NTPEP Geosynthetics Panel
April 11, 2008, 1:30 p.m., Conference Call Minutes

Participants: Keith Platte (AASHTO), Joe Dorsey (AASHTO), Henry Lacinak (AASHTO), Tony Allen (WSDOT), John Remmers (NYDOT), Jim Curtis (NYDOT), Peter Kemp (WIDOT), Dan Sajedi (MDDOT), Bill Hawkins (Fiberweb), Andrew Aho (GMA), Steve Bowlds (Fiberweb), and Frank Hollowell (Fiberweb)

1. Proposed geotextile program work plan revisions

Proposed geotextile work plan revisions were discussed. Regarding the title, it was requested to replace “geosynthetic” with “geotextile”, as only geotextiles are addressed in this work plan. This also applies to the web pages that address this panel’s activities. Henry Lacinak will discuss changes needed to the website separately.

In the 2nd paragraph of the first page of the work plan, the sentence “if used for quality assurance, a letter of certification indicating the tests conducted by NTPEP may be required by member departments” was pointed out by Bill Hawkins as not being quite correct. Bill will submit a correction to Tony Allen to consider.

Regarding the definition of MARV and MaxARV, the definition should just cite ASTM D4439 (i.e., in work plan, 1st page, cross out addition to 1st sentence and replace with per ASTM D4439). Tony Allen will gather any additional comments from the panel regarding the work plan and provide an updated work plan to the panel before the NTPEP meeting, provided those comments are received by April 21st. Some updating of the General Procedures for this testing program may also need updating due to the work plan changes – Tony Allen will look at that document to see what changes may be needed.

   a. Require foreign submissions to be tested at point of manufacture and at US distribution center (if no US distribution center, then what do we do?)

Regarding data requirements for initial product acceptance (by the way, this should be initial product qualification, as product acceptance implies product approval, which NTPEP does not do – this was not specifically discussed in the conference call, but will be discussed at the NTPEP meeting), Tony Allen suggested adding a bullet to require foreign submissions to submit MARV’s based on ASTM standards, and certify that they will meet that requirement for products shipped to the US.

In general, the participants agreed that testing should be conducted on material arriving in the US.

   b. New NTPEP QA testing program (required when…..)

The bullets added in the section “Quality Assurance Requirements for Products …” regarding situations where QA testing would be conducted were discussed. Both DOT and industry members present agreed that the need for QA testing in those situation cited was reasonable. Tony Allen recommended that another bullet be added as follows: “the same product is manufactured at multiple plants
or on multiple production lines, requiring QA tests on samples obtained at the other plants or production lines.”

The question was raised regarding what should be done if the QA test produces a result that does not meet the product MARV or MaxARV. It was suggested that a retest be allowed (typically would test two samples). The General Procedures for the NTPEP Geotextile Program generally cover the process to follow regarding retesting, though some modifications may be needed to address the QA retests.

The issue of testing volume and the ability of NYDOT to meet testing cycle schedules if QA testing is added. In general, it was felt that QA testing would not be required nearly as frequently as is done for product qualification. But this may need to be reevaluated in the future once the additional testing volume becomes more clear.

Another key issue raised regarding the geotextile work plan is that it currently does not address UV stability, yet AASHTO M288 requires the UV stability test (AASTM D4355) to be run and that the product meet certain minimum requirements regarding the test values. There was some discussion regarding the need for this testing, and how important it is. It was pointed out that manufacturers do not do enough UV stability testing to develop a MARV for their products. Since UV testing is rather expensive and time consuming, doing this test on all geotextiles submitted may not be practical. NYDOT is not sure that they can run this test, but they will find out before the NTPEP meeting. Alternatively, NYDOT can split the sample and have another lab do the UV testing. Since the test is time consuming and expensive, Tony Allen suggested that it may be necessary to bring in the product line concept used for soil reinforcement and apply it to geotextiles for this test only, testing the lightest weight product in the line. Due to the complexities and implications of doing this test, this issue needs to be further discussed at the NTPEP meeting.

2. Proposed geotextile PEF revisions

The proposed revisions were general acceptable to the participants. Some minor revisions were proposed and will be incorporated in the draft PEF discussed at the NTPEP meeting.

3. Handling private label products

It was discussed that more detailed certification will be required, and that it would have to be tracked better than done in the past. No additional comments were made by the group.

4. Proposed DataMine revisions

The participants had no comments on what has already been proposed for changes to DataMine.

5. Proposal from Taiwan university lab to do reinforcement testing as an additional NTPEP test lab

Andrew Aho mentioned that the geosynthetics industry had some serious concerns about allowing a foreign lab to do testing for a US based program. Joe Dorsey also mentioned
that AASHTO was also not thrilled with the proposal, but that this should be discussed in more detail at the NTPEP meeting.

6. Other issues?

Timeliness of completing geosynthetic testing and publishing the results was discussed. Joe Dorsey mentioned that they are taking steps to improve the situation, including development of a spreadsheet to better track when submittals come in and the testing is completed and reported out. The NTPEP staff will be making brief presentations on this at the panel meetings (now called technical committees). Joe will send out the draft spreadsheet to us so that we can comment on its adequacy before the meeting.

Conference call adjourned at 3:00 p.m. Eastern time.