

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Rapid natural growth of traffic has become a major concern of many highway departments worldwide. Therefore the demand of road pavement construction has become importantly and critically to provide an enough road platform for the user from time to time. Flexible pavement or known as hot mix asphalt has become a famous highway construction material in our country (Sudan) in tern of easy to assess the bitumen recourses from our oil and gas product and economic aspect if compare to the other expensive material such as rigid pavement. In general, flexible pavement is a relatively thin surface of asphalt Concrete pavement (ACP) over a base and sub-base resting on a sub-grade.

Nowadays, road and surface failure has become critical issue in our country on the flexible pavement shown a bad quality and an error in the design stage. The thickness design of flexible pavement has become crucial elements in the overall efficiency of highway structure system to give a good performance and high serviceability under traffic loading during the expected design period.

The goal of pavement thickness design is to determine the number, material composition and thickness of different layers within a pavement structure required to accommodate a given loading regime. This includes the surface course as well as any underplaying base or sub-base layers.

Nowadays, computer software applications are widely used and can be apply in design of flexible pavement thickness. Computer software can help to help to make the design process become easily, faster and high accuracy result can be obtain. By using the application of software in highway engineering, it can help the highway engineer or designer to provide a good design with a high confidences level without any error if compare to the manual calculation previously.

This study focuses on the development of a software application for flexible pavement thickness design base in AASHTO and road 31 methods by using visual Basic dot net.

This software will be useful to run process with a high result accuracy obtained in order to provide a good quality of thickness design for flexible pavement.

1.2 Problem Statement

Road and surface failure such as cracking, depression and pothole has become critical issue in our country in the flexible pavement where it involves a very high maintenance cost every year. One of the reasons causing this failure happened is improper or error of pavement thickness design.

Currently most of highway design departments or agencies were still practice the conventional method by referring hardcopy of manual design guideline and calculation.

Therefore, human factor in term of making mistake and error cannot fully avoid in their design. Besides, calculation design also considering a longer time period, energy and operating cost. A problem can be occur when an emergency or immediately highway project are needed to be proposed in a very short time of design period. Therefore, there was a needed to use computer software to solve this problem to propose a faster and accurate design of work for any emergency project.

Besides the design of pavement, thickness can become complicated where it is involve many data, graphs and particular selection of properties for different type of layer and condition in pavement design stage. Therefore, there was a needed of computer software to help manage and store this data or information in the system for easily searching and use this data every time in the design stage by using computer software.

There is also less of this kind thickness design software technology currently for highway engineering in our country. Therefore, there was a need to develop a software specialist in pavement thickness design to replace the previous conventional and traditional method for an advance technology in high way engineering.

1.3 The importance of the study

Effective pavement design is one of the most important aspects in highway design. The pavement is the portion of the highway which is most obvious to the motorist. Therefore the thickness of pavement are playing an important role to support all the traffic loading and it's must be design accurately to avoid any failure of pavement structure.

Nowadays, computer software can help to make our life become easy especially in highway engineering to design the thickness of flexible pavement. By applying the computer program, the design stage can be made in a very short time period of design process. Beside, computer software can help to minimize the error factor compare to manual calculation or conventional method. Therefore, computer software can give a high accuracy and quality of result for a pavement thickness design.

Visual basic is Microsoft's high-level object oriented rapid application development environment for the windows platform. Visual basic programmers make user friendly interfaces and easy to used when design the pavement thickness.

The programmers then add code to respond to user interaction with the controls to get the design result need. Beside, computer software (visual basic) also can act as importance data base system to store and install all the important data and properties from complicated table or chart translated into visual basic coding. Therefore, user can easily search for kind of data and make selection option directly from the program software developed.

The purpose of software development in the field of high way are useful in design stage, analytical solving the need to test, evaluate and demonstrate a proposed course of action before implementation, to research, learn and train people . Confidence would be gained from the performance of the software developed and to be justified before the design is proposed.

Besides, the software developed also become useful for any relevant body or associations in highway engineering such as highway engineer and designer, university lecturers and students for their learning and practical, and local authority to approve any design of highway project.

Computer software is an integral part of everyday life, not only in the use of personal computers but also behind the scenes of every business transaction, engineering, research and studies.

Therefore by applying the computer software in thickness design of flexible pavement can give a significant function to avoid any wrong design that may cause failure of pavement and involve high maintenance cost in the future. Besides, it's also can save time, energy and builds up a high level of comfortable, confident and greater effort in term of pavement thickness design.

1.4 Scope of the study

The scope of this study is mainly focus on the flexible pavement thickness design by using Road Note 31 and AASHTO Guideline.

Furthermore, the computer software will be develop by using application of Visual Basic dot net for design interface, function or coding system and generate a report file for reference.

1.5 Objective of the Study

The aim of the study is to develop program model of flexible pavement thickness design by Road Note 31 and AASHTO Guide.

The objectives of this study are:

1. To develop thickness design software of flexible pavement by using Visual Basic dot net programming language
2. Calculate the construction cost of layers in AASHTO and Road Note 31.