

Facelift can extend life as well as boost appeal

2006 saw ACRA make some big changes to its image and services.

ACRA's new corporate livery has already been unveiled, the revised *Guide to Concrete Repair* is now available (order from the website) and ACRA has strengthened ties with Australian Corrosion Association and the Concrete Institute.

Web resources

The big project for the first quarter of 2007 is the new website, which will be a conduit to our members and their services in the diagnosis and repair of concrete structures; also providing useful advice and links.

One of these is ACRA's *SMM (Standard Method of Measurement)* downloadable free from the site.

New lease on life

Just as an image upgrade can work wonders for corporate entities like ACRA, so it can for buildings; although it is an all too often forgotten value-added opportunity to be embraced when other more pressing work is planned.

Not that a face-lift isn't justifiable in its own right.

Many buildings constructed in the 70s and 80s relied on exposed aggregate finishes or plain off-form or precast concrete finishes for architectural effect.

Thirty years on from an era when glass and aluminium curtain wall construction dominated, these facades have lost their appeal.

Hi-tech coatings

Some of these concrete facades are also suffering from concrete deterioration problems, which often leads ACRA consultants to recommend a "protective coating" or "anti-carbonation coating".



FACELIFT GAINS LIFE AND LOOKS

Super paint

These engineered coatings are more than a coat of paint; they are engineered to halt or resist the ingress of contaminants such as chloride ions and carbon dioxide, which can eventually cause reinforcement corrosion in concrete and associated spalling of concrete.

Unlike normal off-the-shelf paints, which don't offer this protection, the use of these engineered coatings ultimately boosts the durability of the concrete, minimising the on-going cost of repairs and the disruption they entail; especially important in coastal regions.

Two-way gain

Application of such coatings also offers the opportunity to change the colour of the building, or of specific building elements.

The architect's eye can create a colour scheme that re-positions the building in the commercial rental market. The colour schemes can be simple and effective also, like painting a brown exposed aggregate facade matt white.

Fix mustn't mar

And of course, make sure the concrete repairs are done properly, else the nicely painted facade might exhibit some unsightly rust staining or concrete spalling sooner rather than later.

If in doubt, call upon an ACRA member to ensure fixes are right for the job and done right. ■