

Maintenance Audit of Government Slopes

Key Message: As part of government's continuous efforts to enhance slope safety in Hong Kong, dedicated maintenance departments (MDs) have been assigned to maintain government man-made slopes. The Slope Maintenance Audit (SMA) Unit in the Geotechnical Engineering Office (GEO) provides assistance/advice to MDs 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 MDs to maintain government man-made slopes. Works Bureau Technical Circular (WBTC) No. 9/96 requires that Geoguide 5 - Guide to Slope Maintenance, published by the GEO, is to be adopted as the minimum standard for the maintenance of man-made slopes and retaining walls on government land. The Circular also stipulates that the GEO will carry out periodic audits on the slope maintenance works of government departments. The objective of the slope maintenance audit is to assist MDs to improve their performance in discharging their slope maintenance responsibilities.

Slope Maintenance Audit Methodology

Seven MDs 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 man-made slopes. The SMA Unit of the GEO carries out slope maintenance audits on these seven MDs in a three-year cycle.

During the slope maintenance audit, MDs will submit its slope maintenance documents to the SMA Unit. The SMA Unit will audit the submitted documents against the current slope maintenance policy and standards and verify the internal auditing mechanism is in place. A number of slope features will also be selected for site inspections to benchmark the actual maintenance conditions against the documentary procedures and the independently audited engineer inspection reports. The SMA Unit will advise the MDs on any non-compliance and areas for improvement. In response to the audit recommendations, the MDs will plan and arrange for necessary follow-up actions to further enhance its slope maintenance works.

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