

A SIMPLE LOW-COST SURVEY OF GOODS TRANSPORT

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Where data is required in order-of-magnitude terms rather than in detailed terms, and especially where it is needed to confirm already established trends, traffic surveys can prove expensive. The paper describes a survey of goods traffic around Puttalam, which employed school children.

School Children were stationed in pairs to cover 14 traffic movements at three locations. Each pair worked one 8-hour shift. The full 24 hours therefore required 84 students. At three way or "T" junctions (such as the Kalpitiya turn-off at Palavi), six traffic flows were identified; that is, from each route of origin, traffic moved in one of two possible directions. Each student pair had to observe only one such flow thus simplifying the task. Each pair had an observation sheet ruled in columns and had to fill in the time of each lorry in the designated flow as well as observable particulars about size of lorry, degree of load and nature of cargo. Supervision was exercised by one school teacher and one project engineer who circulated between the locations especially at shift change.

The results were on the whole satisfactory. It is concluded that local school children can be used for surveys of this type, provided the data sheets are carefully and attractively designed, the children adequately instructed, and one or more teachers involved.

This work was undertaken as part of the Puttalam District Flood Protection and Drainage Project.