

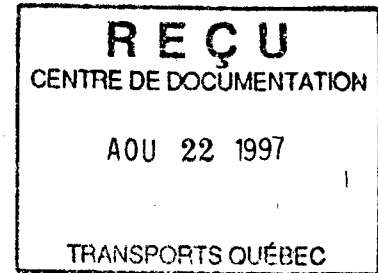
VISUAL STUDY METHOD FOR NOISE BARRIERS

Abstract

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Résumé

VISUAL STUDY METHOD FOR NOISE BARRIERS

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Résumé anglais . English abstract

For several years, the Service de l'environnement of the ministère des Transports du Québec has used a specific visual method for studying noise barriers along existing roads or freeways. This method, whose objectives are the «verifiability» and «reproducibility» of the evaluation made, has become more practical to use.

The complete process of producing a report is divided into four phases : the preparatory phase, the survey phase, the elaboration phase and the publishing phase. The visual assessment per se is carried out in the first three phases and may be included or not in a more comprehensive report.

Normally, the visual study begins when, on the basis of the acoustic assessment, a tentative solution is proposed that identifies by section the type of screen recommended, its location and its minimum dimensions.

The preparatory phase includes the tasks involved in roughly defining a study zone, in researching documents and in examining the tentative solution.

The survey phase consists basically of an inventory on site of the relevant visual elements and other characteristics. It includes a structured photographic survey that considers so-called «representative» and «strategic» views, and results in the constitution of a separate photographic file.

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The elaboration phase is the heart of the process. It includes among other things the following tasks :

- visual simulation of a noise barrier location
- demarcation of the visual access zone
- production of an inventory plan
- definition of landscape units
- division of the noise barrier into visually significant sections

then, for each section defined :

- a summary of the inventory
- an evaluation of the intensity of the impact
- the establishment of mitigation measures
- an estimate

This phase is carried out according to various rules. The visual simulation of the noise barrier location represents, on a realistic background, only the spatial scope of the proposed screen as defined in the tentative solution. Then, the study zone considered is reduced to the visual access zone included in the rough study zone.

A practical feature of this method is the use of tables for a number of tasks, placing the emphasis on the data rather than on a text. The text of the reports is then used mainly to focus on the highlights.

Key words : noise barrier, environment, visual study, landscape

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