

Build Better. Together.

Rock Slope Stability of the Smart Road Rock Cut in Blacksburg, Virginia



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Smart Road Proposed





Source: (Unpublished draft) Digital Geologic Map of the Radford 30X60 Minute Quadrangle, Bartholomew and Others, 2000 -Virginia Department of Mines Minerals and Energy.



Smart Road Planning



- 1995 1997
 - Limited outcrop exposure
 - Rockslides vs. rock falls
 - Vertical slopes not best in folded and faulted rock







Smart Road Goes to Construction

- Construction
 - June 1998
 - Rock Slides
 - Oozing
 - Rock Falls
 - Delays, stop work







Smart Road – Field Mapping

- July 1998
 - Detailed Mapping
 - Concurrent with construction
 - Windows
 - Other significant areas ID, Group and Prioritize





Smart Road – Discontinuities

- Rock Structure/Discontinuities
 - Orientation
- Bedding
- Joints/Faults
- Characteristics
 - Lithology
 - Continuity
 - Infilling
 - Water
 - Roughness
 - Samples
 - Shear testing
 - 34° vs 19°





Smart Road – Kinematic Assessment RockPack II

- Kinematics
 - Geometry
 - Potential for motion only
 - Mass and force not considered
 - Stereonets
- Discontinuities
 - Plot as clusters
 - Limiting equilibrium analysis
 - Friction Angle
 - Daylight



MARKLAND TEST PLOT: c:\rkpk2-04\data\a20714.DAT Friction Angle = 25 degrees Slope dip direction = 38 degrees, Dip = 90 degrees Number of Stations = 21



Smart Road – Kinematic Assessment South/Right Slope

- 90 Degree Slope
 - Planar Failures
 - Large, steeply dipping joints
- 60 Degree Slope
 - Planar failures
 - Significantly reduced







HARKLAND ICST FLOT: C:STRPRZ=04A0a1a3a20714.DHT Friction Angle = 25 degrees Slope dip direction = 38 degrees, Dip = 60 degrees Number of Stations = 21

Smart Road – Kinematic Assessment South/Right Slope

- 90 Degree Slope
 - Wedge Failures
 - Bedding
 - Large Joints
- 60 Degree Slope
 - Wedge Failures not eliminated









Smart Road – Kinematic Assessment North/Left Slope

- 90 Degree Slope
 - Planar Failures
 - Large, steeply dipping joints
- 60 Degree Slope
 - Significantly reduced



Friction Angle = 25 degrees Slope dip direction = 218 degrees, Dip = 90 degrees Number of Stations = 38







Smart Road – Kinematic Assessment North/Left Slope

- 90 Degree Slope
 - Planar Failures
 - Large, steeply dipping joints
- 60 Degree Slope
 - Slightly reduced potential









MARKLAND TEST PLOT: c:\rkpk2-04\data\a1&30714.DAT Friction Angle = 25 degrees Slope dip direction = 218 degrees, Dip = 60 degrees Number of Stations = 38



Smart Road – Initial Study Results

- Vertical slopes will not be safe
 - Subject to large scale falls and slides
- Reduce slope angle to 60 degrees
- Implement monitoring/protective measures





Smart Road – Problematic Areas

- ID problem areas
 - Safety Factor Calculations
 - Some as low as .86/1.3
- One third of planned depth
 - Significant potential for continued problems
- October 1998
 - Delayed for redesign and construction







Congress shapes up budget

Smart Road – Reevaluation

- Design Change Proposed
 - 1.5 H : 1.0 V (34 degrees)
- New Shear Strength Testing
 - Powder-coated bedding planes, zeolite
 - Friction angle of 28 degrees, c=0
- October 1998
 - Delayed for redesign and construction





Smart Road – Redesign South/Right Slope

- 34 degree Slope
 - Planar virtually eliminated



MARKLAND TEST PLOT: c:\rkpk2-04\data\a20714.DAT Friction Angle = 28 degrees Slope dip direction = 38 degrees, Dip = 34 degrees Number of Stations = 21



MARKLAND TEST PLOT: c:\rkpk2-04\data\a20714.DAT Friction Angle = 25 degrees Slope dip direction = 38 degrees, Dip = 60 degrees Number of Stations = 21



Smart Road – Redesign South/Right Slope

34 Degree SlopePesky wedgies



MARKLAND TEST PLOT: c:\rkpk2-04\data\a20714.DAT Friction Angle = 28 degrees Slope dip direction = 38 degrees, Dip = 34 degrees Number of Stations = 21







Smart Road – Reevaluation North/Left Slope

- 34 Degree Slope
 - Planar Failures
 - Virtually eliminated



MARKLAND TEST PLOT: c:\rkpk2-04\data\a1&30714.DAT Friction Angle = 28 degrees Slope dip direction = 218 degrees, Dip = 34 degrees Number of Stations = 38



MARKLAND TEST PLOT: c:\rkpk2-04\data\a1&30714.DAT Friction Angle = 25 degrees Slope dip direction = 218 degrees, Dip = 60 degrees Number of Stations = 38



Smart Road – Kinematic Assessment North/Left Slope

 Virtually eliminated Previously Structure identified Key discontinuity intersections □ Bedding no longer lie within the Small Joints critical zone Δ ▼ Large Joints E Sealed Joints 🔿 Folia-Critical Zone tions Faults

34 Degree Slope

Wedge Failures

MARKLAND TEST PLOT: c:\rkpk2-04\data\a1&30714.DAT Friction Angle = 28 degrees Slope dip direction = 218 degrees, Dip = 34 degrees Number of Stations = 38



Friction Angle = 25 degrees Slope dip direction = 218 degrees, Dip = 60 degrees Number of Stations = 38



Smart Road – Final Recommendations

- Left Slope
 - 60 Degrees: monitoring, protective measures
 - Less ROW acquisition, less excavation
- Right Slope
 - Would need to be dealt with regardless
- Final Slope
 - VDOT announces 30 40 degree slopes
 - \$2.7 million







Smart Road – Summary and Conclusions

- Valley and Ridge Province
 - Structurally complex, folded and faulted discontinuities
 - Steep to vertical rock cuts dangerous without protective measures
- Pre-construction
 - Understand regional and site-specific geology
 - Valuable information from pre-construction mapping, even if limited
- During Construction
 - Verify pre-construction assessment(s)
 - Changed conditions can be recognized early



