

# Frequently Asked Questions for the Regional Asphalt Meetings

## Part A – Job Mix Related

1. When a change in stone source occurs, how will that be handled?

*When a change in source occurs, the contractor will submit the new mix design and TL-127 for approval. The mix will be assigned a new number and the contractor will be placed on limited production.*

2. How is the family of mixes handled when stone sources change due to differences in traffic levels?

*This is a unique situation and not present across the state. The contractor and the district should decide on the most appropriate approach. Each family of mixes will be assigned different numbers.*

3. Is a PG 88 a conservative value for RAP in the high RAP binder calculation?

*Based on the testing performed by VDOT and independent labs, this is a conservative value.*

4. For high RAP “D” mixes, will a separate design be required for each liquid source?

*As long as the AC content, aggregate gradations and RAP percentages are the same for all liquid sources, then only one TL-127 is required. The TL-127 should list the sources and the true PG high temperature values. The mix will be approved based on the lowest PG temperature. A separate design will only be required if the aggregate gradations and RAP percentage changes.*

5. Will a contractor be placed on limited production when the only change is the liquid source?

*The contractor will not be placed on limited production for a change in liquid source only. Changes that include aggregate/RAP percentages may require limited production.*

6. If VDOT does not assign a new job mix number until the TL-127 is submitted, how can the contractor switch mixes during production without the new number?

*This situation should only occur when stone sources change or when a softer liquid than what is approved is used for high RAP mixes. For stone sources, it will be the contractor’s responsibility to notify the department as soon as possible so a Part A approval and job mix number can be received. For liquid changes, the contractor can revert to a PG 70-22 with the same RAP percentage until a new mix design can be reviewed and approved.*

7. Can contractors still use private work for mix approval instead of the 500 ton limited production?

*The sampling and testing of private work for mix approval will be district resource dependent. VDOT must be present for the sampling at the plant and testing in the field.*

*The district materials engineer should be contacted to assess the availability of personnel.*

8. Can private work be included in the lots of Material?

*No, only material provided to VDOT projects will be included.*

9. For the TL-127, should the 4 or 8 sample tolerance be included?

*Until the special provisions are approved, the TL-127 should show the 4 test tolerance. Once approved, the mix designs will be changed to show the 8 test tolerance.*

#### Part B – Warm Mix Asphalt Related

1. What is the long-term performance of WMA?

*WMA has been in use in Europe for over 10 years. The mixes have used additives and not the foaming process. Overall the performance has been good. VDOT and other state transportation agencies have begun monitoring the long-term performance compared to conventional mixes.*

2. How does WMA benefit VDOT and the Contractor?

*VDOT may benefit in several ways. First, with the reduction in mixing temperature, the liquid binder is aged less and thus provides longer fatigue life. Second, with the ability to compact the mix at lower temperatures, contractors will be able to haul further distances and possibly increase competition in some areas. Third, with competition for projects, VDOT should see a lower material cost. As for the contractor, they will be able to pave longer into the season. They will be able to pave in cooler temperatures. They will be able to reduce the mixing temperature at the plant and save on fuel costs. Finally, they will be able to improve their cost competitiveness.*

3. Is there a difference in compactive effort between foamed and additive WMA?

*The compactive effort is a function of the process, mix and placement temperature. We have not done a formal or informal study on this topic. The compactive effort for WMA is equal to or slightly less than HMA.*

4. Do warm mix designs constitute a separate family of mixes?

*No and Yes. For foamed systems, the mix design does not change and can be incorporated into any of the families of mix designs. For additive systems, a new job mix number is needed as well as an approved companion mix without the additive. This would be a separate family due to the additive, but associated with an approved family.*

5. Is the nomograph (Table III-2) applied to WMA?

*No, the cooling rate for WMA is different than HMA. The only temperature requirement for WMA is the 40°F base temperature.*

#### Part C – General Specification and Implementation Related

1. How and when will the new specifications be implemented and effective?

*For the Blueprint related changes, they first must receive approval from FHWA. Once approved, no cost work orders will be executed for on-going existing contracts. No cost*

*work orders will be issued for existing contracts that have not started work. Finally, they will become part of the contracts package for new advertisements. Therefore, the actual effective date will vary from contract to contract. FHWA approval is anticipated by Mid-April.*

2. In the new milling special provision, what is defined as a pass? How is the 0" to 2" depth handled?

*A pass is defined as the milling machine crossing a single point one time. If the milling machine crosses the point twice to remove material, then it is two passes. For projects with the new milling special provision, the contractor will provide a square yard cost to remove a specified depth of material. Depths will be between 0" and 2", and 2" and 4". If the contract specified depth is 2" or less, then VDOT can change the milling depth to remove scabbed material. However, if VDOT changes the depth to exceed 2", this will constitute a changed condition and work order.*

3. How will change orders be handled?

*Change orders will be handled through the Scheduling and Contracts Division with guidance and language provided to the District Construction Engineers.*

4. For the bonded weigh program, will the contractor still be required to have a bond and certified bonded weigh person?

*The contractor will still be required to have a certified bonded weigh person and maintain the required bonding.*

5. Will VDOT continue to require twice a year scale certification? Who maintains the list of scale certification vendors?

*VDOT will continue to require scale certification every six months. This can be done by a private entity or by Weights and Measures. The scales are required to be inspected twice per year. A producer may use an OPIS/VDACS (Weights and Measures) inspection as one of the required inspections however it is the producer's responsibility to obtain the service of a private scale company when OPIS resources are not available.*

6. Will VDOT sign individual shipping tickets?

*No changes have been made for this requirement. The only change to shipping tickets will be the elimination of the requirement to deduct overweight material from the TL-102.*

7. Of the changes outlined, which will be retroactive for existing contracts and which will only be included in new contracts?

*Blueprint related changes will be incorporated in existing contracts and included in new contracts.*

8. For new overlays/surfaces, will all rumble strips not be tacked/fog sealed or only centerline rumble strips?

*Only the centerline rumble strips will not be tacked/fog sealed. The rumble strips on the shoulders will be tacked.*

Part D – Field Related

1. Will the contractor be required to bulk the VST cores?

*No, but the contractor will be allowed to bulk the cores for information purposes only. The results from these cores cannot be used in the contractor's acceptance program.*

2. How many cores will the contractor have to take for VDOT?

*Approximately 2 cores every 25,000 linear feet of paving per lift. The exact number of cores will vary based on the size the project, the contractors QC lots, etc.*

3. How will the VST cores be handled and transported by VDOT to ensure they are not damaged?

*Many districts use coolers or other storage containers to handle and transport cores. District Materials will provide guidance to the inspectors when Materials cannot be present for the cutting of cores. The contractor is encouraged to bulk the cores prior to giving the cores to VDOT. The contractor's results will serve as a check when VDOT performs the verification testing. A large discrepancy in results may indicate damage during transport.*

4. Can the contractor cut a companion core/plug to the VST core/plug?

*Yes they can. However, the core density cannot be used in the acceptance decision process. The contractor must use the results from their random sampling sites.*

5. If the contractor elects to use cores/plugs for acceptance, are we expecting them to core the longitudinal joints for monitoring?

*No, we want to limit the number of cores in the mat. VDOT expects contractors to continue using nuclear gauges for acceptance testing. If the non-nuclear gauge is approved for monitoring or acceptance testing, then these gauges will be used for joint density monitoring.*

6. For tack application rates, what is the proper way to ensure it is correct?

*The correct way is to assess the uniformity of the application visually. Additionally, compute the application rate over a given width and distance based on the gallons used. Together, these two steps will ensure if the tacking application is correct.*

7. If the contractor switches from the high RAP "A" to high RAP "D" mix or vice versa, do they need to cut 6 cores from the initial control strip?

*If the contractor starts with a SM-9.5 or 12.5 A "high RAP" and achieves 92.5% compaction or greater, then only 2 cores will be necessary for subsequent control strips whether the mix is used as an A or D. If the contractor starts with a SM-9.5 or 12.5D "high RAP" and achieves between 92.2% and 92.4%, then 6 cores will be required from the initial control strip for the A mix approval to ensure 92.5% can be achieved.*

8. For VST, if the cores/plugs are not cut in the designated lot, will the contractor have to establish a lane closure to obtain those cores/plugs?

*Every effort will be made to obtain the cores from the identified lot. However, if this does not occur and additional lots of material are being placed, then two random cores will be*

*obtained from the current lot. If no additional lots are available, then the District Materials Engineer must assess if more cores are necessary and what steps should be taken.*

9. How is the VST lot defined – 5,000 feet or day’s production? How will the VST lot match with the acceptance/QC lot?

*VDOT’s will use 5,000 feet to estimate the number of lots on a project or schedule. This estimation will be used by the District Materials Engineer to monitor production and sampling needs. When possible, the VDOT VST cores/plugs will be obtained in the same limits as the QC acceptance lot. As such, not all VDOT lots will be 5,000 feet in length. The goal of the QA program is to monitor 20% of the estimated VST lots; the actual percentage will vary based on the number of QC lots and QC lots size.*

10. What is defined as a paver pass for lot definition?

*A pass of 6 feet or greater is defined as a paver pass.*

11. Is tacking required between layers?

*Tacking is required per specification in 315.05(b).*

12. With the busyness of the summer paving season, should VDOT use a professional services contract to cut the cores/plugs for the VST?

*With the reductions in VDOT staff, every activity was examined to determine what had to be performed and who could/should do it. Since contractors QC density technicians have the equipment to perform the coring/sawing, this approach was selected. To ensure the cores/plugs are obtained when needed, District Materials will have to be present or the project inspector. When the Materials personnel cannot be present, communication with project staff will be vital.*

13. Will VST cores be weighed in the field or in the lab by VDOT?

*VDOT will weigh the cores in the VDOT lab.*

#### Part E – General Questions

1. With the increased use of RAP in mixes, why are the stockpiles growing and not decreasing?

*Even with the increased allowances in RAP percentages, RAP piles are growing due to the increased milling. Only 30% to 35% of the new mix can be RAP. Therefore, 65% to 70% of the milled material does not get used. Also, with limited construction projects – public and private, higher limits of RAP in base mix are not being used. Finally, RAP is not being landfilled but remains in the pavement cycle.*

2. How is lab and field QA programs administered for Local Assistance projects?

*The VDOT Materials Division will be reviewing the QA programs for Local Assistance once this process is completed. QA is required on Local Assistance projects using Federal Aid on the National Highway System. The locality must follow VDOT’s approved process or present an alternative approach to FHWA for approval.*

3. For the Materials Certification Program, who from the contractor's company is allowed to proctor the practical/proficiency exams?

*Only those individuals who are certified and qualified to proctor the exams are eligible. VDOT will review the nominated individuals and make the final decision.*

4. If a certified technician is found to be incompetent, what steps will be taken by VDOT?

*For individuals found to be unable to perform the testing for which they are certified, their certification can be revoked. Additionally, the person who issued their certification will be examined and a determination will be made if their certification should be revoked.*