Rocks around embankment slides

Technically the Standards require an impact-attenuated surface across the impact area around slides. This also applies in the case of embankment slides because they are subject to forced movement. It has, however, become increasingly common in Australia to place rocks around embankment slides rather than impact attenuated surfacing.

Because the surface around an embankment slide is sloped, a unitary surface, generally rubber, is the most suitable form of impact attenuated surface. This, however, can be problematic, in that the surface can be slippery, particularly when sand is present. While this may not be a significant problem for a child, it may be for an older adult, and considering that grandparents are often the ones accompanying children to a playground, a fall on the slope can have serious consequences.

By contrast, while rocks around an embankment slide do not meet the requirements for an impact attenuated surface, they do provide a stable surface which is less prone to slipping on.

An important consideration when determining whether to accept a stable rock embankment around the slide, is the fact that users generally do not fall from the sides of a slide once in motion.

When using rocks around an embankment slide, the rocks should not protrude above the side rails of the slide, nor be greater than 600mm below the sliding surface at any point. Any sharp exposed edges should be removed. The rocks should also be located in such a way that a stable and easy climbing surface is provided. Rocks should not protrude beyond the run-out section of the slide, and the impact area around the run-out section should be impact attenuated.

Consideration could be given to placing a guardrail above the entry to the slide to prevent a user being pushed from the top while waiting to use the slide. This will also force users to enter the slide in a seated position, reducing the risk of falling to the side of the slide.

EXAMPLES