



## IN THIS ISSUE

### FROM THE PRESIDENT

### 2025 NZSEE CONFERENCE

### VANUATU EARTHQUAKE, 17 DECEMBER 2024

### NZSEE POSITION STATEMENT

### MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

### 2025 AWARDS

### DECEMBER BULLETIN AVAILABLE

### AWEC: A COLLECTIVE VOICE FOR CHANGE PAPER RELEASED

### NEW RESOURCE: CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THE SEISMIC PERFORMANCE OF NON-STRUCTURAL ELEMENTS

### NEW RESOURCE: COMMUNICATING SEISMIC RISK INFORMATION WITH TENANTS

### NATURAL HAZARDS COMMISSION TOKA TŪ AKE AND TE PAPA TOURING EXHIBITION

## From the President . . .

2024 has no doubt been a challenging year, whether in the academia, practice or government. As we conclude this year to take a well-earned rest, it would be useful to reflect on a few developments in the last quarter and what's in store for 2025.

### *ATC 15-17 – 18<sup>th</sup> US-Japan-NZ Workshop in San Diego, 2-4 December 2024*



As I noted in the last newsletter, international collaboration is crucial for a small country like New Zealand to draw and build on international research and practice and contribute to a resilience New Zealand. I had the opportunity to participate in the 2024 workshop, together with 13 other others from New Zealand. One of the key take-aways for me from the workshop is the increasing international focus on earthquake resilience, (in the US some call it functional recovery) to be able to quickly recover and provide functionality, which was also an area of my presentation. There was also a lot of discussion about reducing drift limits in buildings to reduce damage.

### *Review of Seismic Risk Management for Existing Buildings*

The government review of the regime for managing the seismic risk to buildings has begun being led by the Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment (MBIE). We have two NZSEE representatives on the Steering Group, Andrew Thompson (Auckland) and Hugh Cowan (Nelson). NZSEE formed a focus group to provide proactive contribution to this review, led by Umair Siddiqui from Wellington, and the group prepared a Position Statement which was circulated to members, and is discussed in this newsletter. The group will be looking to provide further proactive input in 2025. The review provides an opportunity to improve the Earthquake Prone Buildings Regime.

Our NZSEE Resilient Buildings Project led by Helen Ferner and published early this year, through research confirmed the importance of resilience (with the twin metrics of functionality and time for recovery) for buildings. It would be important for earthquake assessments to consider and advise on the resilience of buildings in addition to life safety, so that building owners can make prudent decisions on retrofit, insurance and emergency response planning. The %NBS (New Building Standard) has been used as a benchmark and we have





## UPCOMING EVENTS

### [Seismic Design for Functional Recovery Performance, 2026 NEHRP Provisions Progress Update](#)

Auckland | Online  
23 January 2025  
[www.nzsee.org.nz](http://www.nzsee.org.nz)

### [NZSEE 2025 Conference](#)

Auckland, New Zealand  
8 – 10 April 2025  
<https://confer.eventsair.com/nzsee2025/>

### [SESOC 2025](#)

Wellington, New Zealand  
25 – 27 June 2025  
<https://www.confer.co.nz/2025/sesoc-2025/>

### [19 WCSI Conference](#)

Berkeley, California, USA  
15 - 19 September 2025  
<https://19wcsi.org>

### [NZGS Symposium 2025](#)

15 – 18 October 2025  
Auckland, New Zealand  
<https://confer.eventsair.com/nzgs2025/>

gathered a lot of experience in its implementation. We know that different types of buildings with similar %NBS perform differently and have different levels of safety and resilience, which will be useful to reflect on as we review the regime.

### New Building Standards

We look forward to the publication of the technical specification for seismic design of buildings, TS1170 soon, early in the new year if not before. Also, we need to reflect on and think about the future of earthquake design in New Zealand. We are pleased to hear that the Seismic Risk Working Group is making progress towards thinking about future design. We as an earthquake engineering community need to be reflecting on how we can better design for earthquake resilience and put forward ideas, as we need broader thinking of the challenges. We are keen to provide proactive input to these standards, and if you have any ideas, or are keen to be involved, please [contact us](#).

### NZSEE Annual Conference 2025

Planning for the 2025 NZSEE Conference themed *Harnessing Uncertainty: Driving Positive Change for a Sustainable and Resilient Future* has commenced in earnest, and you will see an invitation from our conference convenor, Sabina Piras.

The selection of Sabina signals diversity in our approach to earthquake engineering. Sabina is a bridge engineer, signaling the importance of considering not just buildings but also infrastructure, and am sure you will see this flavour at next year's conference.

Thanks for all those who have submitted abstracts and look forward to your papers and participation at the conference in April 2025.

Sponsors and exhibitors make a significant contribution to the success of the conference as they showcase new products and developments and also financially help run the conference. If you would like to exhibit or sponsor, please reach out to Executive Officer, [Amy Samuelu](#).

### Awards

The NZSEE led awards provide an opportunity to acknowledge and encourage earthquake engineering research and practice. Showcasing outstanding people, projects and papers that contribute to resilience encourages focus achieving a more resilient Aotearoa. So I encourage you all to think about nominating award worthy people, projects and papers, see call for nominations later in this newsletter.

~ P Brabhakaran ~





**2025 NZSEE CONFERENCE**

8–10 April 2025, Cordis Hotel, Auckland

## **Harnessing Uncertainty**

**Driving Positive Change for a Sustainable and Resilient Future**



On behalf of the New Zealand Society for Earthquake Engineering (NZSEE), we warmly invite you to join us at the 2025 NZSEE Annual Technical Conference, to be held at the Cordis Hotel in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland from 8–10 April 2025.

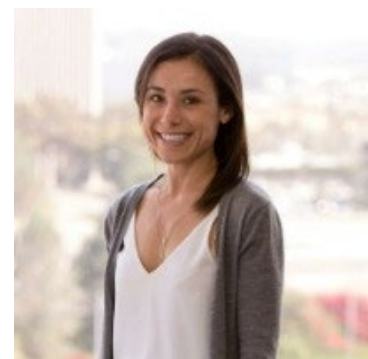
This conference provides a unique opportunity for professionals to connect, share knowledge, and enhance their understanding of earthquake engineering and related disciplines. It is one of the few annual events where experts from across the field can come together to learn, collaborate, and engage in meaningful discussions.

The theme for this year's conference is "**Harnessing Uncertainty: Driving Positive Change for a Sustainable and Resilient Future**". This theme underscores our industry's challenges in navigating seismic uncertainty while building for a sustainable and resilient future. We are in a period of transition, with new scientific updates on the horizon—such as changes to the National Seismic Hazard Model—alongside the need to embed sustainability into our designs and address ongoing research into the performance of existing buildings and transportation infrastructure. These challenges highlight the importance of staying informed and adaptive, ensuring that we can continue to provide resilient infrastructure for our communities.

The technical programme will feature keynote addresses and special sessions focusing on both current and future developments in earthquake engineering. Sessions will cover a broad spectrum of topics, including cutting-edge research, innovations in earthquake and geotechnical engineering, and the social and policy impacts of seismic events. We will place special emphasis on resilient, sustainable, and low-damage design strategies. Additionally, with the increasing momentum in digital transformation, we anticipate sessions exploring the role of machine learning and innovative digital tools within our field.

As the conference approaches, the [website](#) will be regularly updated with details on keynote speakers, the full programme, and activities. Be sure to check back often for the latest information.

We look forward to welcoming you to Auckland for what promises to be an engaging and thought-provoking conference.



**Sabina Piras**  
NZSEE 2025 Convenor

## **REGISTRATION**

Registration is now open!  
Early bird deadline: 3 March 2025



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## Keynote Speakers Announced



**Dr. Rubén Boroscchek**

*CEO Ruben Boroscchek and Associate, Professor  
University of Chile, Chile*



**Marwan Nader**

*Senior Vice President, Chief Bridge Engineer -  
TYLin, United States*

Visit the [Conference website](#) to find out more about the Keynote Speakers and keep up to date with the latest information.

### Key Dates

Abstract submission deadline: **CLOSED**

Presenters advised by: **6 December 2024**

Paper submission deadline: **31 January 2025**

Presenters advised programme allocation: **17 March 2025**

Presenter registration deadline: **20 March 2025**

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## Vanuatu Earthquake, 17 December 2024

A tragic magnitude 7.3 earthquake 31 km west of Port Vila, Vanuatu at a depth of 57.1 km (USGS). There appears to have been significant casualties, collapse of buildings and landslides. New Zealand is helping with the search and rescue and response to the earthquake.

NZSEE's Learning from Earthquakes sub-committee is monitoring the earthquake, to see if we need to take any action to learn from the tragic event. Our thoughts are with the people in Vanuatu affected by the earthquake.

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## NZSEE releases position statement and discussion paper on the MBIE EPB and Seismic Risk Management Review

As many members will be aware, in April this year, the Minister for Building and Construction announced the commencement of a review of the Earthquake-prone Buildings system that was put in place in 2017. 'The Review' is referred to interchangeably as the *EPB and Seismic Risk Management Review*, or the *Review of Seismic Risk Management in Existing Buildings*. The [terms of](#)



[reference](#) for the review were finalised in May 2024. Information on the process and anticipated timeframes is available on MBIE's [website](#).

As part of this, the remediation deadlines for earthquake-prone buildings that had not lapsed as of 2 April 2024 will be extended for four years, to allow time for the Review and any subsequent changes to take place. The Bill to give effect to the extension had its first reading on 8 August and is expected to be passed by the end of 2024.

The Review is being carried out by MBIE staff, and contracted research projects and technical experts where required. The Review is being overseen by a Steering Group chaired by a person independent of MBIE.

NZSEE will continue to support the review through its representation on the Joint Committee for Seismic Assessment and Retrofit (JC-SAR), through nominated representatives on the Review Steering Group, and through the work of a subgroup of the NZSEE management committee.

The important first stage of the review is now commencing in earnest and NZSEE has developed a position statement and discussion paper for the benefit of the Review and to engage and prompt discussion amongst members. The document:

- Provides a brief overview of seismic risk management in existing buildings in New Zealand (and NZSEE's role).
- Consolidates some of the principles that have guided our journey to this point.
- Passes some preliminary observations and opportunities relevant to the review.

The document is available on NZSEE's website and can be accessed via the link below.

### [Read NZSEE's Position Statement](#)

Further to the Review [terms of reference](#), and NZSEE's [position statement](#), we welcome further feedback from members to help guide our ongoing inputs into the review process. This especially concerns further observations on drivers, behaviours, barriers and opportunities relevant to the Stage 1 "current state" and "future state options" review workstreams. Feedback can be emailed to [exec@nzsee.org.nz](mailto:exec@nzsee.org.nz), with the subject line prefix "Seismic Risk Review – ". Alternatively, members are also welcome to submit feedback directly to MBIE's own feedback portal, accessible via the MBIE web page linked above.

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## Membership Renewals

Engineering New Zealand recently sent out invoices for the 2024/2025 membership year. If you haven't already, we kindly ask that you pay your invoice as soon as possible to ensure uninterrupted access to your member benefits.

If you have not received your invoice or have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact the [Executive Officer](#).

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## Follow us on LinkedIn

Stay connected with us on LinkedIn for the latest updates, insights, and industry news. Follow us and join the conversation to engage with fellow members and contribute to the growth of our community!

### [Follow NZSEE LinkedIn](#)



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## Call for nominations for Fellows

In accordance with the [\*Constitution & Rules of The New Zealand Society for Earthquake Engineering Incorporated\*](#), the NZSEE Management Committee shall annually publish a call for nominations for Fellows.

**Rule 4.7 states:**

*4.7 Fellows: The Management Committee may elect as a Fellow of the Society any person, whether resident in New Zealand or otherwise who, in the Committee's estimation, fulfils all of the following requirements:*

- a) the nominee must have been a member of the Society for at least five years immediately prior to nomination; and*
- b) the nominee must be highly respected in some aspect of the fields of earthquake engineering, earthquake phenomena or the effects of earthquakes; and*
- c) the nominee must have performed exceptional service to the Society as demonstrated by:*
  - work on the Management Committee; and/or*
  - work on one or more of the Society's Bulletins; and/or*
  - publication in the Society's Bulletin; and/or*
  - other special contribution which benefits the Society.*

*Prospective Fellows shall be nominated by three current members of the Society, who shall submit with their nomination a brief statement supporting the nominee's case for election. In the event of an initially unsuccessful nomination, the nomination shall stand for three years subsequent to nomination and if not by then successful, shall lapse. Re-nomination of an unsuccessful candidate shall not be accepted for the three years subsequent to failure of a previous nomination.*

*NOTE: Normally not more than five percent of the Society's membership shall be Fellows at any one time. The Management Committee shall annually publish a call for nominations and the closing date for nominations.*

In accordance with the constitution, we are calling for nominations for consideration for election as Fellows.

The submitted nomination will be considered by the Management Committee in their assessment for the election of NZSEE Fellows. The Management Committee's selection of any member for a Fellowship will be final, and no correspondence will be entered into.

Please complete all fields on this [form](#) and submit to the Executive Officer (via email at [exec@nzsee.org.nz](mailto:exec@nzsee.org.nz)) on or before **Friday, 7 February 2025 at 4 pm.**

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## 2025 NZSEE Awards are now Open!

We invite applications for the prestigious NZSEE annual awards. Below, you'll find a summary of each award along with links to the detailed criteria.

This year, we've made some updates, including increasing the prize value for the Natural Hazards Commission Toka Tū Ake/NZSEE Ivan Skinner Award and the NZSEE / QuakeCoRE Emerging Women Leaders in Earthquake Engineering Award.

In general, the awards are all independent, and applicants may be nominated to more than one award, provided they qualify for each award.



Applicants for the Natural Hazards Commission Toka Tū Ake/NZSEE Ivan Skinner Award and NZSEE/QuakeCoRE Emerging Women Leaders in Earthquake Engineering Award are encouraged to evaluate their eligibility for both awards. Submissions can be made for both awards, and this is encouraged if eligibility allows. However, separate submissions are required, and each submission must be tailored to meet the relevant award criteria.

Full details for each award are available on our [website](#).

Please submit your applications directly to the Executive Officer at [exec@nzsee.org.nz](mailto:exec@nzsee.org.nz).

**Note**

*No award may be given for any particular category in any year at the discretion of NZSEE and the Awards Committee. The decisions of the judges are final and no correspondence will be entered into.*

Awards include:

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### **Natural Hazards Commission Toka Tū Ake / NZSEE Ivan Skinner Award**

The **Natural Hazards Commission Toka Tū Ake / NZSEE Ivan Skinner Award** is open to practitioners and researchers contributing to reducing the impacts of earthquakes on New Zealand communities, and individuals from disciplines beyond engineering who are making significant contributions to earthquake impact reduction in New Zealand.

The Natural Hazards Commission Toka Tū Ake / NZSEE Ivan Skinner Award includes a prize of \$15,000.

For more information and application details, please click [here](#).

**Applications close at 5:00 PM on Friday, 14 February 2025**, with no extensions beyond this final deadline.

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### **NZSEE / QuakeCoRE Emerging Women Leaders in Earthquake Engineering Award**

The **NZSEE / QuakeCoRE Emerging Women Leaders in Earthquake Engineering Award** recognises and celebrates younger women from engineering practice and/or academia who demonstrate emerging leadership in the field of earthquake engineering.

This award aims to foster greater participation of women in leadership roles within the discipline. Recipients are awarded a \$15,000 prize to support their career development and goals in earthquake engineering.

For more information and for details on how to apply please click [here](#).

**Applications close at 5:00 PM on Friday, 14 February 2025**, with no extensions beyond this final deadline.



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### John Hollings Seismic Resilience in Practice Award

The **John Hollings Seismic Resilience in Practice Award** recognises case study projects from practice that have the objective of providing enhanced seismic resilience in an earthquake. Submitted projects may be new builds or seismic retrofits and can be a building, structure, or infrastructure.

For more information and details on how to apply please click [here](#).

**Applications close at 5:00 PM on Friday, 7 March 2025**, with no extensions beyond this final deadline.

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### Otto Glogau Award

This annual award recognises the author(s) of the best paper published in the *NZSEE Bulletin* during the three years leading up to 31 December of the year preceding the award (31 December 2024). Eligibility is open to all authors, members or non-members of the New Zealand Society for Earthquake Engineering, whose papers were published in the Bulletin within the specified timeframe.

Nominations for papers meeting the eligibility can include self-nomination. The awards committee will also consider other papers published during the stated period.

The award comprises \$2,000, which may be used to purchase books or support other activities that advance earthquake engineering initiatives.

For more information and details on how to nominate an eligible *Bulletin* paper, click [here](#).

**Applications close at 5:00 PM on Friday, 14 February 2025**, with no extensions beyond this final deadline.

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### NZSEE Research Scholarship

The New Zealand Society for Earthquake Engineering awards an annual Research Scholarship to support students undertaking research projects in earthquake engineering at New Zealand universities and research institutes.

The scholarship objective is to promote research in earthquake engineering and encourage students of high ability to pursue advanced studies in earthquake engineering.

The 2025 NZSEE Scholarship will have a value of \$10,000.

For more information and for details on how to apply please click [here](#).

**Applications close at 5:00 PM on Friday, 14 February 2025**, with no extensions beyond this final deadline.





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## **New Resource: Code of Practice for the Seismic Performance of Non-structural Elements (NSE CoP)**

A new resource is available entitled the Code of Practice for the Seismic Performance of Non-structural Elements (NSE CoP).

The purpose of the NSE CoP is to provide guidance on the seismic design, coordination, and construction of non-structural elements to improve practices, and establish consistency across the industry while meeting the performance requirements of the building code.

It is intended to be the means to achieve consistency in the seismic design and selection of non-structural elements (NSEs) as well as the coordination process between disciplines and through consensus-based solutions.

The NSE CoP supports the translation of building functional requirements into design, construction methodologies and quality assurance processes for NSEs.

The NSE CoP is structured to provide guidance to:

- clients, project managers,
- quantity surveyors,
- designers,
- contractors and sub-contractors.

The NSE CoP may be found here: [Code of Practice for the Seismic Performance of Non-structural Elements \(NSE CoP\) - Building Innovation Partnership](#)

The guide is an output of the Build Innovation Partnership (BIP) and was funded by the Building Research Levy administered by BRANZ and MBIE via the Partnership Scheme.

Jan Stanway

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## **New Resource: Communicating Seismic Risk Information with Tenants: guide for engaging with commercial tenants about seismic building risk**

The guide provides practical, best-practice tips for effective risk communication with commercial building tenants. It might be particularly useful if you are a:

- structural engineer,
- project manager, or
- property manager / agent / owner with tenants.

Within the guide, you will find:

- key principles for effective risk communication,
- tips for holding conversations about seismic building risk,
- understanding a tenant's context,
- what to consider when communicating seismic building risk information, and
- how to communicate different aspects of seismic building risk with tenants.



The Guide can be found here: [Communicating Seismic Risk Information with Tenants](#)

The document was developed in collaboration between Resilient Organisations and the Joint Centre for Disaster Research (JCDR) at Massey University, with input from industry experts. It was funded by the Building Research Association of New Zealand (BRANZ).

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## Natural Hazards Commission Toka Tū Ake and Te Papa launch new touring exhibition

The Natural Hazards Commission Toka Tū Ake (NHC Toka Tū Ake) has teamed up with Te Papa to create [Rūaumoko: Restless Land](#), a new touring exhibition that promotes natural hazard awareness and preparedness.

It combines cutting-edge science with mātauranga Māori to explore the powerful, natural forces that continuously shape Aotearoa.

The exhibition's first venue is Pātaka Art and Museum in Porirua, where it will be on display from 7 December 2024.

Find and more and view the tour schedule [here](#).

