

David Dash

ASCP Honorary Membership – 25 August 2014

Citation

ASCP today also recognises another highly regarded and highly competent pavements engineer.

He would be most widely recognised for his constant striving for technical excellence – in the workplace, at technical meetings and seminars, and even in his recreation where he was well known for hobbling into work with cracked bones and frostbitten toes.

He now shares his expertise in concrete pavements in a consulting role with clients both in Australia and overseas.

He commenced his career in the mid 60s with the Department of Main Roads in country offices at Grafton, Port Macquarie and Bega. He also spent some time in bridge design and as Resident Engineer on the new Telegraph Point Bridge on the Pacific Highway.

He was Supervising Engineer at Blacktown Divisional office in 1984/5, and Divisional Engineer at Goulburn.

In the period from 1985 to 1988, he was Superintendent on all contracts during major construction work on the Hume and Federal Highways, including all major concrete pavement works. This was the very busy period of the Australian Bicentennial Road Development Program during which a lot of pioneering took place and many lessons were learned. He was conspicuous on many fronts that contributed to setting up the concrete pavement industry to where it is today.

Following that, until 1993 he was manager off Major Projects, Northern Region. This included all works on the F3, and other projects on Pacific Highway. On the F3 one of many challenges was constructing concrete pavements through some cuttings that exposed coal seams and close to active mining areas. Over 20 years later and by and large these pavements continue to perform well.

His real strength was in his search for technical excellence. Whilst DMR/RTA specifications were written to meet minimum requirements, we all realise that in the real world, these minimum requirements are not always practicable and do not necessarily result in the best long term product. He was, and still is, a master at understanding the engineering principles, particularly in the area of concrete pavements. As we all know, quality comes at a price but he was always well aware of his responsibilities towards the taxpayer and contractors were always expected to "do the right thing".

In this area, it was not uncommon to see serious hard-fought negotiations taking place and contract variations to concrete mix designs to improve workability of mixes, reduce the construction risks and provide certainty of long term value for money to the taxpayer.

Following his departure from Newcastle, he became the RTA's General manager pavements, based in Sydney. In this role he was instrumental in documenting a number of typical cross-sections for both rigid and flexible pavements for use as guides to designers, both in-house and out-sourced and these are still in use today.

In recent years he has also become very prominent in keeping concrete mix design methods up to date and he has been closely involved with adapting the Shilstone method to local practice for combined aggregate gradings which is now widely and successfully used in practice.

It is without question that he has made outstanding contributions to the concrete pavement industry in Australia, over a long period as demonstrated by contributions to design, construction, research, leadership, advocacy, and as such is worthy of Honorary Membership of ASCP.

I am of course referring to David Dash