

Giving better value than ever

Road Surface Treatments Association chief executive Howard Robinson welcomes the widening of MA+ST's coverage of the roads sector to reflect the growing use of surface treatments and related pavement solutions. The RSTA and MA+ST both have a role to play in spreading knowledge about all the solutions available to clients.

The RSTA formed in 2008 following the merger of the Road Surface Dressing Association with the High Friction Surfacing Association and Slurry Surfacing Contractors Association and has proven to be a timely venture," says RSTA chief executive Howard Robinson. RSTA also has a Specialist Treatments Sector. "The economic background means that all companies and organisations involved in road maintenance have had to refocus on providing ever improving value for money for cash strapped clients. At the same time, industry needs to convince Government and other funders that road investment is an essential ingredient of the country's economic future success."

Howard argues that although there will still be a large demand for asphalt solutions, surface treatments like surface dressing and slurry micro surfacings are a vital part of the range of solutions the industry offers.

The RSTA thinks that MA+ST has a key role to play in spreading knowledge about the full range of options open to clients, many of which now have few in house technical resources, which means there is often a low level of awareness of alternatives. Howard says: "MA+ST has a big role to play. The

magazine has a long established credibility as a place to turn for up to date case studies and technical information about a wide variety of road solutions which we are pleased to be helping to build on.

"There has been a decline in knowledge within client organisations about what technical solutions are available. Often, clients

"Now is the time to invest in roads, before increasing economic activity pushes demand up." Howard Robinson

just do not have a breadth of knowledge about what is available. MA+ST will be able to help by publishing this information on a more regular basis than before, in the magazine and on its website."

RSTA meets with local authority engineers body ADEPT twice a year and has regular meetings with HMEP (Highways Maintenance Efficiency Programme) and the Highways Agency to help raise technical understanding of the issues involved. "We fully support HMEP's aim of having local authorities standardise their procurement practices to eliminate situations where, for example,



RSTA's Chief Executive Howard Robinson

several visits are made to a site to repair 10 potholes, which is among the anecdotal evidence gathered by RSTA to pass on to road authorities. That wastes money and gets our industry a bad name.

"Now is the time for the UK to invest in roads, before increasing economic activity pushes demand up and increases the physical strain on our already fairly worn out roads infrastructure. Our case is more convincingly made when we demonstrate that we have a range of proven solutions offering better value for money than ever before."

Training raises our game

Continually improving the competence of the road surfacing industry's workforce is a key RSTA aim for which a training programme has been developed including courses for junior engineers and technicians, seminars for experienced engineers, and pre-season workshops for workforce induction.

RSTA has two training centres, in Dundee and Exeter for training in surface dressing plant and equipment. The RSTA Assessment Centre enables operatives to achieve NVQ Level 2 and 3. Sector Scheme 13 for Surface Treatments requires all CSCS Experienced Worker cards for operatives and supervisors to be endorsed by the RSTA ensuring external

NVQ assessors have their expertise verified by internal verifiers.

A wide range of NVQs are offered including surface dressing, slurry microsurfacing, high friction surfacing, retexturing, velocity patching, asphalt reinforcement and recycling. RSTA training courses run all year round and can be found at www.rsta-uk.org/calendar.htm



Surface treatments are growing in popularity among local authority clients with limited funds

New codes and guidelines explained

This summer saw publication of 'Service life of surface treatments' guidelines that have been developed jointly with local authority chief officers body ADEPT to provide an agreed service life for surface dressing, slurry surfacing incorporating microsurfacing and high friction surfacing.

Howard Robinson says: "The guidelines come at a very opportune moment as local authorities have to produce lifecycle plans for their highway assets and report annual depreciation in the Whole of Government Accounts.

"They have been produced by industry experts and should be regarded as being the definitive view of the durability of surface treatments."

New codes of practice covering surface dressing, high friction surfacing, and retexturing have been published this summer jointly with ADEPT. More new codes for slurry surfacing, geosynthetics and steel meshes, structural recycling techniques and patching solutions are expected to be published this autumn. A code on preservation techniques is being updated for publication at the end of this year. A new carbon calculator for surface treatments has recently been developed jointly by RSTA and the University of Nottingham. A number of

seminars part funded by Construction Skills Management Leadership Development programme are planned for this autumn to roll out these new tools. Codes can be downloaded from www.rsta-uk.org/publications.htm

Surface dressing

The new surface dressing code, endorsed by ADEPT, provides a comprehensive library of technical guidance and best practice. The document provides a full and in depth explanation of surface dressing and the key issues that must be addressed such as health and safety, the environment, training, site planning, equipment and installation.

There are guidance notes on types and design of surface dressings, binders, aggregates, road surface preparation, when to surface dress and guidance on the use of spray tankers.

High friction surfacing

The high friction surfacing code is endorsed by ADEPT and the Road Safety Marking Association.

High friction surfacing (HFS) significantly improves the skid resistance of roads and is particularly useful on approaches to pelican crossings, roundabouts, junctions and crossings

as well as bends with a radius of tighter than 500m on single carriageways. Use of HFS can result in a 35% reduction in accidents.

The code examines both hot and cold processes in detail and provides best practice guidance and technical specification for their selection and application.

Retexturing

Surface retexturing offers a quick and cost effective way of maintaining skid resistant road surfaces by restoring their micro and/or macro texture. The speed and efficiency of the technique significantly minimises works duration and, therefore, traffic disruption.

For the best results it is essential to ensure that the correct retexturing technique is used.

Techniques include: bush hammering; grooving/grinding; longitudinal scabbling; orthogonal grooving and water jetting. The Code explains which technique is most suitable for which road surface.

The code underlines the need for early contractor involvement to ensure the choice of the most appropriate treatment and provides technical information on the appropriate circumstances and treatments for retexturing bitumen bound and concrete road surfaces.