

# FEDERATION OF PILING SPECIALISTS

## MINUTES OF A TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING

**Date:** Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> November 2021

**Time:** 10:00am

**Location:** Online via Webex

**PRESENT:**

Ash Rogers (AR)	Aarsleff
Chris Barker (CB)	Arup
Christopher Cox (CC)	Atkins Global
David A. Hard (DH)	Bachy Soletanche
Ian Bannerman (IB)	BAM
Mark Pennington (MP)	BBGE
James Binns (JB)	Byland Engineering
Zoe Baldwin (ZB)	Cementation Skanska
Sebastian Draghici (SD)	Central Piling
Richard Ball (RB)	CGL
David Preece (DP)	Expanded
Chris Chapman (CCh)	FK Lowry
Andy Martin (AM)	Foundation Piling
Chris Oram (CO)	Franki Foundations
Andrew Bond (ABo)	GeoCentrix
Devji Bhuvu (DB)	GSS Piling
Chris Beynon (CBe)	Keltbray
David Roy (DR)	Keltbray
Andrew Heathcote (AH)	Keller
Christopher Fox (CF)	Murphy
James Hayward (JH)	Pile Designs
David Illingworth (DI)	Pile Designs
Kayvan Kiany (KK)	Rock & Alluvium
Chris Robinson (CR)	Roger Bullivant
Julia Hill (JH)	Roger Bullivant
Mark Toye (MT)	Socotec
Simon Shaw (SS)	Van Elle
Lewis Yates (LY)	Van Elle

**In the Chair:** Jon Ball (JB) Roger Bullivant

**In Attendance:** Ciaran Jennings (CJ) FPS Secretary  
Melissa Bramley FPS Secretariat

N o	TOPIC	ACTIO N
1	<b>Apologies for absence</b>	
	Peter Illingworth (Pile Designs), Stephen Edmondson (Foundation Piling), Andy Bell (Cementation Skanska), Ebenezer Adenmosun (GeoFirma), Owen Francis (BAM), Craig Macklin (Franki)	
2	<b>Minutes of the last meeting</b>	
	The minutes of the meeting held on the 9 <sup>th</sup> September 2021 were approved.	
3	<b>Matters Arising</b>	
	Mark Pennington welcomed Jon Ball as the new Chair of the Committee, and Chris Oram as the Vice Chair. MP thanked everyone for their support during this tenure JB hoped MP would still remain involved in the meeting.	

## **ICE Specification for Ground Treatment**

CJ stated he had checked in with the AGS and stated the revision of the project did not, at present have a leader. CJ asked if there was anyone who would like to update this to get in touch to drive things forward. JB stated he felt the last revision took place in 1988 and urged those who had a specialism in this area to review, and a joint working group with the AGS would be powerful.

CJ stated the project would work in the same way as SPERW, which the FPS receives royalties from, without any financial input. CB asked if the AGS had accepted the lead on updating the document. CJ said the AGS had not stated formally they would do so and were also looking for an individual to do so. CB stated if someone was found from the AGS, the FPS would need to be involved, and CJ agreed, stating the FPS had expressed to the AGS, that they would expect the AGS to lead, alongside involvement from the FPS. CB wondered if Andrew Heathcote from Keller would be interested in taking a lead. AH stated he might be interested in looking at it but due to capacity there might be an issue. JB stated a Member of the GI team at RBL might be able to offer support too. AH stated in principle he would be willing to take a lead.

JB suggested a short meeting with AH to discuss, and CO stated he would be interested in assisting, too. CB wondered if there was a main contact at the AGS, CJ stated he would investigate who the AGS lead would be from their Geotechnical working group. JH wondered if it would be worth sending an email out to the FPS database – and CJ agreed this would be worthwhile completing to state there is potentially a joint working group occurring with the AGS to update the guide.

CJ

**Action: CJ to circulate an email.**

## **FPS Audit**

CJ stated there was a question on digitisation and how to include this in the audit, and CJ stated he needed to set up a meeting, following a discussion at the Executive Committee in relation to commonality and harmonisation within the industry, which had been difficult previously due to the varying stages of digitisation across Member organisations. CJ felt there was not currently a clear consistent vision. DB wondered if there should be a catch up, to check in on the tasks completed so far. CJ agreed the group needed to be reconvened. JB stated going forwards he was hoping to embed digitisation within the agenda for the committee, and set the baseline standard for the future, to enable the agenda to be set by the Committee.

CJ

**Action: CJ to re-convene the audit committee working groups**

## **Committee Chair**

JB thanked Chris Oram for volunteering as Vice-Chair, and stated he really appreciated Chris's assistance in driving the committee forward. CJ thanked both JB and CO, and thanked Mark Pennington who he believed was the longest standing FPS Chair.

CJ reminded the Committee of the new process for the tenure of Committee Chairs i.e., Chairs will be in position for two years, following which the Vice-Chair will be appointed Chair.

## **Corrosion of Cages Guidance**

CJ confirmed the Guidance had been published internally. CO thanked Owen Francis as the guidance had already been helpful. Ian Bannerman stated he would pass on the thank you to Owen.

It was agreed the document was to support Members when queries of such sort were raised. JB stated it could have more force to be used as an argument if the document was published externally, and a conversation should take place with Owen Francis and Emily Wood to see if they were happy for the document to be made public.

CJ

**Action: CJ to task Debbie to publicise**

## **Apprenticeship Degree – Geotechnical Engineer Level 7**

Zoe Baldwin gave a presentation on the Geotechnical Engineer Level 7 Apprenticeship degree. A copy of the presentation has been circulated with the minutes.

	<p>ZB stated there was currently a Level 6 Geosciences Apprenticeships Degree group, and if there was interest to get in touch.</p> <p>CJ asked if there had to be a separate training organisation to an assessment organisation, to administer the End Point Assessment. ZB confirmed this was not the case in relation to this qualification.</p> <p>JH asked how the qualification differed to doing a part time Masters – ZB confirmed the main selling point was that as a student you would not have to pay tuition fees, or take leave to study, as the Employer is liable for the costs. JH asked what the pre-requisite was for the Qualification, and ZB clarified that it was desirable to have a BSc in Geology or Civil Engineering, but it was not essential to have this level of Qualification, providing the University / FE provider and Employer are confident the individual will be able to complete the academic requirements of the course.</p> <p>Lewis Yates (Van Elle) asked if there was a limit on age. ZB stated the money can be drawn from the levy, but it should be open enough as long as the Employer and FE provider agreed on the level of your application. JB asked ZB to detail whether the qualification was aligned with the academic year. ZB stated if employers were keen to progress with the Apprenticeship to contact the Universities directly.</p> <p><b>Action: ZB to circulate the contact details to the FPS inbox</b></p> <p><b>Action: MB to circulate the presentation to the Committee and the University contacts</b></p>	<p>ZB</p> <p>MB</p>
4	<p><b>CIRIA – Update of 1970’s Piling Guides</b></p>	
	<p>CJ stated there was a small update in Andy Bell’s absence. CB confirmed Chris Presdee had left, and Jack Young had taken over the role. CB stated the draft was being progressed and they were waiting for the draft to be published.</p> <p><b>Action: CJ to confirm with Jack Young whether Chris Beynon is on the email circulation list</b></p>	<p>CJ</p>
5	<p><b>Improving Ground Investigation Data</b></p>	
	<p>JB stated he had attended a meeting with the AGS, the week prior, with a document which was out for final comment, and the approach now taken (on the basis of the geotechnical classification in relation to the Eurocodes), was to use the terms Low, Medium High Risk. JB suggested the creation of a technical note on what is defined by the FPS as Low, Medium and High risk would be worth creating. JB stated the introduction of the terms allowed the debate to move from what we do to calculating the level of risk.</p> <p>JB wondered if amending the Guidance Notes would be worth exploring – and would like to see if there was anyone with an interest in taking on board the ICE document and anything further to add from Eurocodes. JB stated he was seeking volunteers to be in place by the next meeting of the Committee (24<sup>th</sup> February 2022).</p> <p>JB felt a BIM Digitisation group would be worthwhile re-convening to push the AGS format data, and to get the digitisation process rolling and set the standard for the industry, defining and leading it.</p> <p>MP stated he would be happy to re-convene a Digital Group. CJ felt that one area that was raised was to harmonise the expectation about the data which is handed over or available within a project, and the emerging ways of doing this commercially.</p> <p>JB stated the final Yellow Book would be published in the first quarter of 2022 with Julian Lovell (AGS) confirming an exact month shortly.</p> <p>JH wondered how the conversation had progressed in relation to housebuilders and LABC requirements. CJ stated he had put a communications plan together with JB. CJ stated he spoken to Julian Lovell who wanted a deeper alignment between the AGS and FPS, and Steve Hadley and Sally Hudson of the AGS has agreed to hold regular catch up meetings. CJ felt the opportunity next year was for the AGS Members day at Geotechnica, but also an article within NCE would be worthwhile. JB stated it was important not to lose sight of the relationship with Build UK too. JH said she also felt it was important to remember the Site Investigation data was not being received in the AGS format, and work needed to take place in the digitisation and education of the clients and consultants, which can take place next year, but this did need to be progressed. CJ stated a further angle the FPS was taking involved Steve Hadley taking part in a meeting with the Construction Industry Council, to look at the issue of PI Insurance. CJ stated PI Insurance had rocketed for Members due to the Grenfell Tower incident.</p>	

	<p>Chris Beynon asked if Quantity Surveyors were being targeted via the RICS in relation to insurance and ground risk and whether there was a publication from the RICS that could be targeted. JB agreed this was a good suggestion.</p> <p>JBInns stated he was not familiar with the new draft of Specification on Site Investigation data, and asked if it was mandated that the provision of data in the AGS format was a requirement on delivery of the factual report. JB confirmed this was the case. MP stated he did not think this was the issue, but it was the communication of this to Main Contractors that was the issue.</p> <p>JH stated there was lack of internal understanding within client organisations and it was a multifaceted approach, with insufficient ground investigation taking place in the first place. LY stated there were two different issues – the communication of the data with Tier 1 Contractors, and the SI contractors themselves. LY wondered if it was wise to work with the SI Contractors, to understand how the information could be communicated directly.</p> <p>JB stated one of the outcomes from the survey was that very little AGS data was provided and was dependant on the value of the project (e.g., over £1m) and agreed with LY but felt education needed to take place throughout. JB hoped once the standard was adopted, this would assist, but there was a significant education that needed to take place, and who might be put up for articles to take things out on the road to publicise, using a multi-faceted approach. JH stated the matter was brought up at the previously ECG Presentation with Tony Suckling of A-Squared. CB said at ARUP, they request AGS data, but wondered whether the data was issued and timeframes were often another issue. CB wondered whether a link is issued in the report to enable FPS Members to download this.</p> <p>Chris Beynon stated quite a lot of the time the data is stripped out. Ian Bannerman wondered if attachments to pdf documents would assist. JH stated she knew Open Cloud had software with a platform of site investigation in the AGS data which was pdf accessible.</p> <p>JB wondered if it was worth raising this question with the AGS, and whether AGS Members have the facility in terms of online access.  <b>Action: CJ stated he would raise this with the AGS and would ask about the possibilities and the FPS Executive to ensure a clear communication plan.</b>  <b>Action: CJ asked JB to speak to Julian Lovell.</b></p> <p>ABo stated the point on procurement for SI, and PI insurance and explicit wording in Eurocode 7. ABo said in the second generation of Eurocode 7, they had added in explicit wording on those individuals who undertake Ground Investigation <i>assume that Ground Investigations are planned by personnel or enterprises knowledgeable about potential ground and groundwater conditions, are executed by those with appropriate skill and experience and the evaluation of results and derivation are carried out by personnel with appropriate experience and qualifications.</i> ABo stated he felt the wording was very powerful and by placing this in front of the insurers may assist, and was not part of the current Eurocode. ABo stated it will apply across design, and the wording will not change but the emphasis will be greater and moved to part one.</p>	<p>JB / CJ</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p><b>Eurocodes &amp; Execution Codes</b></p>	
	<p>ABo updated the Committee on the timescale to consider what has been drafted and stated things were still up in the air. ABo stated a group of three individuals were preparing the final drafts of part 1, 2 and 3 ahead of the formal inquiry with CEN. ABo stated CEN will need 9 months to turn the text around, with translations taking place and expected the formal draft now to take place in September 2022, which meant there will be a greater time period to review the draft, but ABo could look at side copies. ABo said during this period SC7 will be continuing to work on the draft in preparing possible comments to enquiries prior to the formal consultation period. ABo stated copies will be made open and FPS comments to feed in either via the BSi and the formal process or via the SC7 committee. ABo stated any comments the FPS feel may not get the support of other countries should be submitted via the BSi and any comments which may be universal should be submitted via the SC7 committee.</p> <p>ABo said he believed the area which may be of concern was the Classification of Ground Improvement, which may undermine piling.  <b>Action: ABo to circulate documents when he is in possession</b></p> <p>David Hard stated he had no further update.</p> <p>Chris Fox mentioned an online course taking place with Engineers Ireland entitled Geotechnical Design to Eurocode 7, on 16<sup>th</sup> November. The link was circulated to the committee following the meeting.</p>	<p>ABo</p>

7	<b>ICE Manual of Geotechnical Engineering Guidance Update</b>	
	In Andy Bell's absence there was no update.	
8	<b>Any other business</b>	
	<p>CO wondered what the updates were with the provision for SI that the new Eurocode provisions, as ABo had previously mentioned sending David Norbury's draft. ABo stated due to the delay in the drafts he had not circulated this and would circulate the document as a whole when he was in possession of it.</p> <p>CO also wondered if there was still time to comment on EN206 –, DH stated these could still be fed back to the group, and the main section of concern related to plastic concrete. DH stated the process was by no means finished, and to submit comments.</p> <p>CF asked about the ICE SPERW Specification and if there were any plans to modify things slightly to make completion more user friendly. JB stated he was not aware of a draft being looked at. CJ said if there were elements that would be worth updating the conversation could be opened to reflect changes within the industry, and a fourth edition requirement could be discussed with Thomas Telford, who he was sure would support if enough profit was deemed to be accessible.</p> <p>ABo felt there would be an upcoming review and revision of the Execution standards in light of the new Eurocodes, upon which it would be the right time to create a fourth edition. DH stated the Execution Standards were open for review, but at the moment only one of the groups had a Chair, and the intention was to update these to align them with the Eurocodes. DH said the observation was the SPERW was not only written by the FPS, but involved Clients, who will still require a level of data. JB has said previously they have stated they are in broad compliance with the ICE SPERW Guidance. CJ stated subsequent advisory information could be published alongside the guidance. It was agreed this would be a good approach, and Christopher Fox and Chris Oram agreed they would happily assist.</p> <p><b>Action: CF &amp; CO to discuss the creation of advisory information</b></p> <p>JB asked DH on the process of appointing Convenors within the BSi. DH stated these are put forward by the Country, and to progress this, it would be best to do so via Christopher Starr at the BSi. Mini Piles, Displacement Piles and Soil Nails require Chairs. JB stated it was a significant task, and DH concurred, stating the role continued for a number of years.</p> <p>CO asked if there were plans for an Execution Code on Helical Piling. DH said this would be viewed by most of the other countries as an off shoot of displacement piling.</p> <p>JB wondered if DH could keep an eye on the Committees and not miss the boat. DH stated he would chase up the Secretariat of TC-288.</p> <p>JH asked how the group was progressing on the information on House Builders, and the potential webinar. JB stated this did need to occur, but felt a hiatus had been reached following a conversation with Steve Hadley. SH confirmed a different view, and there was a lack of understanding that the codes had been updated. CJ stated he would investigate who to contact within the NHBC and could draft a letter and potentially contact Build UK too. James Hayward felt the issue resulted when external companies are drafted in when the work is already undertaken, and there is a huge disconnect. JB felt the FPS could set itself as the benchmark standard.</p> <p><b>Action: CJ to provide contact(s) in NHBC, JB and JH to provide technical input to SH's letter</b></p> <p>Chris Beynon wondered if there was a drive to suggest the LDSA guidance was updated to remove working stress design approaches, as he felt a lot of the issues originate from the guidance stating an either/or approach could be taken. JB felt in his view the guidance was quite consistent with the Eurocodes, but felt if there was a desire, an approach could be taken to update the guidance. CB said he felt the trend was moving to Eurocodes. JB felt the committee should give this issue some thought, with the potential to add this as an Agenda item. ABo said he felt stating the change was to comply with current British Standards, was a better way of selling the issue.</p> <p><b>Action: Review of LABC guidance in relation to further emphasis on Eurocodes to be added to agenda for next meeting CB to provide precis of issue that requires progression for discussion.</b></p>	CF /CO
9	<b>Further Meetings</b>	
	<p>2022 Meetings (10am – 12pm)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> February</li> <li>• Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> May</li> <li>• Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> September</li> <li>• Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> November</li> </ul>	