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MPA Asphalt - “Making Warm the Norm”

The adoption of Warm Mix Asphalts (WMAs) in highway construction and maintenance enables a practical means to reduce carbon emissions and contribute to Local Authorities meeting their climate change targets.

As well as the potential for 61kT annual carbon savings nationally through warm mix adoption, as identified in the 2019 APPG report¹ there are many other benefits associated with the use of WMAs, including:

- Improvements to site Health & Safety, air quality and environment for the workforce and public;
- Reduced road user disruption through earlier road opening and / or shorter programme durations;
- Potential plant, labour and traffic management cost savings;

all with no compromise on product quality.

Switching to WMAs by default, would also allow suppliers to transition to ‘Warm Mix Only’ plants. This would help to minimise production and carbon inefficiencies associated with ‘stop/start’ production, associated with swapping between hot and warm mix materials for different clients, which can inadvertently increase overall plant carbon emissions.

Importantly, the revision to the Specification for Highways Works (SHW), issued in August 2021 by National Highways, removed the need to apply for a Departure from Standard, allowing the supply of Warm Mix Asphalts routinely to all National Highways sites. National Highways are now moving to a warm mix default approach through SHW Clause 908.

Given the need for all sectors to reduce their carbon impacts, collectively we have a responsibility to take action where we can. The use of Warm Mix Asphalts represents an opportunity for those in Highways to make a difference. This is why we are continuing to encourage Local Highway Authorities to join National Highways’ approach and move to the default specification of WMAs through their contractors and suppliers.

The MPA and its Members fully support, and have helped drive, the adoption of Warm Mix Asphalts and is ready to support local highways clients to embrace this opportunity on the journey to Net Zero Carbon.

For further information, please contact mpaasphalt@minearlproducts.org

¹ All Party Parliamentary Group on Highways 2019 report Working for Better Roads - Warm Mix Asphalt reducing carbon emissions and improving efficiencies