

Pavement Condition Information Systems Support Contract	
Condition of unclassified roads PCMG 13/09.	
PCMG meeting date	2 nd June 2009
Version number	v0.2 (02/06/2009)
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Approved by	

Condition of unclassified roads (PCMG 13/09)

Introduction

- 1) As chair of the CSS Engineering Committee, Matthew Lugg wrote to local highway authorities in England on 28th November 2008, inviting them to contribute to an initiative to maintain consistent reporting of the condition of unclassified roads in England.
- 2) TRL offered to assist the CSS gather the results each year, and has been receiving information from English local highway authorities. This note summarises the present position.

Issues for discussion and decision

How does the PCMG recommend the results from monitoring the condition of unclassified road carriageways should be used?

How does the DfT intend to use the results in the Road Condition England report?

What further analysis is required?

Information requested

- 3) In summary, the requirement is to use the most recent UKPMS CVI survey results (or UKPMS DVI survey converted to CVI defects) gathered within the last four years, covering the whole of the unclassified road network, with at least 25% of the network resurveyed each year. The results are processed in a UKPMS accredited pavement management system using the variable merge method to calculate the percentage length of the carriageway which exceeds one or more of the following thresholds:
 - Structural Condition Index ≥ 85
 - Wearing Course Condition Index ≥ 60
 - Edge Condition Index ≥ 50
- 4) The condition indicator is reported to the nearest 1% (of carriageway length).

Progress

- 5) The response data are summarised in Table 1.
- So far 118 authorities (out of 149) have responded to the original letter and subsequent requests for information.
 - 74 local authorities have provided the information requested.
 - 36 local authorities have agreed to provide the information, but have not yet completed surveying (or data processing) to be able to report the result.
 - 8 authorities will not be able to provide the information. Six of them have simply stopped surveying unclassified roads, as it is no longer a national requirement. One is only carrying out targeted surveys, and another is only using SCANNER type surveys on some unclassified roads.
 - 31 authorities have not yet responded.

Table 1 Unclassified road response data at 28th May 2009

Description	Number of LA's	Length of Unclassified Roads (km)	Percentage by LA	Percentage by Length
No Response	31	17920	20.81%	9.85%
Responded	118	164032	79.19%	90.15%
Provided PI	74	108053	49.66%	59.39%
Will Provide PI	36	47746	24.16%	26.24%
Not producing PI	8	8232	5.37%	4.52%
Total	149	181953		

Analysis

- 6) The average score is 13.43%
- 7) The length weighted average score is 14.57%
- 8) The 74 results received so far have been analysed into quartiles, and the range is summarised below:

Quartile	Maximum	Upper Q	Median	Lower Q	Minimum
Score	56%	18%	11%	8%	0.17%

- 9) Figure 1 shows the values plotted against the percentage of the unclassified road network which is speed restricted (i.e. urban roads). Most of the values lie in a range from just above zero to under 30%, but

there is one outlier at 56% (i.e. over half the length of the road network is judged to be defective).

- 10) Figure 2 shows the values reported in 2008 (when BV224b was a national indicator) compared with the values reported so far. Some have not changed (and there is a possibility that some local authorities may have responded to the request for information with the 2008 results, rather than the 2009 results).
- 11) Some have changed by rather a large amount (in ways that are not easy to rationalise) but we have not challenged the values, or attempted any sort of investigation or quality control over the data supplied.
- 12) Figure 3 shows how the average condition of unclassified roads appears to have changed over the period 2002 to 2009. There was incomplete coverage of surveys in 2001/02, so the data for 2002 (and to a lesser extent 2003) are incomplete, as they are for 2009. There were also changes in the method of analysis and of reporting over the years, which will have affected the results. However, the overall impression is that the condition of unclassified roads has been gradually improving over the past seven years.

Further work

- 13) TRL will continue to attempt to contact those authorities that have not responded, and to chase those that have expressed willingness but have not yet provided data, in order to increase the coverage.
- 14) Informal discussion has suggested that more authorities have already given up routine CVI surveys than the eight we have identified so far.
- 15) Informal discussion has also suggested that more authorities may decide to drop routine CVI surveys in future years for a number of reasons:
 - Simply to save money by not doing condition surveys
 - Or because they prefer to use a more targeted approach, so no longer have full coverage
 - Or because the results are currently required for some purpose other than national reporting (such as local indicators), but the requirement is time limited, so they will be dropped at some point in the future.
- 16) Therefore there are questions about the risk of losing these data as a regular time series.

Andrew Gallagher

29th May 2009

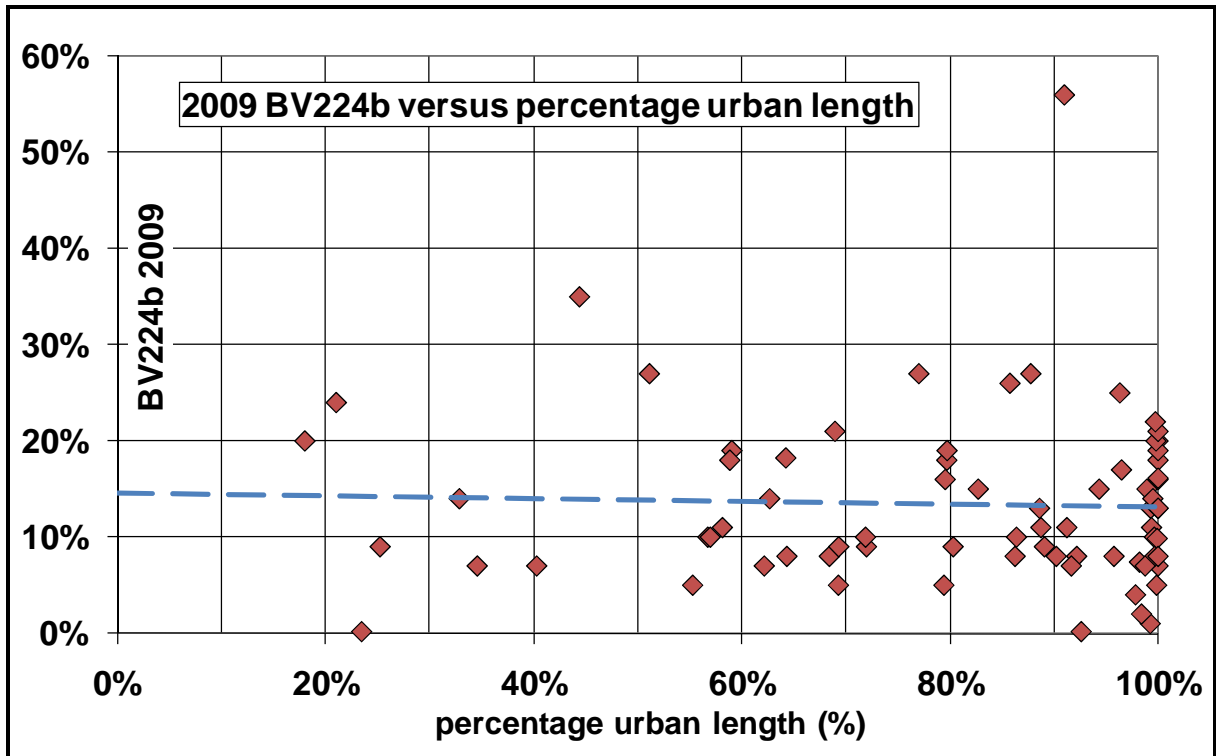


Figure 1 Condition of unclassified roads versus percentage urban length

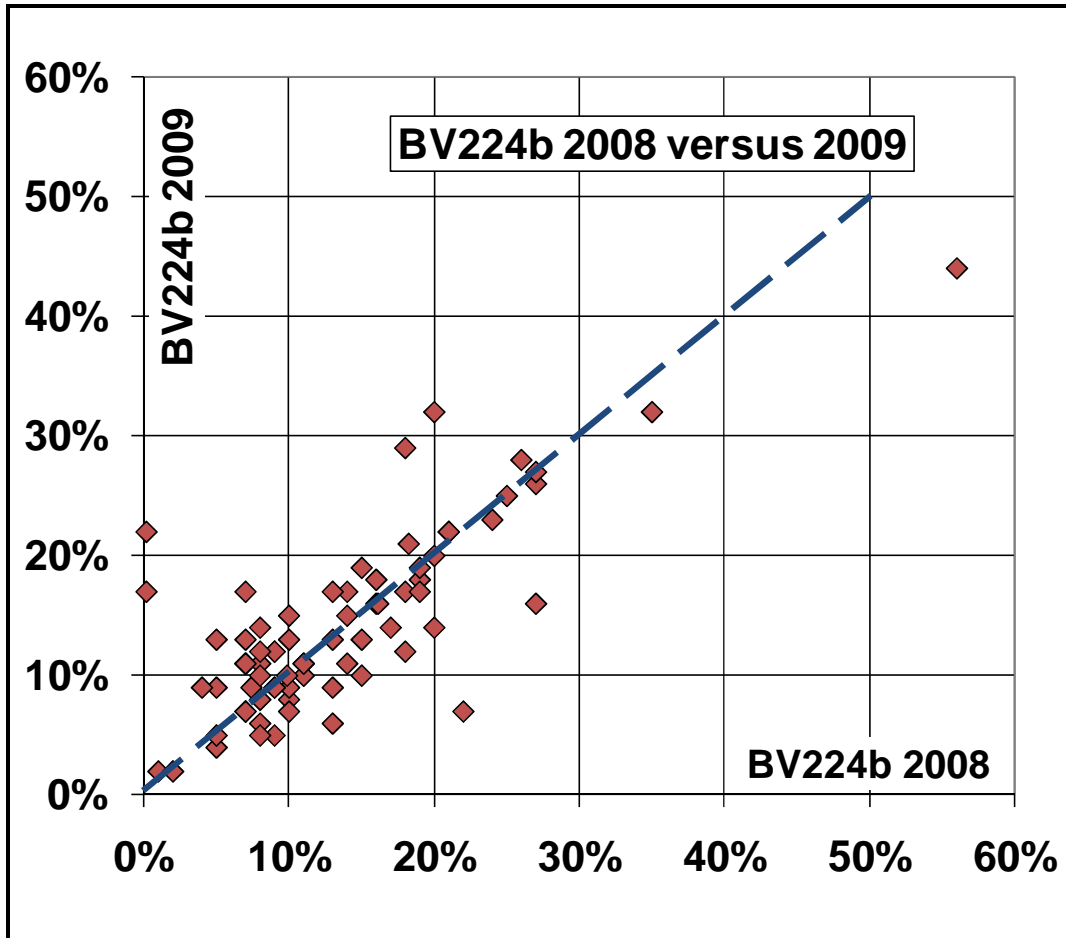


Figure 2 Change in reported BV224b values between 2008 and 2009

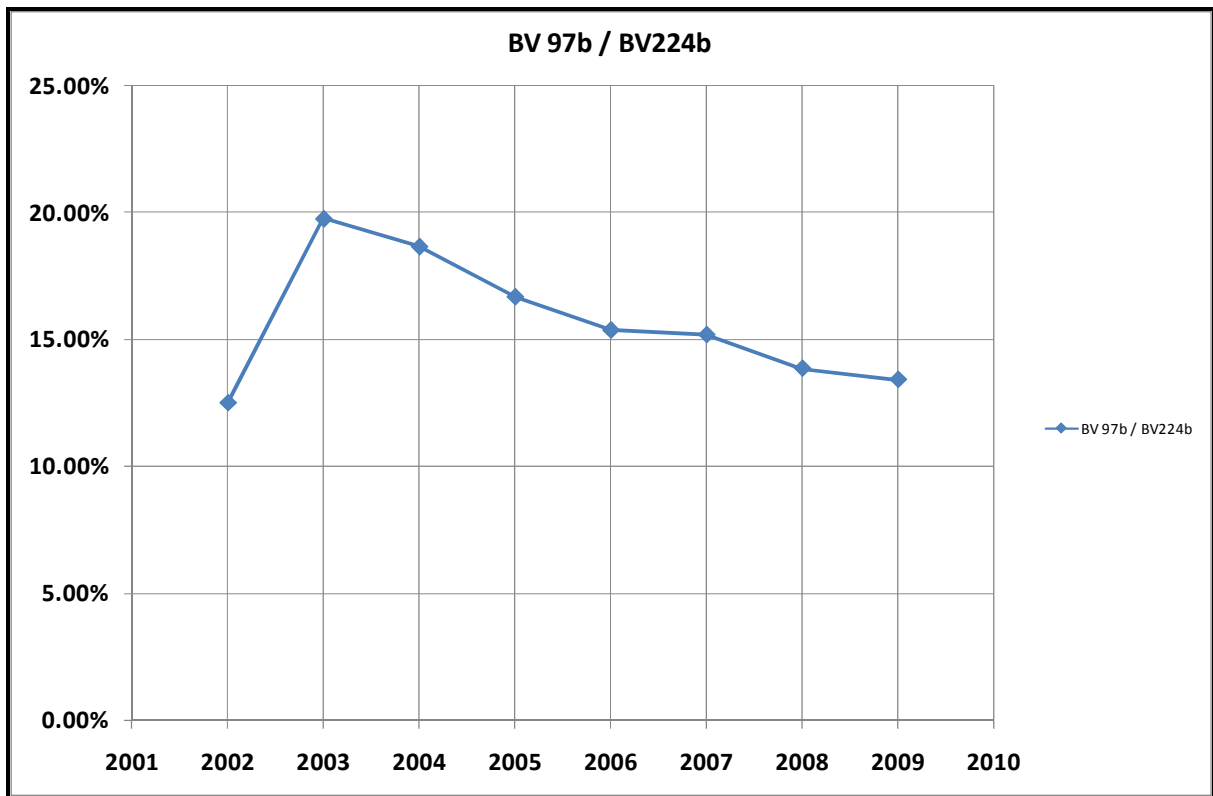


Figure 3 Change in average condition of unclassified roads 2002-2009