



Asphalt Institute California Office Report 1st Quarter 2021

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Here below are just a few topics you may want to be aware of. If my explanation is too brief, then please call me at 805-402-1211, so we can discuss in further detail.

AI Binder/Emulsions Database:

AI has a comprehensive States Binder/Emulsions Specifications Database on its website: <http://www.asphaltinstitute.org/engineering/specification-databases/> . Annual updating with improvements are on their way, with the REs working with Jason Lamb at HQs for the postings. Check out this valuable resource and help inform local Agencies about it.

Suppliers meetings:

Both NV and WA DOTs provide annual summaries of Asphalt binders and Emulsions used by grade and tonnages.

NV DOT in 2020 used 23,500 tons of PG 64-28NV, and 11,200 tons of PG 76-22NV. Cutbacks MC-250 and MC-800 amounted to 76 tons total. Of the 22,683 tons for 17 types of Emulsions; CSS-1h (70:30) was at 1,320 tons, LMCRS-2h at 5,280 tons, PMPS-h as 3,180 tons, PMRE-h at 8,150 tons, and QSE (60:40) at 2,300 tons, were the five dominant grades. This was a reduction of 39% in Asphalt binders and a 6% reduction of Emulsions compared to the 2019 totals.

WA DOT always reports in HMA tons for the year from October 1st to September 31st. Assuming a typical 5% binder in the HMA it results in the following binder tonnages: For 2020 WsDOT was forecasting 44,074 tons, and ended up with 32,280 tons contracted. This is a 27% drop from what was planned.

CA SB1 \$52 Billion ten-year Transportation Bill:

Paving in California continues essentially unaffected by the Covid-19 pandemic.

In early April 2017 the State Senate in California passed a landmark Transportation Bill (SB 1). The California Constitution requires a two-third majority vote to pass any tax increases. It provides \$52 Billion over 10 years, devoted to finally start fixing the State's deteriorating roads, bridges and other neglected transportation infrastructure.

A key element in the bill is that the plan provides \$15 Billion for the State and \$15 Billion to Local Agencies to fix roads. It marks the first increase in fuel taxes in 23 years. Of key importance is that the bill includes language to protect transportation dollars from being diverted to other purposes. Caltrans does not conduct annual Suppliers meetings.

Perpetual Pavement Awards:

In addition to the present Perpetual Pavement Awards highlighting excellent performing pavements, two additional awards programs are being started in 2021, aiming to

recognize the Agencies that purposely design new or reconstructed perpetual pavements. These two additional awards are for perpetual pavements “by Design” and by “Conversion”. In my region AZ DOT’s I-40 pavement was approved for an award. Caltrans has several Long-Life/Perpetual pavements which may qualify for the two new Perpetual Pavement Award categories, to be submitted in 2021.

Caltrans I-5 Long-Life/Perpetual Pavement project:

The large Caltrans Long-life/Perpetual pavement project on I-5 south of Sacramento is on track for main-line paving with another 300,000 tons to go starting in May. The annual verifications of the different performance based mixes have been approved.

With a large \$267 Million CRCP project on I-10 recently awarded (with no Life-cycle Analysis comparisons or alternate designs conducted), I have started to discuss with Caltrans the option of a next large Asphalt Long-Life paving project further east on I-10.

AI Virtual training:

For 30 years the Asphalt Institute has each year offered it’s successful “Principles of Constructing Quality Asphalt Pavements” (CQAP) seminar based on our best-selling Manual Series publication MS-22. After cancelling 8 in-person CQAP seminars, and conducting one successful virtual/life hybrid CQAP seminar in 2020, we kept the momentum going with virtual training offerings. I participated with presentations and/or chat backup support in several; a v-presentation for ORBA in Canada (2/24), v-MDT (2/26 – 3/2), and v-CQAP (3/16 – 17), while I’ve committed to a Longitudinal-Joints v-presentation on 4/7 for CalAPA. For the Fall of 2021 the AI REs are starting to schedule 6 to 8 in-person CQAPs and one MDT. This will be complimented by virtual offerings.

Paving Inspector Training and Certification (PIC):

This AI automated on-line training and certification program is up and running, with a very successful start. After beta-testing completed in early March and a hard roll-out on 3/15, already more than 70 registrants are working to get their AI PIC Certificate. It is our hope that this program will be embraced nationwide by the Cities and Counties as a requirement in their inspection departments.

Caltrans personnel changes and promotions:

Sergio Aceves has been promoted to Caltrans Division Chief of Maintenance, one of the most high profile jobs in the department. The recent CA budget allocates more than \$2 Billion for Caltrans Division of Maintenance. This Division has 1/3rd of the 21,000 Caltrans employees. Sergio has supported the Caltrans policy of Long-Life pavements, such as the present I-5 project, and was instrumental in securing the SB-1 additional transportation funding for the State.

Others promoted in Caltrans in the last two years are; Tim Greutert (Materials Engineering & Testing Services), Ray Hopkins (Division of Construction), Tom Ostrom (head of Engineering Service Center), and Mike Keever (Deputy Director for Project Delivery-Chief Engineer).

Greetings to all. Stay safe and stay healthy!
Bob Humer