

Strong NZ Contingent Attends Quake Conference

Wellington earthquake engineer Dr David Hopkins, the Chairman of the Earthquake Engineering New Zealand business cluster, heads to Vancouver this weekend to chair the opening technical session of the 13th World Conference on Earthquake Engineering.

This forum, held every four years, draws delegates from all earthquake-prone countries to discuss ways of reducing risk to communities. Delegates range from manufacturers of products such as seismic isolation devices to designers and researchers. "Engineering" in this context includes any activity that is aimed at reducing earthquake risk and includes architects, planners, emergency professionals, seismologists, earth scientists, social scientists and insurers.

"Other New Zealand representatives include four specialists from the Lower Hutt based Institute of Geological & Nuclear Sciences, and Alan Wilson Chief Executive of Robinson Seismic Ltd, the company that develops and markets earthquake protection base isolation bearings for buildings, bridges and other infrastructure," said Dr Hopkins.

Dr Hopkins was a Co Chair of the Organising Committee of the 12th World Conference held in New Zealand in Auckland in February 2000 that attracted over 1,700 delegates from all over the world.

"New Zealand is amongst the leading countries in the world in the development of practical solutions earthquake risk reduction," said Dr Hopkins.

Robinson Seismic from New Zealand is also one of the conference sponsors. Amongst the trade exhibitors is one from New Zealand for a new earthquake monitoring seismometer developed by Canterbury University that is now being commissioned for use in New Zealand and Mexico.

“The development of seismic base isolation technology by Robinson Seismic and associated research organisations and consulting firms has seen this technology now in use in several countries, including its recent introduction with the help of the Earthquake Engineering NZ Business Cluster into India as part of the new Bhuj Hospital in Gujarat,” said Dr Hopkins.

“Other leading initiatives from New Zealand include the EQC earthquake insurance system, application of lifeline engineering, development of Civil Defence and Emergency Management legislation and the development of seismic building codes and building standards aimed at making safer buildings.”

The Earthquake Engineering NZ business cluster includes engineers and scientists who are recognised as world leaders in earthquake protection engineering. It is based in Wellington and receives support from Positively Wellington Business, New Zealand Trade and Enterprise and Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade to provide earthquake engineering solutions to countries around the world.

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