

A section of road after PR21L has been applied.



ACHIEVING ACCREDITATION

GAINING CERTIFICATION UNDER ARRB'S TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE PRODUCT EVALUATION SCHEME (TIPES) HAS HELPED AUSTRALIAN MANUFACTURER POLYROAD OVERCOME SOME SIGNIFICANT ROADBLOCKS.

For more than 20 years, Polyroad has produced and supplied its flagship synthetic insoluble binder across Australia.

Polyroad PR21L is designed to resist water ingress. It achieves this through a process of internal waterproofing of fine-grained particles by incorporating a synthetic, insoluble dry powdered polymer stabilisation binder.

"Using PR21L, a road will end up being a flexible, modified pavement," says Stefan

Maslak, Polyroad National Business Manager.

The product gives the road flexibility and stability, which helps to prevent potholes.

"Roads and Maritime Services in New South Wales were one of our first customers and they are still using it today," adds Mr. Maslak. "That, to us, speaks volumes that we have such a long-term relationship with a road agency."

While PR21L has long been established in Australia, Mr. Maslak says the company was looking for a means of achieving a

higher accreditation for its product. "We were asking the state road agencies how to get a product evaluated, what kind of product they wanted and what they would use," he says.

The fact each state road agency has its own evaluation processes or procedures for approving the use of products in its territory has made it difficult for PR21L to be used widely in each state.

The problem was the lack of an existing accreditation process that worked on

a national scale. "What we find in the industry as a manufacturer is that each state has got its own different standards – what applies in Western Australia may not happen in Queensland," says Mr. Maslak.

He explains that it's quite challenging for a manufacturer to work in each state with different standards and guidelines for certification. "There's nothing else for different pavement product accreditation. This was the barrier we were looking to break down," he says. "We wanted something national and consistent."

During his discussions with the various road agencies Mr. Maslak met with Jothi Ramanujam, Queensland Transport and Main Roads (QTMR) Director of Pavements Rehabilitation. Mr. Ramanujam informed him that a national product accreditation scheme was in development and would be available soon. This initiative was TIPES.

Launched in 2014, administered by ARRB and originally developed by QTMR, TIPES aims to provide an independent, fit-for-purpose assessment of innovative road construction products.

Using TIPES would allow innovative products in the road and civil construction industries to gain market acceptance through a single, comprehensive evaluation process. The scheme is open to anything from non-traditional stabilisers, such as

"THE TIPES APPROVAL IS GIVING COUNCILS AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR THE CONFIDENCE TO USE POLYROAD, KNOWING THAT IT'S BEEN TESTED BY AN INDEPENDENT AUTHORITY – ARRB."

PR21L, ultra-thin surfacing products, line-marking, drainage systems, traffic controls and even intelligent transport systems.

TIPES, in theory, alleviates uncertainty, ensures consistency, shares learnings and offers potential savings for road agencies, local government and private developments when deciding to invest in a new technology or product.

The scheme is part of an incentive to create more harmonisation within the Australian road industry which, in part,

helps manufacturers such as Polyroad to supply their products nationwide.

"We were the first ones they sent the TIPES documents to and the first ones who applied," says Mr. Maslak. "It's something we felt we had to do." It took Polyroad between four and six weeks to prepare the information for the TIPES application, which was presented to ARRB in February 2014.

The TIPES accreditation includes the application itself, a laboratory assessment, a field performance of the product and registration of technical opinion, all of which are overseen by a panel of industry experts.

The entire process required close collaboration between Polyroad and ARRB, with the two parties coordinating testing sites for the product and conducting the appropriate assessments, or, as Mr. Maslak puts it "making sure the product can do what it says on the tin".

PR21L was the first product to go through the TIPES evaluation, which resulted in a lengthy assessment process. Final certification was awarded in December 2015. Mr. Maslak is ecstatic at PR21L receiving TIPES certification as it presents a variety of opportunities for the future. "The good thing is that all the state road agencies know about TIPES. ARRB has done a good job," he says. "The TIPES approval is

now giving councils and the private sector the confidence to use Polyroad, knowing that it's been tested by an independent authority – ARRB."

Mr. Maslak says that prior to achieving TIPES accreditation, a number of state road agencies were interested in utilising PR21L once the product had its certification. The Northern Territory Government is also looking at trialling the binder following the successful certification.

"We've also got some irons in the fire overseas," says Mr. Maslak. PR21L is currently being used in the United Kingdom, Finland, Russia, Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei.

Polyroad is the first company to undergo the TIPES process and achieve accreditation, and Mr. Maslak is confident they won't be the last either. ■



Stefan Maslak.



PR21L is the first product to achieve certification under ARRB's TIPES incentive.