



Long life pavements are likely to be whole life cost effective.

tice and information on pavement performance that has accrued since the last revision of the design standards, in order to develop an improved design method for heavily trafficked, flexible pavements.

Traditionally, the design method for fully flexible pavements was predicated on a 40 year life with major strengthening after 20 years.

Traffic levels have increased dramatically since the mid-1980s and recently the option has been introduced of a 40 year design life that

would not require major mid-term strengthening.

The long life roads study looks into a number of distinct areas including design considerations, construction and maintenance.

Whole life costing has also come into the research which finds that there are reductions in whole life costs with the new long life designs. Long life pavements with extended periods between remedial works are likely to see reduced maintenance and user costs.

Responses in to Roads Review

Responses of interested parties to Government's Roads Review consultation paper have to be in by tomorrow, Friday 14 November 1997.

The paper poses the question "What role for trunk roads in England" and is part of an exercise to develop an integrated transport strategy for the country.

The consultation paper raises issues of general roads policy including making better use of the existing infrastructure, managing demand, new roads construction, safety and environmental impact.



Benefits of the advanced asphalt surfacings used recently at Brands Hatch and Silverstone are also available for public highways. The transfer of asphalt technology from the race track to roads confers advantages of durability and skid resistance while offering smoother, quieter and safer roads for the motorist. These modern asphalts developed by companies appearing in this magazine display all the characteristics needed to meet the demands of today's heavily trafficked roads.