

VIEW FROM THE CHAIR



Welcome to the final edition of Australian Geomechanics for 2009. This issue, my last as AGS National Chair, finds the industry with greater levels of hope and positive anticipation for the future than when my term as chair started in 2008. The last two years have also seen considerable change for the Society: the launch of the new website, improvements to our financial condition (building on the efforts of previous chairs, Mark Jaksa and Marc Woodward) and the growth of the Society to be one of the largest Technical Societies within Engineer's Australia (AGS membership currently stands at 1281). Enclosed within this edition you should find a reference DVD which contains copies of all papers published in Australia Geomechanics from 1971 to end of 2009 (this edition). Our thanks to Patrick Macgregor and Peter Robinson for their work in organizing this for the benefit of our members.

The 8th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Australian Geomechanics Society was held in Sydney (Coogee) on 2nd October 2009, followed by the National Committee meeting. At the AGM Graham Scholey was elected as AGS National Chair for 2010 and Sam MacKenzie as Vice Chair/Treasurer. We welcome Sam to the Executive of the Society. My congratulations to them both on their appointments. Service awards were presented to retiring members of the National Committee: Paul Hewitt (Sydney), Chris Boyd (Victoria) and Brenton Harris (South Australia).

At the National Committee meeting we agreed to devolve leadership responsibility for certain National Committee activities to the following state representatives:

Distinguished Speaker Program – NSW (Sydney)

Awards – Victoria

Standards Australia Reports - Newcastle

EVENTS

The **IAEG Congress** (which is held every four years) is the biggest international event in the IAEG calendar. Registration for the **Auckland IAEG Congress** is now open and a “discounted super early bird” registration fee is available until 31 March 2010 (see the congress website: www.IAEG2010). As Fred Baynes points out in the registration brochure the congress is the premier international event for engineering geologists and other interested professionals to interact, talk, learn about their science and have fun. The AGS will provide **\$1000 support for a young engineering geologist to attend the congress.**

The **AGS Engineering Geology** Course being developed by Alan Moon, Fred Baynes, Mark Eggers and Phil Flentje is now scheduled to run for the first time from Saturday 25th September to Sunday 3rd October 2010 and is based in Wollongong. This edition of the Journal includes a revised Technical Note that provides an overview of the Course. A revised website has also been developed from which further details are available: <http://www.australiangeomechanics.org/w10>. Enrolments for the course are now being accepted and it is filling quickly. Please contact Dr Phil Flentje at pflentje@uow.edu.au for more information.

With respect to our distinguished speaker programme, **Clyde Baker** from the US presented the 2009 Terzhagi Lecture in Quarter 4 of 2009. Our thanks to Aecom, for their support and assistance in organising this tour.

Tim Sullivan will present the results of the Yallourn Mine Batter Inquiry to State Chapters of AGS in 2010.

In conjunction with NZGS we are arranging a lecture tour by Professor Thomas O'Rourke from Cornell University (USA), to present the 2009 Rankine Lecture.

Organisation for the **ANZ 2012 Conference**, to be held at the Crown Promenade Hotel, Melbourne, 15-18 July 2012, is well underway under the Chairmanship of Stephen Tyson. This will be "ANZ 2012 – General Engineering in a changing world" and will centre on the difficulties and opportunities faced by the profession in the rapidly changing environmental and financial climates.

We have an excellent and dedicated organizing Committee who have put in a lot of time and effort to date. They are currently developing a conference logo and website with a view to commence publicity at the end of Q1 2010.

AGS WEB PAGE (www.australiangeomechanics.org)

Our redeveloped website was launched in March 2009. **Mark Jaks**a continues 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.

There are constant updates for conference, seminars, Chapter events and award information. Photos from members would be welcomed and will be displayed on the web site. These can be sent to the Secretariat.

AGS AWARDS

The EH Davis Memorial Lecture for 2009 was awarded to **Professor Buddhima Indraratna**. Professor Indraratna is the Head of Civil, Mining and Environmental Engineering, University of Wollongong, and the Founding Director of the Centre for Geomechanics and Railway Engineering (GRE). The Lecture will be given initially in Sydney in February 2010.

Nominations are now sought for the **2010 Geotechnical Practitioner of the Year** award.

LANDSLIDE RISK MANAGEMENT

The AGS Landslide Risk Sub-Committee under the leadership of Andrew Leventhal was successful with a submission to the National Disaster Mitigation Programme for funding to run workshops Australia wide on Landslide Risk Management.

ISSMGE, ISRM AND IAEG NEWS

Fred Baynes continues to be active as international President of IAEG.

Alan Moon is our Australasian Vice President (VP) for IAEG. Additional IAEG details can be obtained from **Peter Robinson** or **Alan Moon** if required.

The **17th International Conference** of ISSMGE was held in Alexandria Egypt from 5-9 October 2009. **Professor John Carter** our Australasian VP attended the ISSMGE Council Meeting on 4 October, 2009 and then stepped down to be succeeded by **Professor Mike Davies** of Auckland University. Nominations are sought for the role of Australian Liaison officer for ISSMGE.

Our Australasian VP for ISRM is **Tony Meyers**. Details of ISRM activities 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 member's zone of the web page. Professor Xia – Ting Feng from Wuton, China was elected ISRM President for the term 2011 – 2013.

Tony has continued to be active in representing AGS with ISRM and AusIMM activity.

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.

The AGS is currently in a healthy financial position which has benefited members by allowing us to fund new initiatives including the Web Site development, Distinguished Speakers Program, updating the AGS collection of technical papers on DVD to 2009 and the 11th ANZ Conference in 2012.

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.

We have advised Engineers Australia that there will be a \$5.00 increase in AGS membership fees for 2010/2011 financial year.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I'd like to thank the members of the National Committee for their service, input and efforts during my two year term. In particular, I'd like to recognise Peter Robinson, Marc Woodward and Graham Scholey for their help and support.

In closing, I'd like to take this opportunity of wishing you and your family a safe and happy Christmas and a healthy and successful 2010.

Neil D Benson (*nbenson@golder.com.au*)

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National Chair
December 2009