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From the President

Welcome to another Newsletter and my last as President of the Society.

It is hugely disappointing that our 2020 annual conference has had to be cancelled. I wish to acknowledge and thank conference convenors Geoff Rodgers and Rajesh Dhakal (and others) who put a huge effort in to organising the conference, and more recently arranging the cancellation. I commiserate with them not being able to enjoy the conference they worked so hard to make happen.



However, we have salvaged what we can. We will publish as many of the submitted papers as possible - thank you to the authors. And we are planning a series of seismic webinars to be held, hopefully monthly, over the rest of this year.

On the financial front there is a significant loss from the conference. Refunds have been offered to registrants, exhibitors and sponsors. I would like to thank those individuals and organisations who kindly left money in to help offset our financial loss.

NZSEE is planning a new project aiming to rethink New Zealand's seismic design standards to achieve more resilient performance outcomes. Thanks to Helen Ferner for leading this initiative.

It is pleasing that MBIE is currently funding the update to the National Seismic Hazard Model. And it has formed a new Seismic Risk Working Group, we understand to consider possible new technical approaches to representing seismic risk in the building system. It is disappointing though that MBIE has not directly invited NZSEE participation in that group.

EQC and NZSEE share objectives for promoting earthquake research and increased awareness about seismic resilience. I recently signed a renewed Memorandum of Understanding with EQC for our partnership with them. EQC provides NZSEE with essential financial support for the cost of publishing the Bulletin, sponsorship of the jointly managed Ivan Skinner award, and sponsorship for our annual conference. I would like to sincerely thank EQC for their continued support of the Society.

New Zealand communities are now certainly testing their understanding of "resilience" – how to recover quickly from a health and economic shock. While the immediate focus may have moved, let's hope we don't also have to test our seismic resilience during our journey through Covid-19.

During the lock-down the Government's Crown Infrastructure Partnership has been busy looking for "shovel-ready" infrastructure projects. What better time to accelerate the earthquake-prone buildings legislated programme? I hope the Government will take a lead to incentivise investment in reducing seismic risk to protect the lives of New Zealanders. The recent mandatory securing of parapets and facades in Wellington following the Kaikoura Earthquake was a successful example of making rapid seismic safety improvements.

Earthquake activity has thankfully been a little benign over the two years of my tenure as President. But we have been continuing the conversation to prepare New Zealand for its next major seismic event, in particular the expected event that will have Wellington's name on it.

I now sign off as President. It's been a privilege and a pleasure to serve the Society and I would like to offer my sincere thanks to the Management Committee, Executive Officer and everyone who has supported me in this role. I wish you all well. The next President of the Society will be elected by the new Management Committee following the forthcoming AGM.

Kind regards,
David Whittaker
President 2018 - 2020

NZSEE 2020 Webinar Series

As you will all know by now, we have had to cancel this year's conference due to the current situation regarding Covid-19. This is a very disappointing outcome for everyone involved, but was the only possible decision in the circumstances.

Despite not being able to hold the physical conference, we are looking to make the most of all the effort that the conference committee, submitting authors, and everyone else has put into planning the conference. There is a lot of interesting and timely content that will be of interest to our members. While holding the full conference online across multiple days would be difficult to organise and attend, we have decided to hold a series of shorter webinars in the coming months. These 1.5-2 hours webinars will cover many of the plenary sessions originally planned for the conference, along with a small number of selected papers that were submitted for the conference. We hope that this will be a good way for us all to stay connected as a community through these challenging times, and enable interaction and debate on important topics, despite the conference cancellation.

The first of this webinar series will be held on Wednesday 22 April from 12 noon to 2:00pm. If you have not already done so, you can register here: <https://www.engineeringnz.org/courses-events/event/nzsee-2020-webinar-series-1/>. We will be announcing the subsequent webinars in the series in the coming weeks.

In addition to the first webinar, **the NZSEE AGM is to be run as a separate virtual event from 3pm on Thursday 23rd April, and will include the announcement of the NZSEE 2020 Awards winners.** The AGM can be accessed at <https://ipenz.adobeconnect.com/nzseeagm/>. It is unfortunate that we are not able to celebrate these in person. However, it is important we recognise our awards recipients for their outstanding achievements and so we'll be sure to celebrate with them to the extent possible in this virtual environment.

Finally, to acknowledge the significant effort put in by all authors who submitted papers to the conference, **a full proceedings of accepted conference papers will be published and made available to all members and registrants.** As we cannot offer the usual oral presentation slots, contributing authors are being given the choice to either withdraw their papers, or to have them included in the proceedings. Authors are being contacted separately to confirm acceptance and permissions regarding the inclusion of their papers in this proceedings.

While we find ourselves in challenging circumstances, we are excited about the opportunity to make the most of this unique situation, stay engaged with all our members, and to deliver a successful webinar series. We look forward to you joining us online!

**Geoff Rodgers and Rajesh Dhakal (Conference Convenors)
and the whole NZSEE Management Committee**



2020 NZSEE AGM & AWARDS

The 2020 NZSEE AGM will be held on **Thursday 23rd April 2020, at 3pm**, followed immediately by the announcement of the 2020 NZSEE Award winners. The AGM can be accessed at <https://ipenz.adobeconnect.com/nzseeagm/>

AGM documents, including proxy forms for those who are unable to attend, can be found at <https://www.nzsee.org.nz/2020-agm-and-documents/>

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The Society would like to acknowledge the generous ongoing support provided by EQC in the form of annual conference and Bulletin publication sponsorship.

