

RILEM State-of-the-Art Reports

Denys Breysse *Editor*

Non-Destructive Assessment of Concrete Structures: Reliability and Limits of Single and Combined Techniques

State-of-the-Art Report of the RILEM
Technical Committee 207-INR



 Springer

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of the RILEM Technical Committee 207-INR



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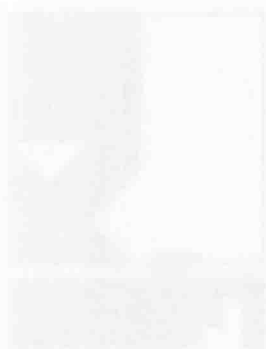
Non-Destructive Assessment of Concrete Structures: Reliability and Limits of Single and Combined Techniques

Concrete is a heterogeneous material with a complex internal structure. The non-destructive assessment of concrete structures is a challenging task due to the variability of the material properties and the complexity of the internal structure. The reliability of single and combined techniques for the non-destructive assessment of concrete structures is a topic of ongoing research.

The reliability of single techniques for the non-destructive assessment of concrete structures is generally low. This is due to the variability of the material properties and the complexity of the internal structure. The reliability of combined techniques for the non-destructive assessment of concrete structures is generally higher than that of single techniques. This is due to the fact that combined techniques can provide a more comprehensive assessment of the concrete structure.

The limits of single and combined techniques for the non-destructive assessment of concrete structures are also a topic of ongoing research. The limits of single techniques are generally higher than those of combined techniques. This is due to the fact that combined techniques can provide a more comprehensive assessment of the concrete structure. The limits of combined techniques are generally lower than those of single techniques. This is due to the fact that combined techniques can provide a more comprehensive assessment of the concrete structure.

The non-destructive assessment of concrete structures is a complex task that requires the use of multiple techniques. The reliability and limits of single and combined techniques for the non-destructive assessment of concrete structures are topics of ongoing research.



RILEM STATE-OF-THE-ART REPORTS

Volume 1

RILEM, The International Union of Laboratories and Experts in Construction Materials, Systems and Structures, founded in 1947, is a non-governmental scientific association whose goal is to contribute to progress in the construction sciences, techniques and industries, essentially by means of the communication it fosters between research and practice. RILEM's focus is on construction materials and their use in building and civil engineering structures, covering all phases of the building process from manufacture to use and recycling of materials. More information on RILEM and its previous publications can be found on www.RILEM.net.

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Members of a TC are experts in their field and give their time freely to share their expertise. As a result, the broader scientific community benefits greatly from RILEM's activities.

RILEM's stated objective is to disseminate this information as widely as possible to the scientific community. RILEM therefore considers the STAR reports of its TCs as of highest importance, and encourages their publication whenever possible.

The information in this and similar reports is mostly pre-normative in the sense that it provides the underlying scientific fundamentals on which standards and codes of practice are based. Without such a solid scientific basis, construction practice will be less than efficient or economical.

It is RILEM's hope that this information will be of wide use to the scientific community.



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Foreword

The concrete infrastructure requires regular assessment in order to ensure public safety and cost-effective maintenance practice. Assessment efforts verify in place material condition, damage state, position and geometry of elements, and other important structural characteristics. But carrying out assessment using direct sampling and observation of the structure is not always possible, especially if the volume of interest is hidden from view (e.g. in the case of internal damage), or physical access to the structure of interest is restricted, or cost concerns limit the number of direct material samples that are collected.

Non-destructive assessment and evaluation (commonly referred to as NDE) methods offer the ability to infer material condition information where direct sampling and inspection cannot. And because of the inherent non-damaging nature of the tests, many data can be collected and analyzed without fear of adversely affecting the structure under inspection. In NDE, a specific test phenomenon is applied and the response observed. Many different types of phenomena are appropriate for application to concrete structures, including mechanical wave propagation, electromagnetic wave propagation, penetrating radiation, optics, magnetism, and heat transfer. Application of the phenomenon (test method) and observation of the observed phenomenological response (test data) is often made difficult by the nature of the concrete infrastructure: large size, difficult access and naturally inhomogeneous material makeup.

The nature of these different phenomena varies and the quality of the connection between the structural or material characteristic of interest also varies, depending on the particular phenomena employed and the characteristic of interest. After some processing, the observed test data, or in some cases judicious combination of distinct types of data, are normally related to the material property or structural condition of interest through some model. But in some cases, this connection is established by a normative rule set. For example, X-rays are less likely to be absorbed or scattered along paths within a solid that contain air-filled cracks and voids; thus we can infer that those paths that reveal higher X-ray intensity contain high amounts of such damage.

We see, though, that NDE relies on an indirect connection between the observed phenomena, and the quality of the NDE result depends as much on the appropriateness and rigor of this connecting model as on the quality of the observed phenomenological data themselves. Thus appropriate and effective use of NDE needs balance of requirements:

- (i) hold suitable understanding of the underlying phenomenon,
- (ii) deploy testing methods correctly, and
- (iii) apply appropriate and accurate connecting models in the analysis.

This book aims to give the reader a solid basis in these three areas, with a particular focus on complimentary combinations of techniques to improve the assessment.

Chapter 1 introduces the basic concepts of NDE, lays out the associated challenges for concrete structures and offers some solution to these challenges through the combination of distinct techniques. Chapter 2 provides fundamental information about the underlying phenomenological basis and principles of individual NDE test methods. Chapters 3 to 7 are devoted to specific NDE applications: strength assessment, defect characterization, geometry (thickness or depth) determination, etc. The last chapter revisits the concepts of test method combination, thoroughly addressing the challenges associated with NDE and proposing future directions of development.

This book is authored and edited under the auspices of RILEM Technical Committee 207-INR, which is made up of internationally recognized experts in the field. From this book, the reader will obtain a thorough background in non-destructive assessment methods that is essential for effective application to concrete structures, representing technical progress in an important field.



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This book is the result of a five year work of RILEM TC 207-INR. More than thirty core members and corresponding members were involved in twelve meetings and contributed to this report. They contributed either as “main authors” coordinating a chapter of the book, as contributors to these chapters or as reviewers. Their list is following. The name of authors and contributors is specified at the beginning of each chapter.

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Contents

1 Non destructive assessment of concrete structures: usual combinations of techniques	1
Denys Breyse	
1 Non-destructive assessment of concrete: objectives and key challenges.....	1
2 Added-value of combining techniques: traditional approaches.....	4
2.1 Purpose for combining techniques.....	4
2.2 Type [A] combination – confirmation of test results obtained with different techniques	5
2.3 Type [B] combination – improvement of test result interpretation obtained with different techniques	9
2.4 Type [C] combination – application of different techniques for “quick” localization of defected areas followed by detailed inspection with “slow” but more accurate measurements	12
3 Conclusions.....	14
References.....	15
2 Presentation of common non destructive techniques.....	17
1 Ultrasounds through transmission.....	17
1.1 Physical principles and theory	17
1.2 Correlation with the mechanical properties	18
1.3 Measuring Equipment and Handling	20
1.4 Guidelines, Recommendations	22
1.5 Common techniques and devices.....	22
1.6 Reliability and limitation of results.....	25
1.7 Developments.....	26
References.....	27
2 Ultrasonic Echo.....	27
2.1 Physical principles and theory	27
2.2 Measuring equipment and handling.....	28

2.3	Data processing: display and imaging techniques	32
2.4	Guidelines, Recommendations	34
2.5	Reliability and limitations.....	34
2.6	Developments.....	36
	References.....	38
3	Surface waves methods	39
3.1	Physical principles and theory	39
3.2	Measurement equipment and procedure	40
3.3	Data analysis and interpretation.....	41
3.4	Reliability and limitation of results.....	43
	References.....	43
4	Impact echo.....	44
4.1	Physical principles and theory	44
4.2	Measurement equipment and handling	46
4.3	Guidelines, references and standards.....	47
4.4	Calibration and interpretation of results	48
4.5	Reliability and limitation of results.....	50
	References.....	50
5	Impulse response.....	51
5.1	Physical principles and theory	51
5.2	Measurement equipment and handling	52
5.3	Guidelines, references and standards.....	54
5.4	Calibration and interpretation of results	54
5.5	Reliability and limitation of results.....	56
	References.....	57
6	Acoustic emission	58
6.1	Physical principles and theory	58
6.2	Measurement equipment and handling	59
6.3	Guidelines, references and standards.....	60
6.4	Calibration and interpretation of results	61
6.5	Reliability and limitation of results.....	62
	References.....	63
7	Ground Penetrating Radar.....	63
7.1	Physical principles and theory	63
7.2	Equipment and handling	66
7.3	Guidelines and standards	67
7.4	Data processing, calibration and interpretation	68
7.5	Applications, reliability of results and limitations	69
	References.....	70
8	Capacitive technique	71
8.1	Physical principles and theory	71
8.2	Measuring equipment and handling.....	73
8.3	Data processing, calibration and interpretation	74
8.4	Limitations and reliability.....	76
	References.....	77

9	Electrical resistivity measurement	77
9.1	Physical principle and theory	77
9.2	Measurement techniques and handling	78
9.3	Calibration, data processing, interpretation of results	82
9.4	Reliability and limitation of results	82
9.5	Guidelines for use, references, standards	83
9.6	On-going developments: problems under research, new questions, specific developments	83
	References	84
10	Infrared thermography	85
10.1	Physical principles and theory	85
10.2	Measuring equipment and handling: the infrared camera	88
10.3	Data processing, calibration and interpretation	88
10.4	Passive thermography applied to the investigation of discontinuities	89
10.5	Investigations with active thermography	92
10.6	Guidelines and Standards	97
	References	97
11	Radiography	98
11.1	Physical principles and theory	98
11.2	Measurement equipment and handling	98
11.3	Guidelines, references and standards	100
11.4	Calibration and interpretation of results	100
11.5	Reliability and limitation of results	101
	References	101
12	Rebound hammer	101
12.1	Physical Principle and Theory	102
12.2	Measuring Equipment and Handling	104
12.3	Calibration and Interpretation of Results	106
12.4	Reliability and Limitation of Results	107
12.5	Guidelines for Use and Standards	109
	References	110
13	Pull-out testing	110
13.1	Physical principles and theory	110
13.2	Measurement equipment and handling	113
13.3	Guidelines, references and standards	114
13.4	Calibration and interpretation of results	115
13.5	Reliability and limitation of results	116
	References	117

3	Estimation of on-site compressive strength of concrete.....	119
	Marios N. Soutsos, Denys Breysse, Vincent Garnier, Arlindo Goncalves, and Andre Valente Monteiro	
1	Introduction – definition of the problem.....	119
1.1	What is Looked For?.....	120
1.2	At What Scale?	122
1.3	For What Purpose?.....	123
2	Description of the Techniques	124
2.1	Penetration Resistance	124
2.2	Pull-out Test.....	125
2.3	Pull-off Test.....	128
3	Calibration Aspects and Assessment of Characteristic In-situ compressive strength	129
3.1	Calibration Aspects.....	129
3.2	Assessment of characteristic in-situ compressive strength by indirect methods.....	148
4	Multivariate analysis and modeling for strength assessment of concrete.....	156
4.1	Back into history: the SonReb method	156
4.2	Developing multivariate relationships as conversion curves	158
4.3	Understanding the possibilities and limits of multivariate correlations	161
4.4	Calibration process and combination of NDT on real data.....	166
4.5	The scope of investigation and its efficient planning.....	168
4.6	Conclusions about combination of techniques	170
5	Data fusion to better estimate strength.....	171
5.1	Why to use data fusion?.....	171
5.2	Data fusion in 1D.....	172
5.3	Data fusion in 2D.....	178
6	Conclusions.....	181
	References.....	182
4	Control of thickness/dimensions of pavements, foundations, elements and piles	187
	Johannes Hugenschmidt, Martin Krause, Denys Breysse, Ernst Niederleithinger, and Alexander Taffe	
1	Problem description, testing tasks.....	187
1.1	Pavement.....	187
1.2	Thin elements.....	188
1.3	Shallow foundations.....	190
1.4	Deep foundations, piles and shafts.....	191
2	Common techniques.....	192
2.1	Pavement.....	192
2.2	Thin elements.....	196

2.3	Shallow foundations.....	201
2.4	Deep foundations, shafts and piles.....	206
3	Special techniques and enhanced methods	213
3.1	Possible enhancements.....	213
3.2	Special techniques.....	214
4	Benchmarks and test sites	216
4.1	Pavements and sealings.....	217
4.2	Thin elements.....	218
	References.....	225
5	Assessment of bonding, delamination and interfaces	227
	Jean-François Lataste and Patrice Rivard	
1	Introduction to debonding and delamination.....	227
2	Description /definition of the problem treated	228
2.1	What is being looked for?	
	At what scale? For what purpose?	228
2.2	What level of interpretation? Required accuracy?	229
2.3	Why it is difficult?	233
3	Description of Techniques	234
3.1	Common techniques.....	234
3.2	Special techniques.....	246
4	Global strategy of approach towards diagnosis	248
4.1	Complementary techniques.....	248
4.2	Use for better efficiency	250
4.3	Use for more information.....	251
4.4	Use for better reliability	252
4.5	Case study	253
5	Benchmark and test site	255
6	Conclusion	259
	References.....	260
6	Localization of grouting faults	
	in post tensioned concrete structures	263
	Martin Krause	
1	Introduction.....	263
1.1	State of the art and existing guidelines	
	and recommendations	263
1.2	Fields of application.....	264
2	Overview of Methods.....	264
3	Radiography with X- and γ -Radiation	265
3.1	X-rays.....	265
3.2	Gamma-Radiation	265
4	Echo Methods with mechanical waves: Impact Echo.....	268
4.1	Application of the impact-echo method for tendon ducts.....	268
4.2	Point and Linear Measurement and evaluation.....	272
4.3	Impact-Echo imaging.....	272
4.4	Interpretation and research: the SIBIE procedure.....	278

5	Echo Methods with mechanical waves: Ultrasonic Echo	279
5.1	Introduction, principle.....	279
5.2	Ultrasonic Point Measurement and evaluation	280
5.3	Linear Measurement and 2D representation of the data	280
5.4	Linear and 2D Measurement followed by Imaging with Reconstruction calculation (magnitude evaluation).....	283
5.5	Reconstruction calculation using phase evaluation.....	287
5.6	Ultrasonic Echo with Linear Array	291
6	Ultrasonic Through Transmission.....	294
7	Other methods.....	295
7.1	Radar for plastic ducts	295
7.2	Active Thermography	297
8	Conclusions.....	298
	References.....	300
7	Ruptures of prestressing cables	305
	Jean-Paul Balayssac, Carmen Andrade, Javier Sanchez Monteiro, and Horst Scheel	
1	Definition of the problem.....	305
1.1	What is looked for?.....	305
1.2	At what scale?.....	307
1.3	For what purpose?.....	308
2	Description of the techniques.....	309
2.1	Radiography.....	310
2.2	Magnetic methods.....	312
2.3	Acoustic Emission	317
2.4	Special techniques.....	320
2.5	Calibration aspects	326
2.6	Evaluation and comparison of the techniques.....	326
3	What can be done for a better assessment? Combination possibilities	326
4	Benchmarking sites: examples.....	330
5	Conclusions.....	331
	References.....	332
8	Non destructive assessment of concrete structures: combination of different techniques for addressing new challenges.....	335
	Denys Breyse and Vincent Garnier	
1	Introduction: a new challenge for combination	335
2	The identification / inversion problem	338
2.1	Understanding the complexity of the problem.....	338
2.2	Formalizing the problem.....	339

3	Practical case of Type [D] combination for concrete properties assessment	344
3.1	Porosity and water content assessment by combining two NDT methods.....	345
3.2	Young modulus assessment by combining two or more NDT measurements	346
4	Data fusion	350
5	Quality of techniques and quality of assessment	353
5.1	Effect of the noise	354
5.2	Quality of the models used for inversion/identification.....	354
5.3	Complementarity and efficiency of combination.....	355
	References.....	357
	RILEM Publications	359
	RILEM PROCEEDINGS.....	359
	RILEM REPORTS.....	365
	RILEM Publications published by Springer	369
	RILEM BOOKSERIES (Proceedings)	369
	RILEM STATE-OF-THE-ART REPORTS.....	369
	Index	371

Chapter 1

Non destructive assessment of concrete structures: usual combinations of techniques

Denys Breysse¹

1 Non-destructive assessment of concrete: objectives and key challenges

Condition assessment of building materials is critical when reassessing existing structures, since material ageing can result in performance loss, degradation of safety, and maintenance costs. For these reasons, the use of non destructive testing (NDT) has become more common to assess the condition of existing reinforced concrete structures. The first part of this book shows the range of NDT methods that are available, which show some sensitivity to concrete properties or defects. Their use has become more common to assess the condition of existing reinforced concrete structures. When detecting or suspecting of a possible pathology, e.g. after visual inspection, the usual approach with application of NDE is the following:

- (a) to identify first the roots of the problem,
- (b) to know if there is a possible evolution of damage and, if any, at what rate, and
- (c) finally to know what is the severity level of the problem, its location and extent.

Much research has been aimed to developing techniques and data processing. Some standards have been developed for individual techniques and reference texts have been produced on individual problems, like strength assessment (EN 13791 2007). Some authors have also tried to synthesize the capabilities of techniques with

¹Vincent Garnier, Martin Krause, Patrice Rivard, Felicita Pires and John Popovics have also contributed to this chapter.

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