

Simply Better (an elevated premium spec)

This spec needs only 3 elements to make it effective.

1. Define “surface” as the measured distance between the top of the binder and the top of the upper aggregates in the predominant surrounding pavement. For this to be effective, the words scar, and damage, and other words need treated as well.
2. Carefully limit potential uses for this elevated spec as a premium solution for a limited genre of high-profile projects or parts of a project. An example of high-profile parts for a project could be transition markings at the ends of a changed traffic pattern, or permanently conflicting lines such as are created by adding a turn lane without re-paving, or on high-profile streets earmarked for exceptional beautification, tourism center, or unusual traffic patterns.
3. Our 3 charts illustrate the relationship of surface elements and the adjusted value of those elements where older pavements offer less durability; but the best is still needed. The 3 charts are provided under the article, “The Missing Metric”.

A Layman’s use of “surface” would simply be the highest plane of the pavement. The difference between expectations and fulfillment rests entirely upon the application of this definition and its intentional replacing of the layman’s use of the word “surface”. This simple misunderstanding has dampened the satisfaction of hundred, even thousands, of stakeholders.

A carefully defined target promotes accuracy that a broad target cannot cause or prevent. By narrowing the target, even the unskilled and poorly equipped will engage with the goal and will, in fact, **meet much more of the goal** simply by aiming at a narrowed target.

The Pareto Principle, aka the 80/20 principle, asserts that 20% of the effort returns 80% of the benefits. The simplicity of defining a narrower target should provide 80% of the improvement desired.

Aircraft Engineer Kelly Johnson is associated with using the term, “KISS”, which is today known as the KISS Principle. Now has other forms such as “Keep it simple sailor” or “Keep it super simple.” A simple spec need only a few definitions to make it much more effective.

Whereas the current spec may look short and simple, it is lacking two key definitions. The current spec is ambiguous, not simple. A simple definition of the two terms “Damage” and “Surface”, provides a clear target.

State DOT's have the chance to lead America in this as well as leading the Aviation industry by equipping Heavy and Highway personnel to bring the same accuracy to bear on the airfield pavements they encounter now and then. The FAA currently has a more elaborately written spec yet it too fails to address the key weakness of a written spec by not defining "Damage" and "Surface", and by not providing a metric based upon surrounding virgin pavement surfaces.

State DOT's can lead a valuable change in the transportation industry by addressing these two words in a simple spec. (See the "Surface Erosion Chart".