

NEWS ON RECENT CONFERENCE

New Zealand – Japan Workshop on Soil Liquefaction during Recent Large-Scale Earthquakes

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The 2010-2011 Canterbury earthquakes in New Zealand and the 2011 off the Pacific Coast of Tohoku Earthquake in Japan have caused significant damage to many residential houses due to varying degrees of soil liquefaction over a very wide extent of urban areas unseen in past destructive earthquakes. Although these earthquakes caused extensive damage to life and property, they also serve as an opportunity to understand better the response of soil and building foundations to such large-scale earthquake shaking. With the wealth of information obtained in the aftermath of both earthquakes, information-sharing and knowledge-exchange are vital in achieving liquefaction-proof urban areas in both countries. Data regarding the observed damage to residential houses as well as the lessons learnt and current research on the topic of liquefaction are essential for the rebuilding efforts in the coming years and in mitigating buildings located in regions with high liquefaction potential.

As part of MBIE-JSPS collaborative research programme, the Geomechanics Group of the University of Auckland and the Geotechnical Engineering Laboratory of the University of Tokyo co-hosted a workshop to bring together researchers to review the findings and observations from recent large-scale earthquakes related to soil liquefaction and discuss new research results and possible measures to mitigate future damage. This workshop was held at the Faculty of Engineering building, University of Auckland, New Zealand on December 2 - 3, 2013. This event, which was attended by more than 80 researchers, engineers and practitioners from the local industry, involved invited presentations from 20 soil liquefaction experts from Japan, the United States, Chile and New Zealand. The highlight of the workshop was the two discussion sessions, one at the end of each day, which focused on current soil liquefaction issues, such as soil/site characterisation, liquefaction susceptibility and triggering, liquefaction-induced ground deformations, effects on structures and countermeasures. The final workshop proceedings will be published by CRC Press / Taylor & Francis Ltd in mid-2014.

Photographs taken during the workshop are shown below.



Photo 1 Group photograph of participants

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Photo 2 Prof. S Yasuda (Tokyo Denki University) delivering his invited presentation



Photo 3 Prof. M Cubrinovski (University of Canterbury) delivering his invited presentation



Photo 4 Prof. R Boulanger (UC Davis) leading one of the discussion sessions



Photo 5 View of the workshop



Photo 6 Exchanging pleasantries during the tea break.



Photo 7 Prof I M Idriss (UC Davis) giving a speech during the workshop dinner