

Pay now to save more later on a litre of repair

Quotes for concrete repair projects today mostly comprise:

- A "lump sum" with an allowance for volume of repair in litres, or
- A *Schedule of Rates* with a volume estimate and a per litre rate.

Either way, the \$64 question is: **how many litres make a repair?**

1 L of repair?

Firstly, what is in a litre of repair?

$1 \text{ m}^3 = 1000 \text{ L}$ or $1 \text{ L} = 0.001 \text{ m}^3$.

For a 50 mm deep repair (breakout behind reinforcement), $1 \text{ L} = 50 \times 50 \times 400 \text{ mm}$ or $0.001 \text{ m}^3 =$ a 70x70x200 mm milk carton.

Note that a litre of repair includes jack-hammering out the concrete, preparing all concrete and steel surfaces and reinstating the concrete with special repair materials.

Clearly *not* an easy call!

\$\$ for the unknown

And the fact is, if you get a lump sum price with an allowed quantity or volume of repair, **you'll have to pay for the size of the actual job once the extent is known.**

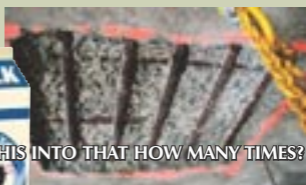
It is unfair to ask a contractor to pay for a job that hasn't been well enough surveyed.

So survey!

As part of a detailed survey, a consultant will identify the deterioration mechanism and make an estimate of quantity of repairs.

A more detailed inspection yields more information, yielding more certainty, yielding a better budget estimate, yielding a more realistic project cost, yielding fewer arguments down the track!

Now, you can obtain an estimate from just about any-



where. But how accurate will that be? And once you've all agreed to pay a certain cost for a repair job, **what if the estimate is incorrect?**

ACRA members are expected, by virtue of their expertise, to provide a realistic cost estimate to undertake the works. If an ACRA contractor member feels he can't give you a realistic estimate without the help of a consultant, then he will refer you to one.

A budget estimate is just that: an estimate. Even though a consultant or contractor can give you a cost estimate, **this estimate will only be as good as the information on which it is based.**

If the project is simple, then not much information is needed to give a good estimate. **But if the project is larger or more complicated, then more money should be spent up front assessing the structure and coming up with a budget estimation.**

Saving you...

- At project stage by minimising variations and the possibility of a blow-out in quantities
- In the mid-term through failure of repairs or materials
- In the long-term by minimising long-term repairs and reducing maintenance costs.

At whose risk?

Who pays if you get the litres wrong? Read next issue's column for the answer.

Meanwhile review ACRA's *Standard Method of Measurement*, which is the basis of a good quote. **Download it free from www.acrassoc.com.au/PDFs/SMM.pdf.** ■