

Report On
7th EUROPEAN CONFERENCE ON EARTHQUAKE ENGINEERING
From
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This conference was held in Athens from September 20-25 1982 under the sponsorship of the Technical Chamber of Greece.

Three New Zealanders presented papers (D.G. Cox, J.P. Hollings and R.G. Tyler). A paper by Thomas Paulay was presented by Thomas Scarpis of Athens. Messrs. S. Mulholland and I.C. Smith also attended the conference.

The immediately adjacent Chandris Hotel and EVGENIDON Conference Hall provided a comfortable venue and the Greek organisers were hosts for two grand receptions and for the conference dinner which was held in a romantic setting aboard the Greek cruise ship HERMES. Most foreign delegates took advantage of a free afternoon to visit some of the ancient monuments and archaeological sites for which Greece is famous.

More than 400 papers were accepted for the conference which meant that about 10 minutes only could be allowed each author for both presentation and discussion. However, there were many authors who did not turn up and who apparently did not advise the organisers. The presentations were not rescheduled; instead the Chairmen of the sessions made ad hoc adjustments to the session programme during each session. The effect of these arrangements was that some sessions of up to 2 hours were cancelled completely while in others very good papers were squeezed to less than 10 minutes, and the opportunity for useful session discussions passed by.

The conference was properly named 'European' since by far the greater representation in papers and attendance was from Europe with only a small contingent from North America, Japan, China and NZ.

The European papers seemed to come almost entirely from Universities or Technical Institutes - for example in the "design" section (Session 4.3) out of 41 papers only 3 were from practising design engineers and those three were non-European. In addition the papers presented by the European academics seemed highly abstract. It was difficult to make a connection between some of these papers and the problems of the practising design engineer. A North American comment overheard in the coffee break was "mathematical massaging and gymnastics".

Designers in NZ are fortunate that the engineering staffs of the universities keep in close contact with engineers in practise - both parties benefit.

Opportunities for an exchange of views between the European engineers and others were informal only and left to the initiative of individuals. It is difficult as a visitor to make these contacts in the short time available and as a result something is lost on both sides. The NZ practise of organised visits to local major works under construction, of small discussion groups in local offices or private houses would have been good for getting people of widely differing background and opinion to talk to each other.

A canvass of opinion among the NZ contingent towards the end of the conference resulted in the general accord that attendance at the conference has been an interesting and instructive experience.

A full list of papers presented follows. ^{*} Those NZ Society members resident in NZ can obtain a copy of any paper listed by writing to Hollings, Box 3942, Wellington.

* Next issue, Vol 16, No 4, December 82.