Slope Safety Technical Review Board

Key Messages: A Slope Safety Technical Review Board (SSTRB) was first established in 1995 to review the Government’s work in slope safety management and advise on technical aspects of the slope safety system. The SSTRB benchmarks the work of the Geotechnical Engineering Office (GEO) against international practice and assists the GEO in enhancing technical quality improvement. The current Board was appointed by the Director of Civil Engineering and Development in 2018 with a term that expires in 2021. The Board currently comprises Dr Suzanne Lacasse of Norway, Professor David Petley of the United Kingdom and Professor Kenichi Soga of the United States.

Background

The Slope Safety Technical Review Board was established by the then Director of Civil Engineering in May 1995 to advise the Government on technical aspects of slope safety. A total of seven Boards have been formed since then. Each Board comprises three renowned geotechnical experts and the tenure of each Board is 4 years. The current Board is the seventh Board, which commenced in July 2018. The Board members include Dr Suzanne Lacasse, Professor David Petley and Professor Kenichi Soga. A list of members of the previous Boards is presented in Annex A.

Work of the Slope Safety Technical Review Board

During the annual visits of the SSTRB, the Members interacted extensively with staff of the GEO and were briefed on GEO’s work, the subjects of which included quantitative landslide risk assessment and management, technical development in slope engineering, Landslip Prevention and Mitigation Programme, Landslip Investigation Programme, Landslip Warning System and emergency preparedness, innovation and technology development, slope safety public education, extreme weather effects on slope safety, natural terrain landslide risk management, cavern engineering and underground space development. The Board also held meetings with the Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) and local geotechnical professional groups.

The Board noted that the challenges with regard to slope safety in Hong Kong are unique in the world. The Board expressed commendation on the GEO’s contribution and the state-of-the-art expertise in landslide risk management:

“The level of expertise on slope safety at the GEO is unique on an international scale. The SSTRB finds that the GEO continues to lead international practice on slope safety and is a model that other countries aspire to follow.”
Criteria for Selection of Board Members

Recognising the significance of the SSTRB in enhancing GEO’s work, the Government decided to appoint the seventh SSTRB in 2018 with a term that expires in 2021.

The criteria for the selection of members to the SSTRB were:

(a) high international standing in the geotechnical field;
(b) appropriate knowledge and experience related to slope safety; and
(c) no involvement with commercial projects in Hong Kong that could have a real or apparent conflict of interest with the SSTRB duties.

Members of the Seventh Board (2018-2021)

The seventh Board currently comprises:

Dr Suzanne Lacasse is the Technical Director of the Norwegian Geotechnical Institute (NGI), Norway. She is a renowned geotechnical expert with a wide range of engineering experience from consulting, research and university teaching. Her areas of expertise include probabilistic analysis and knowledge-based systems.

Professor David Petley is the Vice President of the University of Sheffield, UK. He enjoys a high international standing in the geotechnical field, with expertise in landslide risk management, remote sensing and engineering geomorphology. He served as a Technical Advisor for the Public Works Department of the Malaysian Government on the National Slopes Master Plan from 2007 to 2010.

Professor Kenichi Soga is the Chancellor’s Professor at the University of California, Berkeley, US. His areas of expertise include infrastructure sensing, performance-based design, maintenance of underground structures and energy geotechnics. His experience in the application of innovative technology in geotechnical engineering is particularly pertinent to enhancing the landslide risk management in Hong Kong.

Geotechnical Engineering Office
Civil Engineering and Development Department
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Annex A - Members of the First to the Sixth Slope Safety Technical Review Board

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Members</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Board</td>
<td>1995 - 1998 • Professor Norbert Morgenstern • Professor Robin Fell • Sir John Knill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Board</td>
<td>1998 - 2001 • Professor Norbert Morgenstern • Dr Suzanne Lacasse • Professor C F Lee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Board</td>
<td>2002 - 2005 • Professor Norbert Morgenstern • Professor Malcolm Bolton • Professor Wang Sijing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth Board</td>
<td>2006 - 2009 • Professor Wang Sijing • Dr Suzanne Lacasse • Professor Oldrich Hungr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifth Board</td>
<td>2010 - 2013 • Dr Suzanne Lacasse • Dr Peter Lyttle • Professor Wilson Tang (2010 - 2012) • Professor David Petley (starting from July 2012 in replacement of the late Professor Wilson Tang)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sixth Board</td>
<td>2014 - 2017 • Dr Suzanne Lacasse • Professor Oldrich Hungr (2014 - August 2017) • Professor David Petley</td>
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