

CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN

Hello again from Perth. As this is my last Chairman's Column, before handing over to **Neil Benson** as our National Chair for 2008 and 2009, I will try to summarise some recent events and point out some important issues going forwards into 2008.

The 10th ANZ conference in Brisbane was a resounding success technically, socially and logistically. I would like to acknowledge **Burt Look, Jay Ameratunga, Chris Thorley, Brett Taylor, David Starr** and **Beng Cheah** for their hard work and dedication in organising such a successful event.

Our second national committee meeting for 2007 was on 20 October and we achieved progress on a number of fronts. I would like to congratulate **Graham Scholey** for his successful nomination as AGS Vice Chair and Treasurer for 2008 and 2009.

I am extremely pleased to be able to confirm that the Civil College, Engineers Australia, awarded the 2007 Warren Medal to **Robin Fell, Bruce Walker** and **Tony Phillips** for the LRM suite of papers published by AGS in March 2007.

It is anticipated that the next National Committee meeting will be in Melbourne on 7 March 2008. Please contact your state National Committee representative, **Peter Robinson** (AGS Secretariat), **Neil Benson** or myself if you would like any feedback or additional information in relation to the AGS national committee meetings.

COMING EVENTS

As indicated above, the 10th ANZ Conference "Common Ground" in Brisbane was very successful on all fronts and AGS and the conference committee received very positive feedback from many of the delegates. It has been confirmed that the 11th ANZ conference will be in Melbourne in 2011. Additional details of the organising committee, location and dates will be provided once they are available.

Mark Jaksa has successfully co-ordinated our distinguished speaker programme in 2006 and 2007. As part of this program **Antonio Gens** visited Australia to deliver his 2007 Rankine Lecture – "Soil-environment interactions in geotechnical engineering". As immediate past chair I will be coordinating the distinguished speaker program for 2008 and 2009. Please send me details of any visiting speakers that may be available to deliver AGS and NZGS lecture tours.

The very successful, bi-annual, **Geology for Engineers** course, run in Adelaide by **Alan Moon, Fred Baynes** and **Isabelle Lamb**, is to be run again in April 2008. Places are limited to 18 and this course is always fully booked well in advance so contact Alan Moon (alan_moon@coffey.com) if you are interested in attending.

On a related note, I understand that **Phil Flentje, Alan Moon** and **Fred Baynes** are planning to develop a short CPD course that will teach Engineering Geology. It is planned to hold the course in Wollongong in 2009 and the course will be designed to be complementary to the Adelaide Geology for Engineers course. Further details will be provided once they are finalised.

The next **YGP Conference** is due to be held in Wellington late in 2008 and the NZGS have recently set up an organising committee. All interested AGS members, below the age of 35, are invited to send abstracts to **Dr Elisabeth Bowman**, the YGP committee chair, at the Civil Engineering Department, Canterbury University, Locked Bag 4800, Christchurch 8140, NZ (elisabeth.bowman@canterbury.ac.nz).

AGS has agreed to support the safe working platforms initiative that is being rolled out by the Piling & Foundation Specialist Federation (PFSF). Details of this important initiative, that will require engagement and support from the geotechnical profession, are included in this edition of Australian Geomechanics and further details can be obtained from **Peter Goodman** of PFSF at www.pilingfederation.org.au.

It was decided at the recent ISSMGE council meeting that the 6th International Congress on Environmental Geotechnics will be held in 2010 in New Delhi, India.

AGS WEB PAGE (www.australiangeomechanics.org)

The new AGS web page, which is hosted by Engineers Australia (EA), is now live and we thank **Jamie Penrose**, of EA, and **Mark Jaksa** for their support in this area. These new arrangements will ensure that the AGS webpage is updated on a regular basis and that an improved and modernised web based service can be provided. We have decided



to maintain our original web address (www.australiangeomechanics.org) and will establish a link through to the new page before the old web page is deleted.

Mark Jaksa has volunteered to continue in the role of AGS webmaster and so please contact Mark if you have any questions or comments in relation to functionality, content, use and maintenance of our web page. Mark has dedicated significant time and energy to the development of our web page over an extended period of time and we are extremely grateful for his offer to continue in this role.

AGS AWARDS

Professor Robin Fell, formerly of the University of New South Wales, recipient of the **2007 John Jaeger Award**, presented his paper, entitled *Internal Erosion and Piping of Embankment Dams and their Foundations* at the Brisbane ANZ conference.

The **2007 E H Davis Memorial Lecture** was presented by **Dr Chris Haberfield**, of Golder Associates, in Sydney on 14 November. It is hoped that arrangements can be made for Chris to extend the lecture tour in 2008 to visit the other AGS chapters.

The AGS Joint Societies Award for the 10th ANZ conference, to recognise *the most valuable conference paper*, was decided in favour of **Misko Cubrinovski**, from the University of Christchurch, for his paper entitled *Key parameters in pseudostatic analysis of piles in liquefying sands*. Misko was congratulated on this award at the ANZ conference closing ceremony and will be presented with a certificate by the NZGS chair at a function in early 2008.

I am very pleased to be able to confirm that the 2006 Australian Geomechanics award, for the best paper published in AG that year, has been awarded to Peter Mitchell for his paper entitled *Pile design for liquefaction effects* that was published in Volume 41 No 4 in December 2006.

ISSMGE, ISRM and IAEG news

As International President of IAEG, **Fred Baynes** has been active over recent months and also managed to attend the ISSMGE council meeting in Brisbane. AGS and IAEG are attempting to address some outstanding administrative challenges in relation to registration status of AGS members who have selected IAEG membership. It is hoped that continuing effort from **Peter Robinson**, Engineers Australia, **Alan Moon** and **Fred Baynes** can resolve these issues early in 2008.

Alan Moon, our Australasian Vice President (VP) for IAEG, attended the national committee and provided a detailed report on recent IAEG issues. Additional IAEG details can be obtained from **Peter Robinson** or **Alan Moon** if required.

Professor John Carter, our Australasian VP for ISSMGE, was very active with the preparations for the ISSMGE council meeting in Brisbane which coincided with the ANZ conference. John reported on ISSMGE issues in general and, in particular, on progress with the formation of FIGS from an ISSMGE perspective. Additional details of John's detailed report can be obtained from **Peter Robinson** or **John Carter** if required.

At the ISSMGE council meeting it was decided to approve progress to the next stage of formation of FIGS. As the decision had already been ratified by ISRM and IAEG it is now clear that all three international societies are in agreement with the formation of FIGS. Additional details, in particular in relation to the nomination process for the first President of FIGS, will be provided as soon as they are available.

As our Australasian VP for ISRM **Tony Meyers** attended the national committee and provided a detailed report on ISRM and AGS/AusIMM issues. A copy of this report can be obtained from **Peter Robinson** or **Tony Meyers** if required.

Tony continues to play a proactive role in ISRM and liaison between AGS, AusIMM and the Australasian Tunnelling Society (ATS). Additional details of ISRM activity are available from the web page www.isrm.net. AGS members in ISRM are encouraged to obtain a password to gain full access to the information available from the members zone of the web page.

SECRETARIAT AND FINANCIAL ISSUES

Peter Robinson continues his effective secretariat role and our accounting, auditing and reporting continue to be up to date and transparent. We are pleased to confirm that Peter has agreed to continue with his contract with AGS on an ongoing basis to ensure provision of his services into the future.

Peter has recently made significant progress with our membership records and contact details. Please make sure that you let Engineers Australia and the AGS Secretariat know if you change your address or contact details so that we can keep the membership database up to date.

As detailed above, there are some unresolved challenges in relation to administration of individual AGS membership of the international societies. Please contact **Peter Robinson** if you have any questions or concerns in relation to the status of your membership of the international societies.

Our treasurer **Neil Benson** and **Peter Robinson** continue to actively monitor and report our financial affairs and we are pleased to note that AGS is in a healthy financial position.

LANDSLIDE RISK MANAGEMENT

AGS sent out an e-mail request for volunteers for membership of the LRM assessment panels in November 2007. We have also included this request for volunteers and details of the functions required in this role in this edition of *Australian Geomechanics*. As this edition will not reach you until December we have decided to extend the deadline for volunteer nominations until 31 January 2008.

LIAISON WITH NZGS

We welcome **Dr C Y Chin** into the role of National Chair for NZGS and look forward to ongoing productive liaison between AGS and NZGS. **Mark Eggers, Alan Moon** and **Fred Baynes** will maintain direct contact with **Ann Williams** and the NZGS team organising 2010 IAEG Congress to ensure effective support from AGS.

During recent discussions with NZGS representatives it has been agreed to adjust the previously published rotation sequence for the ISSMGE VP role between Australia and New Zealand. We have attached details of the revised Australasian VP sequence to avoid any confusion in 2009.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge **Peter Robinson, Mark Jaksa, Neil Benson** and the AGS National Committee for their support and assistance over the last two years. In particular, I would like to thank **Mark Jaksa, Fred Baynes** and **John Carter** for their support and assistance with clarification on some of the historical and international issues associated with AGS and the international societies.

I have found the role as National Chair demanding but extremely interesting and rewarding. I am comfortable that **Neil Benson**, assisted by **Peter Robinson, Graham Scholey** and myself, will now grab the baton and take AGS forwards successfully through 2008 and 2009.

Patrick MacGregor and **Sara Lanesman** continue with their excellent work on the editorial, production and management of advertising with AG and deserve our collective congratulations and thanks for their efforts and the success and quality of *Australian Geomechanics*.

Please feel free to contact me if there are any issues relating to AGS that you want to discuss with me.

Have a great and, no doubt very well deserved, Xmas break and all the best for a successful 2008. Please continue to actively engage with and support AGS in the future as the success and growth of our society is closely connected to the success and growth of our profession.

Marc Woodward (marc_woodward@coffey.com)

AGS National Chair
December 2007