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Comparative measurements of ground penetrating radars used for road and bridge diagnostics in the Czech Republic and France

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1                   **COMPARATIVE MEASUREMENTS OF GROUND PENETRATING**  
2                   **RADARS USED FOR ROAD AND BRIDGE DIAGNOSTICS IN THE CZECH**  
3                   **REPUBLIC AND FRANCE**

4  
5                   J. Stryk<sup>(1)</sup>, R. Matula<sup>(1)</sup>, K. Pospíšil<sup>(1)</sup>, X. Dérobert<sup>(2)</sup>, JM. Simonin<sup>(2)</sup>, A. M. Alani<sup>(3)</sup>

6                                   <sup>(1)</sup>Centrum dopravního výzkumu, v.v.i.

7                                   Líšeňská 33a, 63600 Brno, Czech Republic

8   [josef.stryk@cdv.cz](mailto:josef.stryk@cdv.cz)

9  
10                                   <sup>(2)</sup> French Institute of Science and Technology for Transport, Development and Networks

11   CS4, 44344 Bouguenais, France

12   [xavier.derobert@ifsttar.fr](mailto:xavier.derobert@ifsttar.fr)

13  
14   <sup>(3)</sup> University of West London

15   School of Computing and Engineering

16   St Mary's Road

17   Ealing, London W5 5RF, UK

18   [amir.alani@uwl.ac.uk](mailto:amir.alani@uwl.ac.uk)

19  
20                   **Abstract**

21                   *The paper describes the current situation regarding the comparative measurement and accuracy of ground penetrating*  
22                   *radars (GPR). GPR measurements are used for non-destructive diagnostic of roads and bridges, specifically for*  
23                   *measuring pavement layer thickness and determining the location and position of reinforcement in concrete. The*  
24                   *information used in the paper is based on the performed in-situ measurements. The conclusion includes*  
25                   *recommendations of how to perform and evaluate the in-situ GPR comparative measurements.*

26  
27                   **Key words**

28                   *GPR (Ground Penetrating Radar), non-destructive diagnostics, pavement layer thickness, reinforcement, cement*  
29                   *concrete pavement, comparative measurement.*

## 30 **1. INTRODUCTION**

31 Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) is traditionally used in diagnostics of transport infrastructure. It can either be used for  
32 one-off structure condition diagnostics or comparison of a development over a time period. At present, GPR is  
33 commonly used for diagnostics of roads at the project level (i.e. evaluation of shorter road sections) and rarely used at  
34 the network level.

35 One of the first applications of GPR in road engineering was to determine road layer thickness [1-4]. In this case,  
36 measurements are performed on both asphalt and cement concrete pavements, each with their own specific features.  
37 Given that, roads are line structures, accuracy of the localization measurement play an essential role. The measurements  
38 are usually performed on a longitudinal basis and under high speeds, so that road traffic is not restricted. In this case,  
39 the measurement is performed using a single or several horn antennas, or GPR device designed for 3D measurements  
40 [5-8].

41 An extended application of GPR is the localization of built-in reinforcement. For pavements, the elements in question  
42 include dowels and tie bars in jointed unreinforced concrete pavement (referred to as concrete pavement [9-10]). For  
43 bridges, the cover of reinforcement in bridge decks are evaluated more frequently [11-16]. For these applications, a cart  
44 with a single or more dipole antennas and measurements at walking speed are most commonly used.

45 The paper analyses a situation concerning in-situ comparative measurements of ground penetrating radars used for road  
46 and bridge diagnostics. Technical regulations and situations in individual countries are described in Chapter 1.1 and 1.2.  
47 Comparative measurements of GPR systems carried out in the Czech Republic and France with conclusions formulated  
48 on the basis of performed measurements are mentioned in Chapters 2 and 3. Recommendations for performance of GPR  
49 comparative measurements focused on two applications, pavement layer thickness and reinforcement position in  
50 concrete, are presented in Chapter 4.

### 51 **1.1 TECHNICAL REGULATIONS**

52 There is currently no European standard addressing the diagnostics of roads and bridges by GPR. No creation or  
53 adoption of any standards from [ASTM D6432-11](#), [ASTM D4748-10 \(2015\)](#), [ASTM D6087-08 \(2015\)](#) is currently  
54 expected within CEN.

55 However, on the national level within Europe there are guidelines and regulations targeting the diagnostics of transport  
56 infrastructure conditions using GPR. The most detailed ones are English [DMRB 7.3.2 \(2008\)](#) and [DMRB 3.1.7 \(2006\)](#),  
57 German [Merkblatt B 10 \(2008\)](#) and recommendations produced within the European project MARA-NORD in 2011.  
58 More recently, European GPR Association has published guidelines for pavement structural surveys GS1601 (2016)  
59 and the Belgian Road Research Centre has produced a recommendation guide [ME91/16](#) for pavement applications.

60 A European project COST TU1208: Civil Engineering Applications of Ground Penetrating Radar has been in progress  
61 since 2013 to 2017. The planned outcomes of the project include recommendations for the design of a new European  
62 standard. Among these, one recommendation guide is devoted to flexible pavements and another to concrete structures.  
63 The calibration procedures and verification for different types of GPR systems are always stated by manufacturers. Four  
64 basic procedures are specified in [ASTM D6087-08 \(2015\)](#).

65 **THERE IS NO STANDARD OR OFFICIAL RECOMMENDATION OF HOW TO PERFORM**  
66 **COMPARATIVE MEASUREMENTS OF GPR, FOR DIAGNOSTICS OF TRANSPORT**  
67 **INFRASTRUCTURE CONDITIONS. 1.2 SITUATION IN INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES**

68 Representatives from 13 European countries were contacted as part of project COST TU1208. At least one comparative  
69 measurement of GPR on roads was confirmed in two cases, with one business partner reporting a comparative  
70 measurement on a railway. All partners reported having no technical specifications, methodology or operational manual  
71 available for comparative measurements of GPR.

72 None of the 13 countries require a certificate to be issued by a relevant state administration body or road administrator  
73 from companies carrying out GPR diagnostics.

74 Of the 13 countries, 4 use their own specific technical specification, methodology or operational manual for the  
75 measurements by GPR. Obtained accuracies for the applications determining pavement layer thicknesses and location  
76 (depth) of reinforcement in concrete pavements range from 3 to 15 %, depending on specific layer thickness and its  
77 location.

78 The determination of electromagnetic signal propagation speed is performed using different methods including usage of  
79 table values for corresponding pavement layers, method of reflective coefficient for horn antennas, CMP method  
80 (Common Mid Point)/WARR (Wide-Angle Reflection and Refraction) as well as measuring relative permittivity, e.g.  
81 with the use of Percometer. The most commonly used method is using drilled cores, measuring layer thickness in  
82 isolation joints, and measuring height before and after the laying of pavement layers. When determining the  
83 reinforcement depth location, software analysis of hyperbole shapes from measurement reports is used.

84 There are only few documented results of GPR comparative measurements performed in-situ, e.g. project reports of  
85 MARA-NORD and American research programme SHRP: Strategic Highway Research Program.

86 [Some papers point out the importance to develop a methodology for calibrating GPR devices and to verify their proper](#)  
87 [operation. Results of several tests carried out in order to evaluate the stability of a GPR system working with different](#)  
88 [antennas was described \[17-18\], a relationship between GPR frequencies, optimal thresholds, and signal accuracy was](#)

89 analysed [19]. Other papers focus directly to signal processing techniques in relation to the quality of the acquired data  
90 and the purposes of the surveys [20].

91 The results of comparative measurements of pavement layer thickness are also reported by sources outside Europe. An  
92 American paper [21] describes a comparison of four non-destructive methods: GPR, IE (impact echo), MIRA  
93 (ultrasonic pulse-echo) and MISW (multiple impact surface waves). Layer thickness was measured on concrete roads  
94 and asphalt pavements. The measurements of GPR using different producers were performed with the use of different  
95 central transmission frequencies and antenna types (dipole antennas, horn antennas, 3D device). Some of the stated  
96 GPR measurement accuracies are alarming. In comparison with core drilling, the relative error for the determination of  
97 concrete pavement thickness by GPR ranged from 6 % to 83 %.

98 The above emphasises that accuracies reached by GPR measurements need to be specified in greater details, ideally  
99 detailing comparative measurements with a larger number of GPR systems from different manufacturers and operators.

## 100 **2. COMPARATIVE MEASUREMENTS OF GPRs**

101 There are several ways to approach in-situ comparative measurements. We can find inspiration from other NDT  
102 methods that are used for pavement diagnostics, e.g. measurement of longitudinal unevenness of pavement surfaces  
103 (IRI parameter), skid resistance of pavement surfaces (friction coefficient), and bearing capacity of roads (deflections  
104 under loading). The replicability of measurements produced by different devices directly measuring the same road  
105 pavement parameter are determined. Comparative measurements of these parameters are performed at both national and  
106 international level, for example through the Dutch programme CROW (bearing capacity), European projects  
107 ROSANNE (skid resistance), and FILTER (unevenness).

108 In the case that it is possible to compare the measured results of the real condition, a comparison is done with the results  
109 of measurement performed by a reference device with higher accuracy (e.g. in case of unevenness).

110 In the case this cannot be performed, the golden centre (e.g. for measurement of friction coefficient and pavement  
111 deflections) is determined for results of individual devices involved in the comparison. However, this method is more  
112 complicated and may lead to a higher error.

113 After participating in the comparative measurement, the owners of devices that met the set requirements of repeatability  
114 and reproducibility receive a certificate for measuring the particular parameter from a relevant body of the state  
115 administrator/ administrator of transport infrastructure.

116 Regarding GPR, the comparative measurement should include at least 2 applications:

- 117 - Pavement layer thickness measurement (including bound and unbound layers from different materials).
- 118 - Localization of built-in reinforcement (e.g. in cement concrete).

119 Examples of comparative measurements performed in the Czech Republic and France are described in the following  
120 three chapters.**2.1 COMPARATIVE MEASUREMENT OF GPRS IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC – PAVEMENT LAYER**  
121 **THICKNESS DETERMINATION**

122 Comparative measurements of devices used for measuring variable pavement characteristics are performed in the Czech  
123 Republic in accordance with technical specification of the Ministry of Transport [TP 207](#): Accuracy trial. The  
124 specification deals with measuring surface characteristics and pavement deflections.

125 In 2015, the authors of this paper designed a method to extend accuracy experiment to continuous measurement of  
126 pavement layer thickness by GPR on reference road sections. The design is based on the results of the first performed  
127 comparative GPR measurement on a two-kilometre motorway section with three bridge structures (six organizations  
128 participated in the experiment).

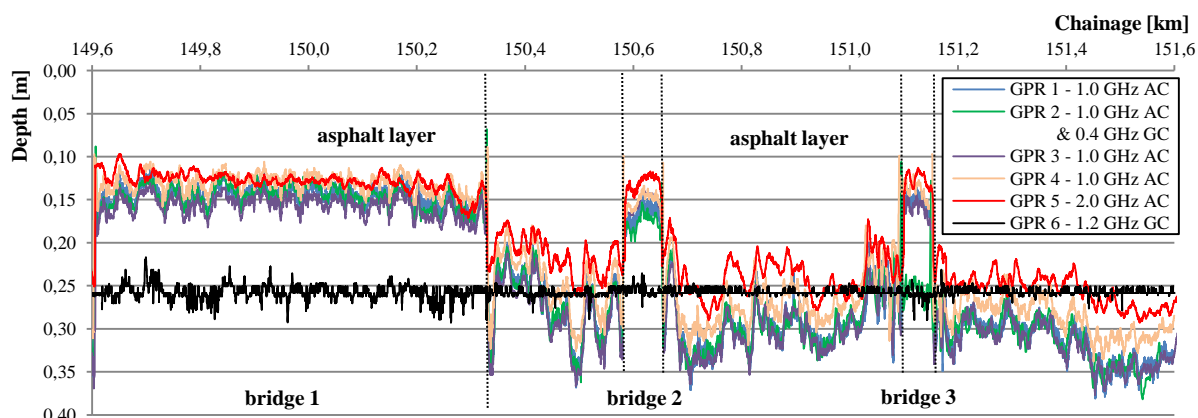
129 The specific measurement of total thickness of asphalt layers was performed in the middle of the right (slow) traffic  
130 lane. Individual measurements were performed without traffic restrictions, under traffic flow speed, and were performed  
131 on different days. The decision concerning used signal processing methodology was left to each participant according to  
132 its common practice. The real thickness was verified by several core drills and the evaluation was made in two levels.

133 In the first level the participants had no available information from drills and each comparative measurement participant  
134 needed to determine electromagnetic signal propagation velocity using their own methods. In this case, the signal  
135 propagation velocity used by individual participants ranged between 0.116 and 0.150 m/ns.

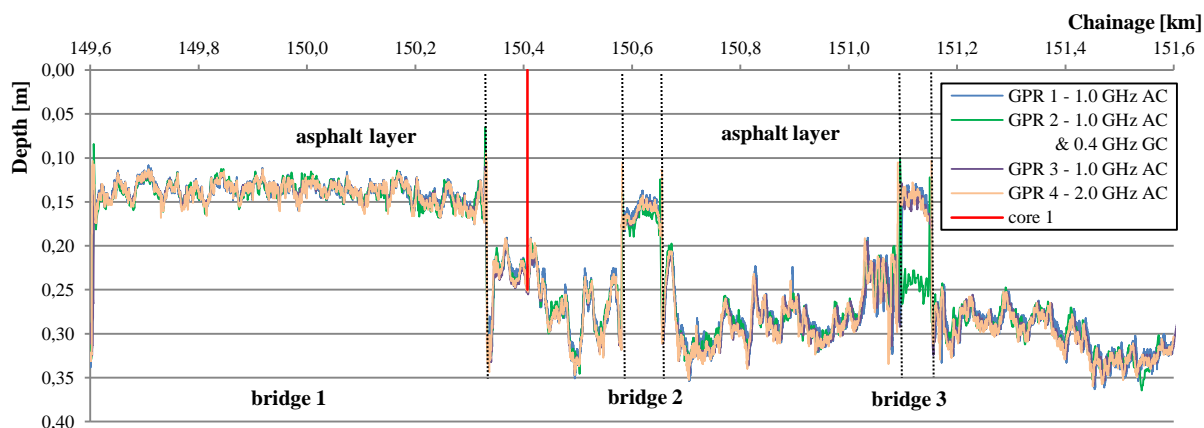
136 In the second level, the experiment participants were given information from one drill. Based on known asphalt layer  
137 thickness in a specific place, it was possible to determine the electromagnetic signal propagation velocity more  
138 accurately and reached an average value of around 0.130 m/ns. The difference between individual evaluation levels  
139 along the whole monitored road section is presented in [Fig. 1](#).

140 When evaluating comparative measurement results, the measurements of two organizations were disqualified. One  
141 organization failed to maintain the recommended steps of measuring and the layer courses provided insufficient detail.

142 The other stated a constant thickness of asphalt layers of approx. 260 mm for the whole monitored section.



143



145

146 **Fig. 1** Comparative measurement of road layer thickness on reference motorway section – results of first evaluation

147 level (top), results of second evaluation level after calibration with the use of core drill (bottom), AC – means air-

148 coupled antenna, GC – means ground-coupled antenna

149 The asphalt layer thicknesses on bridges determined by the organizations and marked GPR 1 to GPR 4 are very similar;  
 150 they only differ in one case, on bridge No. 3 (see Fig. 1). The error was made on identifying the edge between the  
 151 asphalt layer and concrete bridge deck.

152 When comparing the results of 4 organizations, individual 5-metre segments were taken into account. The difference in  
 153 determined asphalt layer thickness from the average value on bridges ranged from 3 to 15 mm, i.e. 1 - 9 % of layer  
 154 thickness. The difference in determined asphalt layer thickness from the average value outside bridges ranged from 10  
 155 to 18 mm, i.e. 3 - 5 % of layer thickness.

156 Along with the evaluation of measured layer thickness, driven distance on the monitored section was also compared.

157 The maximum error was within 4 metres, i.e. less than 0.2 %.

## 158 2.2 COMPARATIVE MEASUREMENT OF GPRs IN FRANCE – PAVEMENT LAYER THICKNESS DETERMINATION

159 In the 2000, the Technical and Scientific Network (TSN) of the French Ministry of Environment, Energy and Sea  
 160 organized a comparative experiment for their different GPR systems for road layer thicknesses measurement.

161 Three GPR systems were tested with several central frequency antennas: 400 and 900 MHz ground-coupled antennas  
 162 and 1000, 1500 and 2000 MHz air-coupled antennas.

163 The final objective was to estimate the global uncertainty on layer thickness measurements, including the influence of  
 164 time window effect, reference (coring location), scan picking, ambient temperature, height of antenna, speed of  
 165 acquisition, repeatability and reproducibility.

166 Three types of course were tested; asphalt, concrete and unbound layers, implying several types of interfaces with  
 167 specific electromagnetic contrasts and depths to detect. Interfaces between two successive courses are generally easy to

168 detect, due to their high electromagnetic contrast, and correspond to a first family tests (Fam. 1). A second family of  
 169 tests gathered all the other interfaces, which is more difficult to detect either due to low electromagnetic contrast  
 170 between two similar layers or to important and variable depths (Fam. 2).

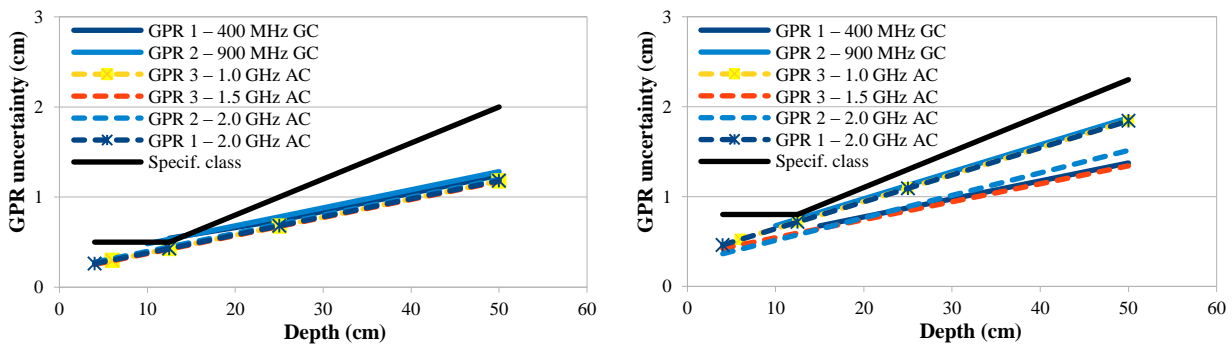
171 This notion of family of interface was designed by the TSN and validated by the Ministry, which also set some specific  
 172 class of accuracy, limiting the uncertainty of road thickness estimation, in relation to road managers requirements.

173 Static or nearly static measurements were done on homogeneous granite slabs (thicknesses: 48, 50 and 52 mm) and on  
 174 an indoor 5-m long road test-site (presenting 4 types of structures). Similarly, dynamic measurements were done on the  
 175 same days (same time of day), on 9 road sections of 100m long, at 40 km/h for air-coupled antennas and 30 km/h for  
 176 towed system supporting ground-coupled antennas. For the dynamic test focused on the speed acquisition, vehicles  
 177 rolled from 20 to 60 km/h.

178 GPR data processing steps were following:

- 179 - on the granite slabs and the 5m road test site, the stability of the amplitude pickings was studied using their  
 180 averages and standard-deviations,
- 181 - on the 100m road sections, after an adjustment of the longitudinal location, the calculation of the average and  
 182 standard-deviation of GPR scans for every measurement were performed.

183 The decision concerning used signal processing methodology was left to each participant according to its common  
 184 practice. While analyzing the results, the experimental campaign showed the negligible effect of the height of the  
 185 antennas, the ambient temperature, the time window and vehicle velocity on measurements. The uncertainty of  
 186 reference (choice and measurement of cores) on the estimation of the layers along the sections was evaluated to 0.8 mm.  
 187 The global uncertainties of the GPR systems remains are depicted in Fig. 2 for the two families of layer interfaces. All  
 188 systems remain under the requested class of accuracy. Moreover, it is interesting to state, ground and air-coupled  
 189 present similar uncertainties, and that these ones do not increase as the central frequency of antennas decreases.



190  
 191 **Fig. 2** Uncertainties of GPR measurements for several systems for different kind of interfaces: Fam. 1 (left) and Fam. 2  
 192 (right), AC – means air-coupled antenna, GC – means ground-coupled antenna



193 **2.3 COMPARATIVE MEASUREMENT OF GPRs IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC – LOCALIZATION OF DOWELS IN CONCRETE**  
 194 **PAVEMENTS**

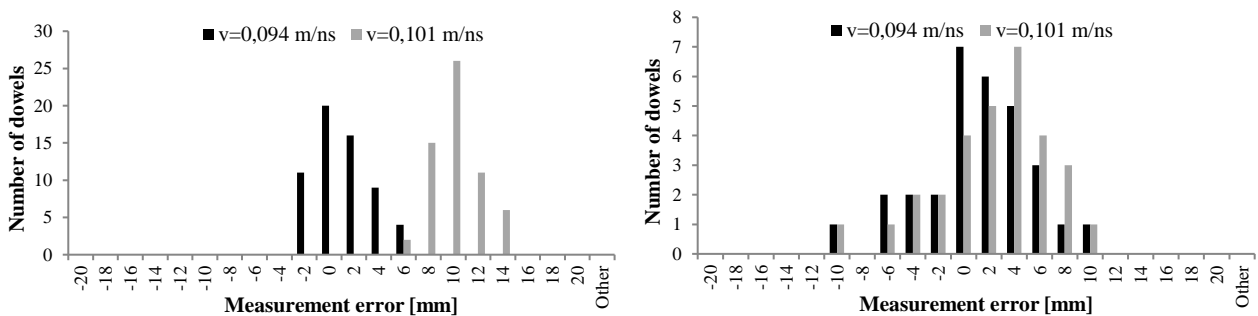
195 The authors of the paper have focused on the diagnostics of localization of dowels in concrete pavements since 2009,  
 196 which is when they started using a two-channel GPR, doing experiments on laboratory samples, and subsequently  
 197 performing measurements on roads in-situ [9].

198 The first comparative measurement of dowel localizations in concrete pavement was performed by the Czech Road and  
 199 Motorway Directorate in 2010. Based on comparison of determined and real position of three dowels, found by core  
 200 drilling, the GPR method accuracy was found insufficient. A subsequent analysis discovered that inaccuracies were  
 201 caused by the incorrect determination of electromagnetic signal propagation velocity by individual measurement  
 202 participants.

203 Following this, several comparative measurements were performed testing road sections built by companies specialized  
 204 in laying concrete pavements, when more attention was paid to the correct determination of electromagnetic signal  
 205 propagation velocity. The result was higher accuracy in localization of dowels and their tilt.

206 An example of a comparative measurement result in 2012 is shown in Fig. 3. The measurement concerned a concrete  
 207 pavement joint with 30 dowels in different positions. The measurements were performed in two lines, 200 mm left and  
 208 right of the joint. EM signal propagation speed was determined by the CMP method ( $v=0.101$  m/ns).

209 Subsequently, the pavement was cut in these lines along the entire height and the positions of individual dowels were  
 210 measured in horizontal and vertical direction. The data helped to determine the real depth of dowel position and  
 211 calculate their tilt. Based on the real depth of a single dowel, the electromagnetic signal propagation velocity through  
 212 concrete was adjusted ( $v=0.094$  m/ns). Fig. 3 presents inaccuracy of the localization of dowels and their vertical tilt, and  
 213 the cause of the inaccuracy due to the electromagnetic signal propagation velocity used. While the electromagnetic  
 214 signal propagation speed plays a crucial role in the depth determination, it does not play a major role for the vertical tilt  
 215 calculation.



216 **Fig. 3 GPR measurement errors when using different electromagnetic signal propagation velocity – determination of**  
 217 **depth of dowels in the joint (left), vertical tilt of dowels (right)**

219

220 The distrust of contractors as well as road administrators of this testing method initiated the need to minimize  
221 inaccuracies of GPR measurements and to perform comparative measurements like with other NDT methods which are  
222 used for road diagnostics.

223 In 2015 another comparative measurement of GPRs adjusted for localization of dowels and tie bars in concrete  
224 pavements was performed with two-channel GPR systems, see Fig. 4, left.

225 Several isolation joints between two pavement sections were selected where the locations of dowels and tie bars were  
226 measured directly in the joint (Fig. 4, right) with use of a calibrated steel rule measure and a tape measure. The  
227 thickness of concrete above the reinforcement was recorded vertically and distances of reinforcement centres were  
228 recorded horizontally. The following day a new section the concrete pavement was laid and it was measured by GPR  
229 devices after it hardened.



230

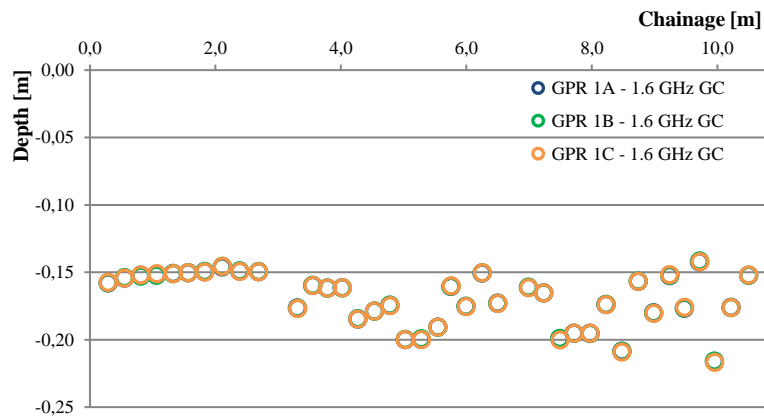
231 *Fig. 4 Two-channel GPR device for localization of dowels and tie bars in concrete pavement (left), method of direct*  
232 *localization of reinforcement in isolation joints (right)*

233 The signal processing included the following steps: time-zero correction, signal amplification, signal filtering (vertical  
234 IIR filters, background removal), migration velocity analysis and interactive interpretation.

235 Monitored parameters for the evaluation of measured position of dowels and tie bars were as follows:

- 236 - Stationing in a joint (horizontal distances of dowel and tie bar centres).  
237 - Depth of placement in a joint (related to the centre of dowel and tie bar).  
238 - Tilt in horizontal and vertical direction (measured by 2 antennas overrunning in three different positions; up to 6  
239 positions of dowel/tie bar recorded).

240 Repeatability was analysed through three identical overruns made with each cart during the localization of dowels (Fig.  
241 5) and tie bars. When localizing tie bar positions, the results were compared with the real positions in the isolation joints  
242 (Fig. 6).

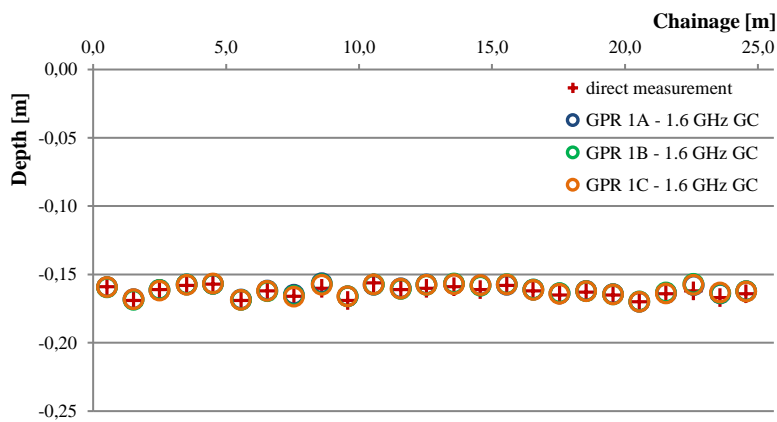


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**Fig. 5** Repeatability of measurements – dowel positions in a construction joint – GPR device 1, three overruns, GC – means ground-coupled antenna

245



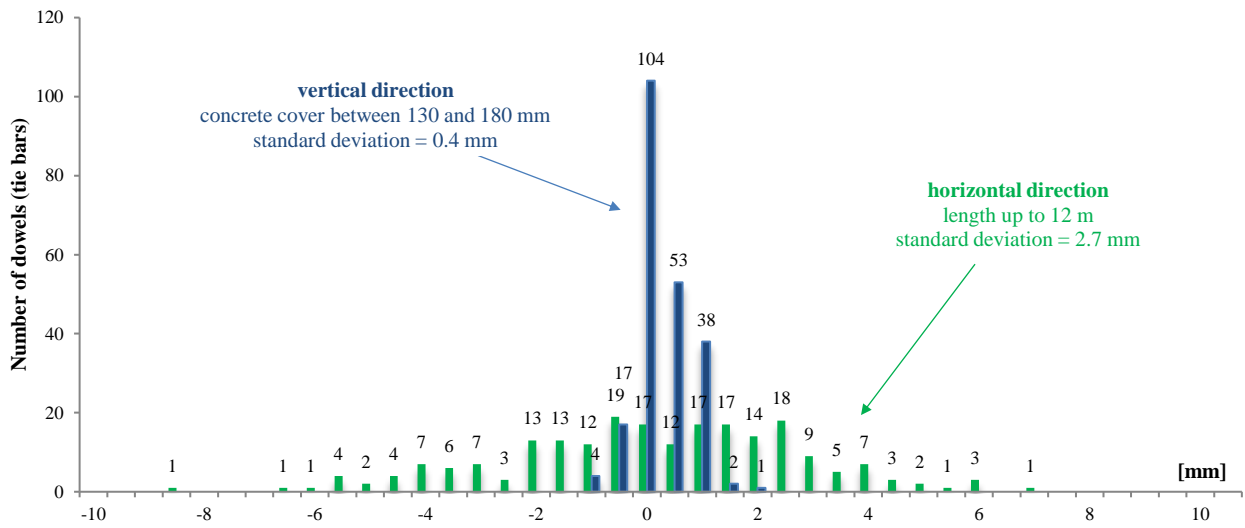
246

**Fig. 6** Localization of tie bars in an isolation joint in comparison with real position – GPR device 1, three overruns, GC – means ground-coupled antenna

248

249 In order to determine built-in reinforcement location more accurately three overruns by a two-channel GPR device in  
 250 three different lines were performed, i.e. up to six positions of a dowel or tie bar were recorded. Subsequently, the  
 251 linearization of these points was performed.

252 The differences in location of monitored 220 dowels and tie bars in isolation joints measured in 2015, are shown in Fig.  
 253 7 concerning repeatability and Fig. 8 concerning comparison with true position.

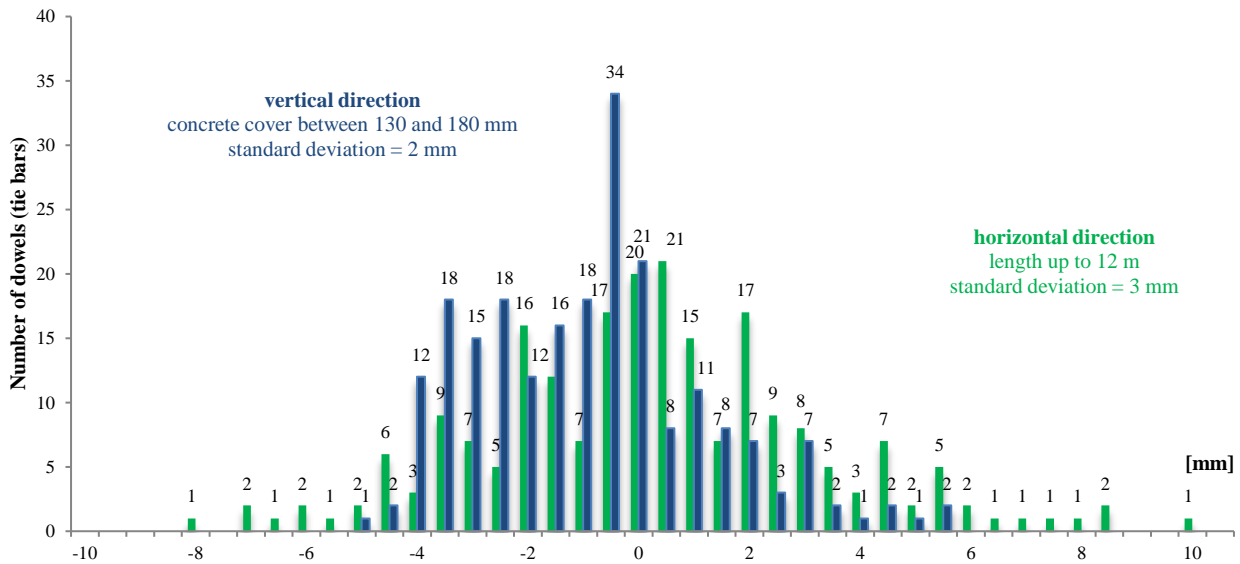


254

255 **Fig 7** Repeatability of GPR measurements in horizontal and vertical direction for three overruns – results from 220

256

*dowels and tie bars in isolation joints*



257

258 **Fig 8** Accuracy of GPR measurements in horizontal and vertical direction – results from 220 dowels and tie bars in

259

*isolation joints*

260 Based on all results of GPR measurements, the following conclusions were made:

261 - repeatability for 3 overruns:

262 • in horizontal direction up to 7 mm,

263 • in vertical direction up to 2 mm.

264 - accuracy for locating dowels (tie bars):

265 • in horizontal direction up to 10 mm,

266 • in vertical direction up to 5 mm.

267 Electromagnetic signal propagation velocity was determined on concrete pavement isolation joint. The accuracy in  
268 vertical direction is particularly influenced by the non-homogeneous nature of material (cement concrete) above the  
269 dowels (tie bars) in question. The accuracy in horizontal direction is particularly influenced by inaccuracy of the  
270 localization device, which is mounted on a wheel of the mobile device, correct setting of the beginning of measurement,  
271 and total driven distance, which was up to 12 m in this case.

### 272 **3. CONCLUSIONS FROM PERFORMED MEASUREMENTS**

273 In order to reach required accuracy, it is necessary to maintain certain rules for measuring and for evaluating the data  
274 measured by GPR.

275 The optimum setting of the equipment for a specific application includes an option to select the number of channels,  
276 frequency of antennas, speed of measurement, measured data localization method, etc. The option is often left for the  
277 device operators, since it is closely related to available devices.

278 The effect of correct determination of electromagnetic signal propagation velocity through a tested environment was  
279 found to be the most decisive factor for accurate determination of layer thickness or reinforcement depth. Standards and  
280 technical specifications show table values of electromagnetic signal propagation velocity and relative permittivity for  
281 different materials. Their ranges are considerably high for road materials, such as cement concrete and asphalt concrete,  
282 particularly due to the age and condition of the layer, non-homogeneous, different moisture of materials, etc.  
283 Relative permittivity of cement concrete in tables ranges from 4 to 20 and the corresponding electromagnetic signal  
284 propagation velocity from 67 to 150 mm/ns. Using the table values for the data evaluation may lead to a considerable  
285 error. Based on Czech experience, the electromagnetic signal propagation velocity through concrete pavement ranges  
286 between 85 and 115 mm/ns.

287 Ideally, the specific electromagnetic signal propagation velocity should be determined with the use of core drills or by  
288 directly measuring of thickness or depth. If they cannot be used, CMP, WARR and other methods are employed to  
289 reach the maximum accuracy of this value.

290 Prerequisite for correct determination of horizontal position is sufficient accuracy of the device used for measuring of  
291 driven distance and the evenness of the measured surface. When measuring pavement layer thickness, the monitored  
292 road section is divided into smaller units to prevent serious errors. In some cases it was obvious that the depths are  
293 determined correctly but the driven distance was incorrect, which is particularly hazardous for the determination of  
294 electromagnetic signal propagation speed with the use of core drills performed in a specific position.

295 Regarding laboratory measurements, high accuracy is often reached particularly when determining the position of built-  
296 in reinforcement in horizontal and vertical directions. Repeatability of GPR measurements is usually not a problem.

297 The measurement data is processed with the use of different software with the aim of emphasizing the required areas  
298 and suppress undesirable effects, such as passing vehicles, electric power network, etc. The data from measurements  
299 performed at new structures, rather than at older ones, are much clearer, which is particularly obvious at layers from  
300 asphalt concrete.

301 The interpretation of pavement layer thickness measurement data is performed in graphic form where all measured  
302 values along the whole monitored road section are shown. The evaluation uses the table form, where it is necessary to  
303 select an interval for the calculation of averages of measured thickness. This may be a source of inaccuracies at a  
304 sudden change in thickness, particularly in combination with inaccurate driven distance measurement.

305 The interpretation of built-in reinforcement position from measurement data, e.g. dowels in concrete pavement, is  
306 easier, since every reinforcement element is evaluated separately. The table marks the dowels which fail to meet the  
307 requirements for tilt and the accuracy of placement depth.

#### 308 **4. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PERFORMANCE OF GPR COMPARATIVE MEASUREMENTS**

309 Based on the existing experience, comparisons of different GPR devices, and performance of comparative  
310 measurements of GPRs and other NDT devices, the below mentioned general recommendations were formulated which  
311 are specifically related to two GPR applications, i.e. measuring of pavement layer thickness and localization of built-in  
312 reinforcement.

313 During the first phase, it is necessary to check the functionality of the GPR system, ideally on a reference sample from  
314 homogeneous material verifying the signal shape (time course, amplitude, signal-bias ratio) and its stability. This check  
315 should be made in regular intervals even outside comparative measurements. Related recommendations are shown in  
316 e.g. [ASTM D6087-08 \(2015\)](#), [19].

317 Thereafter, the process should be verified on a real structure or a large-scale testing sample. However, in case of testing  
318 sample there is a disadvantage that the results will become known over time and it is necessary to produce a new  
319 sample.

320 Apart from checking the correct determination of layer thickness/reinforcement depth, it is also necessary to verify  
321 devices used for measuring of a driven distance/measurement localization (DMI - Distance Measuring Instrument,  
322 GNSS - Global Navigation Satellite System).

323 Comparative measurements must generally be performed on the same day and under same conditions for all  
324 measurement participants.

325 Regarding the GPR, repeatability and reproducibility of individual devices should be performed. Setting specific  
326 requirements will be crucial, since they must reflect the purpose and required measurement accuracy.

327 **4.1 Pavement layer thickness**

328 The requirement for measurement accuracy needs to be based on the measurement purpose which the devices are to  
329 serve. European project ROSANNE deals with three different precision classes:

- 330 - Level 1 – measurements in construction contracts.
- 331 - Level 2 – measurements for the network monitoring and research.
- 332 - Level 3 – measurements for other purposes.

333 The specific requirement should be defined by a relevant state administration body, road administrator or other end  
334 users of measurement results.

335 The equipment used and signal processing methodology could be unspecified, however, it is necessary to state whether  
336 the measurement is performed along a single longitudinal line or it is a 3D measurement, to state required depth range,  
337 and minimum measurement speed.

338 Testing road sections should include traditional structures with asphalt concrete layers, or with concrete pavement  
339 respectively (in case they are applied on the road network). Thickness of new pavement layers can be measured by a  
340 laser scanner before and after their laying, which makes information on the real condition more accurate. Regarding  
341 older pavements, core drilling is made for carefully pre-selected positions. It is recommended to have at least 100 m  
342 long sections with changing layer thicknesses at their length.

343 The measurement should be performed by at least 3 repeated, consecutive, overruns of GPR devices. The evaluation of  
344 the measured data should ideally be performed at two levels, at first without calibration, while every participant  
345 determines the electromagnetic signal propagation velocity with their own method, and then with information from core  
346 drilling (location of drilling, individual layer thickness). Evaluation should be applied on both the repeatability of  
347 measurements by individual devices, and the difference between determined and real layer thickness. It is recommended  
348 to make averages every 1 metre for the measured thickness, which may be adjusted based on the frequency and extent  
349 of layer thickness changes.

350 **4.2 Reinforcement position – with focus on dowels in concrete pavement**

351 Although this is a different GPR application, a number of recommendations are similar to pavement layer thickness  
352 measurement.

353 It is diagnostics of small depths, therefore, vertical accuracy is usually required up to 1 cm (Czech technical  
354 specification of Ministry of Transport [TP 233](#), [9]).

355 It is recommended during the measurement to use at least a two-channel device, which measures the dowel location in  
356 two points within a single overrun. Therefore, besides the location, it is possible to determine the tilt of dowels, which is  
357 evaluated.

358 The measurement should be performed on several joints of concrete pavement, where sufficient variability of dowel  
359 position (depth, spatial position) was determined in advance. The test sections should be produced with the use of at  
360 least two different concrete mixtures. The measurements should be performed at least three times, due to the evaluation  
361 of repeatability. The evaluation of the measured data should ideally be made at two levels, at first without calibration,  
362 while every participant determines the electromagnetic signal propagation velocity with their own method, and then  
363 with information on a position of one dowel for each concrete mixture (depth in the joint). The accuracy of localization  
364 of dowel in horizontal and vertical direction in a selected place, usually in a joint, and its tilt (horizontal and vertical  
365 displacement) is evaluated.

## 366 **5. CONCLUSION**

367 The performance of in-situ comparative measurements of GPR systems used for diagnostics of road infrastructure is  
368 currently not required and organised at national and international levels.

369 The paper presents the results of the measurements performed in the Czech Republic and France with achieved  
370 accuracies. Based on the existing experience and results of comparative measurements the general recommendations  
371 were formulated, which are specifically related to two GPR applications, i.e. measuring of pavement layer thickness and  
372 localization of built-in reinforcement. This methodology was integrated in technical specification of the Czech Ministry  
373 of Transport [TP 207](#): Accuracy trial, where a new chapter focused on GPR comparative measurement was added in  
374 2017.

375

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