

CALIFORNIA ASPHALT INSIDER

The latest news and views from the California Asphalt Pavement Association

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CALENDAR

(Always on-line [HERE](#))

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Greetings!

This weekly bulletin contains the latest news and information of interest to the asphalt pavement industry in California. Please feel free to distribute this newsletter to others who may be interested in asphalt pavements.

→ Caltrans names Cory Binns new Deputy Director for Maintenance & Operations

Longtime Caltrans executive manager Cory Binns was recently named the department's Deputy Director for Maintenance & Operations, replacing Steve Takigawa, who is retiring at the end of this month.

"I look forward to working with our industry partners as we use innovative and sustainable solutions to deliver SB1 projects and maintain a safe, reliable and efficient transportation system for Californians," Binns told *Asphalt Insider* following his appointment.

Binns, who joined the department in 1999, most recently was director of the Caltrans regional operation in San Diego, District 11, and since August has been acting Deputy Director for Project Delivery/Chief Engineer. Binns and Takigawa were both on hand last October to present recognition awards to CalAPA members and Caltrans staff for their work on rewriting the department's new pavement smoothness specification. A previous *Asphalt Insider* story about that is [HERE](#).

The personnel announcement was made in a Feb. 20 internal e-mail to Caltrans employees by Caltrans Director Toks Omishakin, who has been on the job less than four months. It is the latest in a series of management changes at the 20,000 department triggered by the changeover last year from the Brown Administration to the Newsom Administration.

The appointment of Binns officially takes effect March 1, but there will be a transition period as Takigawa will not depart his position into retirement until the end of this month.

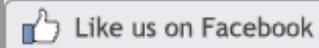
The director of Maintenance & Operations is one of the two co-sponsors of the Caltrans-industry Pavement & Materials Partnering Committee (formerly known as the Rock Products Committee), which oversees the review and updating of Caltrans specifications, test methods and, as they relate to materials, construction standards.

Takigawa has been a driving force behind weaving industry input into the Caltrans decision-making process as it relates to asphalt and



Cory Binns (left) and Steve Takigawa (right) share a light moment with Blair Anderson of Caltrans during a pavement smoothness recognition event last year in Sacramento.

SOCIALIZE



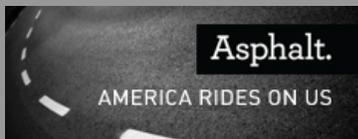
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Asphalt is used on about 95 percent of paved roads in California and across the U.S. Why? Because it's smooth, quiet, safe, durable and 100 percent recyclable. Visit the [Asphalt Pavement Alliance](#) website learn more about why asphalt is the right choice now more than ever.



GET TECHNICAL

Are you an engineer, designer or technical professional who makes decisions on pavement type selection? The DriveAsphalt website has technical reports and other resources may be just what you're looking for. Click [HERE](#) for more information.



construction materials-related issues. A recent rewrite of the PMPC charter a few years ago included a name change, and the term "partnering" was inserted into the title at Takigawa's insistence. Takigawa was a frequent participant in CalAPA conferences and other events, and was known for his accessibility and no-nonsense approach to addressing the sometimes contentious agency-industry relationship.

"Partnership is about listening and learning," Takigawa said during the pavement smoothness recognition event last Oct. 17 at Caltrans Headquarters in Sacramento. "I think this is what partnership is about -- finding something, working on it and getting it done."



Steve Takigawa speaking at a CalAPA asphalt pavement conference in Sacramento.

At the same event, Binns added, "You need to learn as you go and get something that you can administer and build and gets the product that you want."

In his e-mail announcement, Omishakin said: "I would like to thank Steve Takigawa for his dedication and contributions to the Maintenance, Equipment and Operations of the State. He noted Takigawa's numerous accomplishments during his tenure, including spearheading the managing of the massive Caltrans equipment fleet with Global Positioning System (GPS) vehicle data, converting roadside lighting to energy-efficient light-emitting diodes, and the development of a "lights out" program to use prismatic sheeting on overhead signs that allows the removal of all lighting, copper wire and catwalks. Takigawa's work in overseeing the implementation of an Integrated Maintenance Management Program earned the International Honors Laureates' Medal from Computer World.

Binns, a 1991 graduate of the University of California at Irvine with a Bachelor of Science Degree in engineering, worked in the private sector prior to joining Caltrans in 1991. During his Caltrans career he worked in multiple positions in the divisions of Design, Environmental Engineering, Construction and Maintenance. He was named chief deputy director of District 11 in 2012.

Omishakin noted that Binns was a 2017 recipient of the "Honorable Ray LaHood Award" from the San Diego Chapter of the WTS. The award recognizes someone who "has actively led by example in seeking opportunities women and minorities," Omishakin said in his announcement. Additional information about the recognition is [HERE](#).

The department also announced that Gustavo Dallarda will continue to serve as acting District 11 director until the position is filled permanently.

In the complex Caltrans organizational structure, the



Steve Takigawa (left) chats with Alan French of DeSilva Gates during a break at a CalAPA Asphalt Pavement Conference in Sacramento.

CalAPA

California Asphalt Pavement Association (CalAPA)

Mailing address:
P.O. Box 981300
West Sacramento, CA 95798

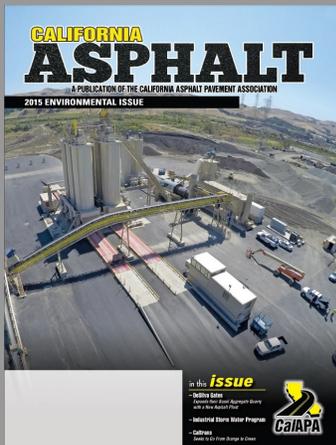
Main office:
1550 Harbor Blvd., Suite 211
West Sacramento, CA 95691

(916) 791-5044 (phone)

BACK ISSUES

Did you miss an issue of the *California Asphalt Insider*? No problem! Past editions of the newsletter are available at the CalAPA newsletter [archive page](#).

MAGAZINE



CalAPA produces a highly regarded magazine, *California Asphalt*, and an annual membership directory. To view current and past issues of the magazine, click [HERE](#). For advertising sales information, click [HERE](#) or call Kerry Hoover with Construction Marketing Services at (909) 772-3121.

STAY INFORMED

deputy director of Maintenance and Operations oversees several key elements related to pavements, a central component of SB1, the \$50 billion Road Repair & Accountability Act of 2017 that raised fuel taxes and fees to pay for repairing California's rapidly crumbling road and bridge infrastructure. The measure survived a ballot challenge in 2018, and in June of that year voters also approved by 80 percent a measure, Proposition 69, to protect transportation dollars from being diverted to non-transportation uses. The department's Division of Pavements, which is chiefly responsible for ensuring the department's pavements are safe and durable, falls within the Maintenance & Operations management silo.

The other co-sponsor of the Pavement & Materials Partnering Committee (PMPC) is the Caltrans Deputy Director for Project Delivery/Chief Engineer. Mike Keever was recently promoted to that post. Previous *Asphalt Insider* coverage of that move is [HERE](#). CalAPA Technical Director Brandon Milar is a member of the PMPC Executive Committee. The most recent version of the Caltrans organizational structure is [HERE](#). A Sept. 9, 2019 *Asphalt Insider* issue reporting on the appointment of Omishakin as the 30th director of Caltrans can be found [HERE](#).

→ Welcome aboard: J.F. Shea Construction

CalAPA is pleased to welcome its newest producer member, J.F. Shea Construction, Inc.

Based in Redding, J.F. Shea is one of the most storied names in the heavy construction field, having participated in the building of Hoover Dam, the Golden Gate Bridge, segments of the Interstate Highway System and other landmark projects.

J.F. Shea's Redding division operates aggregate, asphalt and ready-mix plants in California and Oregon, and conducts construction operations in Northern California. The division began **J.F. Shea Construction, Inc.** in 1956, and has expanded *Caring since 1881*

over the years with several acquisitions. The company's main focus has been on highways, bridges, paving and earthwork, and its emergency repair work has made national headlines. Recent major projects include the excavation and straightening of Highway 299, widening of travel lanes and bridge work in Bella Vista, a project that was completed one year ahead of schedule.

The company also won awards for its work on the Long-life Asphalt Pavement Project on Interstate 5 in Siskiyou County near Weed, Calif. The 6-mile, \$17 million project was completed ahead of schedule and under budget in 2014, and was awarded a Caltrans Partnering Leadership Award. The long-life asphalt design strategy employed on this project also earned Caltrans a national "Pavement Pioneer Award" by the Asphalt Pavement Alliance.

For more information on the company, click [HERE](#), or call (530) 246-4292.

→ News you can use: Crisis P.R. tips to consider before a crisis happens

Editor's Note: Sooner or later, something bad is going to happen. How your company or organization responds to the crisis is

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We can bring CalAPA's popular training classes to your facility at a date and time convenient to you! Click [HERE](#) to view our "hosted" training class flier, or contact CalAPA at (916) 791-5044 for details. This service is available to public agencies and CalAPA members only.

important. Just as important, however, is how your response is perceived by employees, stakeholders, regulators, stockholders, elected officials and others. What follows are some tips drawn from a CalAPA "Member Alert" sent last year on the topic. For additional information and resources, contact CalAPA.

Be prepared. Have policies and procedures in place on how to handle a crisis situation, and train employees on them periodically. Have a designated spokesperson, and a backup person, who are trained in dealing with such inquiries. Make sure they have studied up on appropriate briefing materials in advance and have practiced with an expert. All media/legislative/community inquiries should be coordinated with your company's designated media/legislative/public affairs specialist, if you have one. Sometimes it is a safety & health professional.

Be quick. Inquiries, particularly from the media, must be handled quickly due to crushing deadlines. Even if you don't have much information to report, such as in an accident situation, it is better to say something (such as that the situation is under investigation and highlight your company's commitment to safety) rather than to have a one-sided story that may contain inaccuracies.

Be truthful. Never make up facts, guess or speculate. Don't be drawn into answering questions that are outside of your area of expertise. Be very careful in rendering opinions. In an accident situation, emergency personnel or safety regulators will release official information. On private or public works jobs, the owner or agency representative is typically the designated spokesperson. Know in advance. Confine your remarks to verifiable facts about your company, your commitment to safety, being a good neighbor, etc. Sometimes it is prudent to withhold information, such as when it is incomplete or in a state of flux. In situations like this, it is OK to say "we have no information to release on that at this time" until more sound judgements can be made. No member of the media wants to report a "fact" that later turns out to be wrong. Stress that you are working to verify information to ensure it is accurate.

Be brief. Speak in short, concise "sound bites" whenever possible. Don't ramble. Stay on point. Take some time to collect your thoughts before speaking to someone, even if it means that you must call them back in a few minutes. Review some speaking points and run it past your media/legislative/public affairs specialists, if you have one. Never say "no comment" -- it comes off as evasive and rude. A statement made to the media may end up in a lawsuit, so be mindful of legal implications of what you say. Consult with your attorney if appropriate. Remember, "e-mail is forever" so be extra careful with written communications.

Be professional. Always be professional and courteous when dealing with an elected official or staff person, member of the media, regulator or concerned citizen. Avoid the temptation to be argumentative or defensive. Listen clearly to questions or statements, express genuine concern, be sure you fully understand the questions, and share appropriate information that may help ease the concerns of the person contacting you. Follow up with any commitments, including calling back with additional information. This is a branch off the customer service tree, so adopt a customer service mindset: be friendly and helpful. At the same time, be careful not to admit fault in the heat of the moment, which could lead to legal exposure. There will be plenty of time for investigations and the collection of facts, and rendering of judgments later. Be supportive of a thorough and fact-based inquiry, if appropriate, but avoid offering opinions until all the facts are in.



Remember, reputations are built and destroyed based a response to a crisis, including the perception of the response. An effective crisis communications plan and strategy goes a long way toward protecting or enhancing a company or organization's reputation and effectiveness, and building confidence with stakeholders.

→ Tech Term of the Week

Each week we highlight a word, acronym or other reference commonly used in the asphalt pavement industry in California.

COARSE GRADED AGGREGATE: An aggregate having a continuous grading in size of particles from coarse through fine with a predominance of coarse sizes.

→ Paving Pointer of the Week

Each week we highlight a key point or best practice of interest to asphalt paving crews, inspectors and others working in the field. We welcome suggestions. More tips can be found in our Asphalt Parking Lot Construction Checklist [HERE](#).

PROJECT REVIEW: Every paving project should start with a detailed review of the project's contract, plans, and specifications. Any questions arising from this review should be directed to the design firm's engineers.

→ Safety Tip of the Week

Each week we highlight a key tip or best practice to ensure that asphalt plants and paving operations are safe, comply with appropriate regulations and are accident-free. We welcome suggestions. More tips can be found in our Safety Checklists posted on our Safety Resources Page [HERE](#).

SAFETY POLICY: Make sure your company safety policy is updated periodically and distributed to all employees. A signed and dated acknowledgement from all employees that they have received, read and understand the safety policies should be filed with other employee information.

→ Quote of the Week

"The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing."

Edmund Burke

We hope you enjoy CalAPA's *Asphalt Insider*. We are committed to providing you with the most up-to-date information on technical issues, regulation, news, analysis, events and trends in California that may impact the asphalt pavement industry. Click [HERE](#) to contact us with any comments or suggestions.

Sincerely,



Visit the CalAPA Safety resources page [HERE](#).

The *California Asphalt Insider* is an official publication of the California Asphalt Pavement Association. For more information or to inquire about membership, call (916) 791-5044, or click [HERE](#) to send us an e-mail.
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