Maintenance Audit of Government Slopes

Key Message: As part of government’s continuous efforts to enhance slope safety in Hong Kong, dedicated maintenance departments have been assigned to maintain government man-made slopes. The Slope Maintenance Audit Unit in the Geotechnical Engineering Office (GEO) of the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) provides assistance/advice to maintenance departments to improve their performance in discharging their slope maintenance responsibility.

Introduction

Lack of maintenance of slopes and retaining walls is a major contributory factor to many landslides in Hong Kong. Government, as part of its continuous efforts to enhance slope safety in Hong Kong, has assigned maintenance departments to maintain government slopes. Works Bureau Technical Circular (WBTC) No. 9/96 requires that Geoguide 5 - Guide to Slope Maintenance, published by the GEO of the CEDD, is to be adopted as the minimum standard for the maintenance of man-made slopes and retaining walls on government land. In the same circular, the Development Bureau (DEVB) also assigns the GEO to carry out periodic audits on the slope maintenance works of government departments.

The Slope Maintenance Audit Unit under the Island Division carries out the maintenance audit work on behalf of DEVB. The Unit consists of a small team of professional and technical staff headed by a Senior Geotechnical Engineer. The objective of the slope maintenance audit is to assist maintenance departments to improve their performance in discharging their slope maintenance responsibilities.

Slope Maintenance Audit Methodology

Seven maintenance departments including Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department, Architectural Services Department, Drainage Services Department, Highways Department, Housing Department, Lands Department and Water Supplies Department are responsible for the maintenance of government slopes. The Slope Maintenance Audit Unit carries out slope maintenance audits on these seven maintenance departments biennially.

In each cycle of the slope maintenance audit, each maintenance department will submit its slope maintenance documents to the Slope Maintenance Audit Unit. The Unit will audit the submitted documents against current slope maintenance policy and standards. The department will be advised of the GEO's recommendations for any improvement identified. In response to the audit recommendations, the department will plan and arrange for necessary follow-up actions to further enhance its slope maintenance works.

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