



Australian Flexible Pavement Association media release

Successful trial paves the way for more resilient and sustainable roads

A long-term trial, established in Coober Pedy, South Australia, to test the longevity and performance of road surfacing materials has successfully shown that trial sites continue to provide satisfactory performance, confirming the quality of contemporary maintenance methods.

The trial, run by Austroads and supported by the Australian Flexible Pavement Association and its members, assessed the performance of several specially designed and constructed spray sealed sites. The trial aimed to test the quality and practicality of national specifications and testing methods used for the procurement of polymer modified binders (PMBs).

The Coober Pedy trial found the road surfacings were performing to a high standard after eight years of service other than isolated areas of stripping and some areas of bleeding which were considered to be 'primarily due to a degradation of the structure of the pavement below' (Austroads AP-T354-20, 2020). Another series of site inspections were undertaken in July of this year, which continues to confirm this ongoing performance.

The performance assessment and findings have massive implications for Australian road managers and the broader industry, guiding best practice and confirming the implementation of innovative binders and spray methods.

AfPA has welcomed the opportunity to be involved in the trial and called for continued investment in such long-term pavement performance studies, including regular monitoring and inspections to ensure that the flexible pavement industry remains driven by improvement and that roads continue to safely work for communities.

AfPA Executive Director and National Sustainability Director, Norbert Michel, said: "Our members have been heavily involved in these inspections, driven by our mission to ensure that our industry remains solution-focussed and infrastructure is delivered sustainably, with a long-term vision.

"Australians rely on our multi-billion-dollar road network, many of which do not see frequent maintenance, so it is crucial to get things like this right.

"Our industry is keen to ensure that the best available binders and technology are used to deliver these high performing and longer lasting road surfaces, reducing frequency of maintenance and lowering overall carbon footprint."

AfPA CEO, Carlos Rial, said:

"AfPA and its members are always delighted to be involved in these types of long-term projects, this is because we believe that our drive for innovation must go hand in hand with monitoring and testing to achieve real change.

"We hope that the findings presented will reaffirm the positive changes being made within the delivery of infrastructure projects and provide confidence to road management authorities to implement best practices moving forward."