

**ESTIMATION OF  
CONCRETE SERVICE LIFE**  
*The Theoretical Background*



by

**Vagelis G. Papadakis**

*Chemical Engineer, PhD*

**Patras, Greece, 2005**

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**1<sup>st</sup> edition**

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First published 2005

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## Foreword

*Concrete* is the most widely used building material. Despite of the significant advances made in concrete technology in recent years, the problems of unsatisfactory durability of structures are in a dramatic increase. Deterioration of concrete in service may be the result of a variety of mechanical, physical, chemical or biological processes. *Corrosion of steel reinforcement* is the most serious durability problem of reinforced concrete structures. It impairs not only the appearance of the structure, but also its strength and safety, due to the reduction in the cross-sectional area of the reinforcement and to the deterioration of bond with the surrounding concrete.

Over the past 50 years, an enormous amount of energy has been expended in laboratory and field studies on *concrete durability*. The results of this research are still either widely scattered in the journal literature or mentioned briefly in the standard textbooks. Moreover, the theoretical approaches of deterioration mechanisms with a predictive character are limited to some complicated mathematical models not widely applicable in practice. A significant step forward could be the development of appropriate *software for computer estimation*, including the reliable mathematical models and strengthened by adequate experimental data. Within this framework, the present work is the *theoretical background* where such software is based, as well as the *permanent reference* to explain any inquires and check further the reliability of the results.

In the present work, a *mix design strategy* to fulfil any requirements on strength and service life is presented. The *chemical and volumetric characteristics* of concrete are first estimated and the *service life of the concrete structure* is then predicted, based on fundamental models developed earlier mostly by the present author. The prediction is focused on the basic deterioration phenomena of the reinforced concrete, *carbonation and chloride penetration*. Aspects on *concrete strength* and *production cost* are also considered. The proposed models enable mixture proportions to be accurately specified and concrete performance reliably predicted. This work is the *source book* for the development of the software for estimation of concrete service life, EUCON<sup>®</sup>. In general, this work concerns *Construction Engineers* and *Building Material Manufacturers* towards fundamental comprehension of materials behavior. Basic principles of Chemical Engineering are applied to simulate the physicochemical processes, yielding simple and accurate mathematical models for *design* and *prediction*. The work structure presented herein is in full compliance with the new *European Standards for cement: EN 197* and *concrete: EN 206*.

The experimental research and mathematical modeling has been carried out by the present author as a part of various national and European Union research programs in Greece and Denmark, during the last 20 years. The *General Secretariat for Research and Technology, Ministry of Development, Greece*, provided financial support for the present work through the PRAXE Programme (02-PRAXE-86).

Prof. M.N. Fardis (Civil Engineering Department, University of Patras, Greece) and Prof. C.G. Vayenas (Chemical Engineering Department, University of Patras, Greece) are heartfelt acknowledged for their valuable contribution as supervisors in the beginning of this work, during my Ph.D. Dissertation (1986-1990). Grateful thanks are due to all Danish Technological Institute -Concrete Centre's staff (1997-1999), and especially to Erik J. Pedersen, Dr. Mette Glavind and Christian Munch-Petersen. Mr. E. Haniotakis (TITAN Cement Company S.A.), C. Georgiou (INTERBETON S.A.), Prof. S. Tsimas (National Technical University of Athens) and the staff of TITAN's Concrete Technology Laboratory are also cordially acknowledged for valuable suggestions and technical assistance provided. Finally, I wish to express my great thanks to Maria Efstathiou, who developed the computer program based on the present theoretical background, for the preparation of the illustrations and for the technical assistance provided.

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April 2005

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