

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### AMALGAMATION OF THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON EARTHQUAKE ENGINEERING AND THE NEW ZEALAND SOCIETY FOR EARTHQUAKE ENGINEERING

Report by A. G. Stirrat

On 12th March 1973 it was my good fortune to chair a meeting, the outcome of which I am sure will benefit earthquake engineering in New Zealand. The meeting was attended by the National Committee on Earthquake Engineering and the Management Committee of the N.Z. Society for Earthquake Engineering. Its objective was to consider the principle of amalgamating the two bodies into one. While this principle has been under consideration by the two, independently of one another over the past three years or more it was not until this latest meeting that both came together to discuss the issue.

The result was unanimous agreement to abolish the present establishment and to form a single body having the proposed name, N.Z. National Society for Earthquake Engineering. It was the wish of the meeting that this Society become a technical group of the N.Z. Institution of Engineers, thereby continuing to enjoy the administrative assistance which the present Society has had. It will of course be necessary to obtain the formal approval to this change from the Royal Society of N.Z., the N.Z. Institute of Architects, the Earthquake and War Damage Commission and the N.Z. Institution of Engineers. Those members present at the meeting who represent these organisations believed that such approval would not be difficult to obtain.

It has always been my belief that amalgamation of the two bodies was essential to gain the full support and understanding of those interested in earthquake engineering. Claims that confusion existed in the minds of many over the separate responsibilities of each could not continue to be ignored. In addition, the numbers involved in this country could not, to my mind, justify the two separate entities.

The way is now clear to combine the strengths of the two into the new National Society. While an immediate start has been made on the amalgamation by having a small working party representing the two separate bodies consider a draft constitution, it is recognised that some time will elapse before the formalities are complete. There will be an opportunity for members of the present Society to consider the amalgamation at their Annual General Meeting. I am confident that few problems will arise, and the new National Society will flourish with everyone's support.

### PRINCIPAL NEW ZEALAND EARTHQUAKES DURING THE YEAR 1972

by R. Adams

Earthquake activity was comparatively quiet in New Zealand during 1972. The largest shock recorded was that of 24 March 1972, which had a magnitude of 5.8 (Richter Scale). This earthquake was centred off the Fiordland coast near Doubtful Sound, and was felt throughout Fiordland and Southland, but no damage was reported.

The earthquake that attracted most attention in the course of the year occurred near Te Aroha on 9 January, and was felt as far afield as Auckland, Mangakino and Whakatane. The magnitude of this shock was only moderate (5.1), but its shallowness and its closeness to Te Aroha resulted in high intensities being recorded there. Many chimneys in the area were broken, and stores suffered much loss of goods from shelves. Internal partitions collapsed in the grandstand of the Te Aroha Jockey Club, and there was damage to grave-stones in the Te Aroha Cemetery. Insurance claims for damage total about \$150,000. The earthquake was followed by numerous aftershocks, and by the end of January, 16 had been recorded with magnitudes of  $3\frac{1}{2}$  or greater. Further activity occurred on 20 and 21 June. The largest of these later shocks had a magnitude of 4.5 and was felt strongly throughout the Coromandel Peninsula and western Bay of Plenty.

Several shallow shocks were felt widely in the central parts of the country, and caused minor damage. The first, on 14 March, had a magnitude of 5.2 and was centred at the north of D'Urville Island in Cook Strait; it was felt in Wellington and elsewhere between southern Taranaki and Nelson. A shock of magnitude 5.1 occurred on 31 July about 30 km to the east of Masterton, and was felt in the Wairarapa and Wellington regions. On 21 December a further shock of magnitude 5.1 originated 20 km off Cape Turnagain in southern Hawke's Bay. This shock was felt throughout the southern part of the North Island.

Three deep earthquakes were also felt extensively in the central and southern parts of the North Island. These shocks occurred on 1 May at a depth of 100 km near Palmerston North, on 12 October about 270 km beneath the Ohakune region, and on 10 December at a depth of 200 km beneath northern Taranaki. All these earthquakes had magnitudes of about 5.2.

A shallow earthquake in an area of less