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Editorial comment

DESPITE THE CONSIDERABLE VOLUME of research into the behaviour and design of bridge decks in the past, the demands of the motor-car, particularly in urban environments, continue and will continue to pose new problems requiring extensive study. A measure of the magnitude of the problem may be obtained from the stated requirement of £150 million expenditure per annum in the 1970s for the construction of urban motorways. Already we have evidence of the types of construction involved, in the Mancunian Way and the Western Avenue Extension. Design problems associated with these structures were solved with the aid of model testing and computers. However, there was obviously a need for a more fundamental study of what may be termed elevated roads, to provide accurate and simple design procedures.

With this end in mind, a comprehensive research programme was submitted to CIRIA and, it is believed for the first time, this is being implemented by a research organization in industry and two universities acting in the closest collaboration; these are the Cement and Concrete Association and the City and Dundee Universities. The principal aims of the programme are to provide experimental data on the appropriate flexural and torsional stiffnesses of practical forms of construction, to make an assessment of the available methods of analysis for one particular form of construction, namely the hollow-box spine-beam type, and to recommend appropriate design procedures.

In addition to this programme, much analytical research is being carried out, or is being sponsored, by the Ministry of Transport and the Road Research Laboratory. Detailed design studies are being made by these bodies to compare the relative design and construction costs and the over-all economy of various solutions to specific problems.

Against this background of research and development work, it was most appropriate that a code of practice committee should be set up with the brief to produce a bridge design code for both steel and concrete. This committee, under the chairmanship of Dr O. A. Kerensky, began its work in 1968 and has agreed to base the code on limit-state principles. Hence it should be consistent, and compatible, with the draft Unified Code for the Structural Use of Concrete now issued for comment. It is to be hoped

that the current research and development work will be presented in a form to the code committee suitable for assessment and, if it is approved, incorporation in the code.

The Council of the Sand and Gravel Association of Great Britain decided recently that the cost of maintaining its joint research teams should no longer be met from the general funds of the Association. If the teams were to be continued, they would have to be financed by direct support from the industry. Financial provision has been guaranteed for the team at the Road Research Laboratory, working on the classification of aggregates and on sub-bases, to continue for a further two years. No such funds have become available to continue the team stationed at the Cement and Concrete Association and therefore this team has been closed down on completion of its programme of work on marine aggregates.

All the manufacturers of lightweight aggregate in Great Britain are represented in the membership of the recently formed Association of Lightweight Aggregate Manufacturers. The objects of the Association are: to promote, to encourage and generally to protect the mutual interests of member companies; to represent the industry in dealings with official bodies; to maintain contact with foreign associations of like nature. Enquiries regarding the availability of lightweight aggregates, their structural and other properties, and all other relevant matters are welcomed. The first Chairman is N. R. Sharpe of Lytag Ltd; the Vice-Chairman and Secretary is E. R. R. Mengham of Leca (G.B.) Ltd; the address is 14 Lower Regent Street, London SW1 (telephone 01-839 2525).

The publishing assets of Concrete Publications Limited, which was previously a wholly owned subsidiary of The Associated Portland Cement Manufacturers Limited, have now been transferred to the Cement and Concrete Association, and the company itself has been wound up. The monthly journal *Concrete*, *The Concrete Year Book* and other books and periodicals previously published by Concrete Publications Limited will henceforth be published by the Cement and Concrete Association.