

## Engineers - get it right!

Welcome to the first of my weblogs relating to deep foundation issues. Like most professionals in the geosciences, I find my own area of foundation engineering to be a rewarding area which combines science and art. Every job (potentially) provides new challenges and the opportunity for fresh insights and understandings. Experience, which comes with grey hair is not easily gained with short-cut approaches - at least for the mortals among us!

At any one time, we are engaged in a wide variety of work at different ends of the design and construction spectrum. We like to be engaged at the front end, helping contractors develop innovative and cost effective solutions, or at the commencement of a project, when some timely advice from someone who has 'been there before' can be invaluable in raising consciousness about key issues which could become problems in foundation installation, and which therefore need particular care and attention.

It is our sorry experience that usually designers and project engineers either don't need such advice, don't know that they need such advice, or there is no money in the kitty for 'technical insurance' and risk management. The upshot is that we find ourselves increasingly in the position of being engaged in an arbitration, legal process or insurance claim, providing advice on what went wrong and who was to blame. At that stage of the process, despite the considerable amounts of time often needed to wade through the project documentation, the high fee levels that can be commanded are of no concern and pale into insignificance compared with the losses which have been incurred, or which are being recovered.

It is a sad indictment on our profession that we are not able to organize ourselves better to provide professional service and value to the community.