



ALLIED
BUILDING ADVISORY GROUP
PTY LTD



COGRI AUSTRALIA PTY LTD
Global Flooring Solutions

TECH BULLETIN

Hardstand & Concrete Slabs - The Importance of Proactive Maintenance

Allied Partner: COGRI AUSTRALIA PTY LTD

Date:

November 2021



Introduction

Industrial facilities, such as warehouses, distribution centres and manufacturing facilities run their operations on top of a concrete industrial floor slab. It is one part of the building that will be utilised on a daily basis and it's the point where the warehouse and the Materials Handling Equipment (MHE) interact. It is the tabletop on which operations function and as such will have a direct bearing on the successful performance of any warehouse operation

All too often damaged floor joints, cracks and surface defects are left untreated for as long as possible, until they can no longer be ignored. This inevitably leads to more expensive repairs, increased forklift maintenance, production downtime for repairs and the potential risk of personal injury to the occupants of the building. Despite the perceived inconvenience of having floor repairs carried out, there are very good reasons not to ignore damaged joints, cracks and surface defects. These include but not limited to –

- **Operational Performance** - Damaged floors will result in MHE operating at slower speeds, ultimately impacting on warehouse efficiency.
- **Equipment Damage** - The forklift trucks can suffer wheel, bearing and suspension damage.
- **Health & Safety** - Driver fatigue and the risk of injury to staff, customers and visitors.
- **End of Lease Make Good Costs** – If you are a tenant leasing the premises, it is most likely there is a maintenance clause and/or make good clause in your lease contract which could lead to unforeseen high end of lease make good costs.

The Importance of Proactive Maintenance – Concrete Industrial Floors

The warehouse concrete floor is arguably one of the most important elements for businesses that operate a warehouse because their whole operation is dependent on its performance.

If a floor is damaged this will slow throughput (goods moved per hour), increase cost of maintenance of the MHE that operate on the floor and be an operational health and safety (OH&S) risk.

Whether it is an internal or external slab, the importance of on-going, proactive maintenance cannot be underestimated. What starts as a minor chip in the concrete slab can deteriorate overtime into large spalls that damage MHE and cause downtime. The cost of the repair can turn into one costing thousands of dollars. If the repair had been picked up early, all of this could be avoided.

Ignore external hardstand maintenance and you can end up with much greater problems. Lack of resealing of joints for example can result in water ingress into the slab; overtime this can cause the sub fines washing out, creating voids underneath which, in turn, can cause the slabs to rock and/or crack and turn into a structural failure. This may sound melodramatic, but it happens far more than it should.

How To Manage Repairs & Maintenance

How you maintain your industrial flooring depends on the type of floor you have in you facility. The most common flooring found in warehouses, factories and industrial units is concrete with a power trowelled finish. Resin coating systems such as epoxy, polyurethane or acrylic can also be found in industrial environments. Many facilities will have a combination of concrete and resin, where the resin is applied to pedestrian walkways, pallet lanes and general safety markings.

Understanding what floor system is in place and how it is used will help when putting together a floor maintenance schedule. As well as taking specialist requirements into consideration, the main schedule should also include the following ongoing tasks:-

1. **Inspection** – Conduct regular visual inspections for signs of damage and log all joint, crack and surface defects for maintenance requirements.
2. **Cleaning** – All floor surfaces should be cleaned regularly to prevent the build up of dirt and debris, which also reduces the risk of potential slip hazards.
3. **Planned Maintenance** – Address non-urgent repair tasks before they are allowed to become a serious issue requiring an expensive repair detail.

To help with prioritising repairs and assisting with maintenance budgets the following traffic light system can be utilised -

Red – Serious damage requiring immediate repair action.

Amber – Damage requires timely action. Failure to repair will result in more serious damage.

Green – Serviceable and monitor. Report signs of any deterioration at the earliest opportunity.

About CoGri Australia

CoGri Australia are specialists in the upgrading, refurbishment and repair of warehouse, factory and industrial concrete floor slabs, including new and existing VNA / narrow aisle warehouses. With a wide range of hi-tech equipment and an experienced and qualified team of professionals, CoGri Australia Pty Ltd are able to provide a full range of high quality concrete flooring services and cost effective solutions.

If you would like to find out more, feel free to get in touch at cogriadmin@cogriaustralia.com.au





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