COST 344

Improvements to snow and ice control on European roads and bridges

Funding: European
Duration: Apr 1999 - Apr 2002
Status: Complete with results

Background & policy context:
COST 344 aimed to review snow and ice control methods and examine ways of improving them to provide ‘best value’ in terms of road network management and maintenance and assessment of the efficiency of the methods adopted.

Effective snow and ice control is a vital service for European governments to ensure road users can travel safely and with minimum disruption in very cold and severe climatic conditions. It is important that the service is provided at an affordable price and best value achieved with minimum environmental impact.

Objectives:
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- to review snow and ice control methods and examine ways of improving them to provide ‘best value’ in terms of road network management and maintenance and assessment of the efficiency of the methods adopted,
- to reduce environmental impact and harmonise safety and environmental standards, thus providing guidance to decision makers, and
- to ensure that improved snow and ice control methods are based on best practice.

Methodology:
- Assessment of snow and ice control methods.
- Identification of improvements to snow and ice control methods and management of the process.
- Assessment of the safety and economics of road traffic in winter conditions.
- Assessment of real time information to road users through telematics.
- Assessment of de-icer products and their environmental impact.
- Assessment of developments in Road Weather Information Systems.
- Development of objective criteria and benchmarks at European level.
- Establishment of terms of reference for the development of safety and environmental standards at European level.

Parent Programmes:
COST - Co-operation in science and technology

Institute type: Public institution
Institute name: Technical secretariat set in the European Commission
Funding type: Public (EU)

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Key Results:

Technical Implications

The scientific users of the results of COST 344 are researchers in the field of winter maintenance. The Action generated the basis for full-scale European experiment and evaluation of improved winter measures to be carried out under a future Transport Programme of the Fifth Framework Programme for Research and Development. The Action also promoted exploitation of technological advances in application and distribution of snow and ice control measures, leading to significant environmental benefits.

Policy implications

Millions of Euros will be saved through lower operational costs and a reduction in adverse effects on highway infrastructure and the environment. For the road users, more effective management of winter operations will lead to reduced traffic delays and accidents.

STRIA Roadmaps: Network and traffic management systems, Infrastructure
Transport mode: Road transport
Transport policies: Safety/Security, Environmental/Emissions aspects