

John Barber discusses Ability's Dy-On-Crete® Mark 2 and its applications for simulated rock work in a variety of applications including Melbourne's EastLink.

John Barber - over 25 years industry experience.

John Barber specialises in the creation of simulated concrete environments - an artform which results in a variety of creative structural solutions that can blend harmoniously within a particular environment which can include: simulated landscapes, sculpture, artificial rock and waterfall constructions, animal enclosures in zoos, concrete features in parks and public spaces as well as along freeways and roads utilised for strengthening banks and for noise abatement concrete structures.

Work along the new EastLink freeway.

John has created areas of simulated rock work to match sections of land along the sides of the freeway, required to fortify and to match the look of the banks that either already had natural rock exposure or had decorative natural stones in place. Occasionally John is asked to create features that stand out, but for this particular project, the opposite needed to occur and the simulated rock needed to blend in with the already existing exposed rock.



Why create simulated rock?

Creating these simulated stones and rock areas assists in keeping labour costs down as transportation and placement of rock is an expensive and labour intensive procedure. The artificial rocks are created with rubber molds with imprints of real rocks, are coloured initially with a base colour, then a final more realistic looking coating is applied and then they are attached to a reinforced concrete background area.

Ability products used for this purpose.

John mixes in Ability's **abilox**® powder colouring pigments as base colours for his artificial rock mixes and then applies **Dy-On-Crete**® **Mark 2** liquid colours to colour and match as realistically as possible the surrounding natural rock areas as he has found that ordinary latex based paints fade out shortly after application while both the Ability **Dy-On-Crete**® **Mark 2** and **abilox**® colours have proven durability against all weather conditions lasting well over 15 years since their application on a variety of projects.

Why Ability products?

As well as being water based and easy to use, **Dy-On-Crete**® **Mark 2** comes in a range of 'natural earth' colours offering paler colours to assist with colour mixing. John has found that one of the more important benefits of **Dy-On-Crete**® **Mark 2** colours are that they are non-toxic which means that they can also be used safely on projects such as aquariums or where animals may come into contact with his concrete creations and John has utilised these colour coatings at both the Melbourne and Sydney zoos.

Focus on use of environmentally friendly products.

John is passionate about this kind of work as it is very creative and varies from job to job. He feels that although it is mainly concrete based, it is continually evolving and is becoming much more environmentally friendly and he is working hard to lessen his carbon 'footprint' by using environmentally friendly, highly durable, non toxic products wherever possible.

