

# FEDERATION OF PILING SPECIALISTS

## MINUTES OF A TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING

**Date:** Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> May 2021

**Time:** 10:00am

**Location:** Online via Webex

<b>PRESENT:</b>	Tony Suckling (TS)	A2 Studio
	Ash Rogers (AR)	Aarsleff
	Chris Barker (CB)	Arup
	David A. Hard (DH)	Bachy Soletanche
	Owen Francis (OF)	BAM Ritchies
	James Binns (JB)	Byland
	Andrew Bell (AB)	Cementation Skanska
	Sebastian Draghici (SD)	Central Piling
	David Preece (DP)	Expanded
	Andy Martin (AM)	Foundation Piling
	Chris Chapman (CC)	FK Lowry
	Chris Oram (CO)	Franki Foundations
	Andrew Bond (ABO)	GeoCentrix
	Devji Bhuvra (DB)	GSS Piling
	Andrew Heathcote (AH)	Keller
	David Roy (DR)	Keltbray
	Emma Haddow (EH)	Murphy
	David Illingworth (DI)	Pile Designs
	Mohamed Ayeldeen (MA)	Remedy Geotechnics
	Neil Stone (MS)	Rock & Alluvium
	Julia Hill (JH)	Roger Bullivant
	Martyn Ellis (ME)	Socotec
	Mark Toye (MT)	Socotec
	Simon Shaw (SS)	Van Elle

**In the Chair:** Mark Pennington (MP) BBGE

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

No	TOPIC	ACTION
1	<b>Apologies for absence</b>	
	Jon Ball – RBL, James Blackwell - Martello, Michael Gavins - Atkins	
2	<b>Minutes of the last meeting</b>	
	The minutes of the meeting held on the 25 <sup>th</sup> February 2021 were approved.	
3	<b>Matters Arising</b>	
	<p><b>a) ICE Specification for Ground Treatment</b> CJ mentioned he had passed this to the AGS, as this Committee had agreed to be involved but not run it. CJ stated he was waiting to hear back from the AGS, unless there were members of the Technical Committee who wished to participate. It was agreed to leave this item and remove it from the agenda.</p> <p><b>b) LABC Settlement Requirements</b></p>	

<p>MP stated this was discussed at the previous meeting, and it was agreed to remove the item from the agenda.</p> <p><b>c) FPS Audit</b></p> <p>CJ stated there was now a full house of volunteers across the committees. CJ stated the next stage was to set up a meeting on the topic and have the revision completed by the end of 2021, in order to start the new audit schedule in 2022.</p> <p>The Committee asked for clarity on the audit schedules. CJ clarified that for the vast majority of Associate Members are not required to be audited, aside from the Reinforcement Suppliers, which was a new category which had recently been set up. CJ stated the audits are focused around ensuring robust processes are in place with competent individuals to undertake the work and do not delve into the science or engineering of a design, rather the output and deliverables.</p> <p>CJ asked if there were any technical gaps in the audit schedules at the moment, now would be the time to mention these, and it was very much down to FPS Members to determine what good looks like in the industry.</p> <p>CJ mentioned there were plans to issue a survey of customers and clients and project donors understand the awareness of the FPS and what it stands for, really pushing the sustainability and or quality agenda.</p>	
<p><b>Action: CJ to circulate audit schedules and organise a meeting</b></p>	<p><b>CJ</b></p>
<p><b>d) Piling Conference 2020</b></p> <p>MP stated he had been sceptical about holding the conference virtually, but felt it had gone well. AB stated he felt the event had a broad audience, and the range of content and openness was positive.</p> <p>A discussion ensued on the sponsorship of the event.</p> <p>ME from Socotec stated as a firm, they questioned the benefits of being a sponsor in relation to return on investment, and lack of mention during the conference.</p> <p>TS then shared the dissemination of knowledge due to the virtual conference had been really worthwhile, meaning all levels of the organisation had been privy to some of the seminars. MP also said the benefits were being able to review recordings of many of the sessions.</p> <p><b>e) Committee Chair</b></p> <p>CJ mentioned that as discussed previously MP was looking to step down, and a new process had been implemented for a sitting chair for two years, before a review takes place, and the Vice Chair can take over.</p> <p>CJ stated there had been three nominees for the Vice Chair role, however, no nominations for Chair, and urged members of the Committee to come forward if they were interested in taking up the position. CJ said the next step will be for a discussion with the Executive Committee.</p> <p>A question was asked on the possibility of a job share of two Vice Chairs – CJ agreed he would investigate this option.</p>	
<p><b>Action: All to consider next steps</b></p>	<p><b>All</b></p>
<p><b>f) NHBC &amp; Premier Guarantee</b></p> <p>Craig Burton was looking to discuss this item and was not present in the meeting. JH mentioned that the LABC and Premier Guarantee at RBL they were a lot stricter in terms of the design and Eurocode and testing and validation of dynamics and statics. It was confirmed this agenda item was connected with raising awareness up front when clients are placing orders with contractors who are installing driven piles with a factor of safety 2, which then come back from NHBC. DI stated it was also consistency from warranty providers. CO wondered if anyone was seeing a downward shift in warranty providers. JH stated she had conversations recently with the LABC and they were sticking to the Good Practice Guidance, and stated RBL had been running some CPD sessions with housebuilders. It was agreed it was an awareness and expectations issues. MP asked if there was some guidance that could be created by the committee. JH stated there was already an LABC good practice guide which was very clear, but the issue was with housebuilders and their understanding of the guidance, working aside from British Standards and</p>	

	<p>factors of safety of 2.5 or 3, or 2, and the housebuilders need to understand the difference between British standards and Eurocodes, and also the provision of adequate site investigations.</p> <p>TS asked if the issue was factors of safety or a lack of belief of the dynamic test is equivalent to a static test. AR stated the market was not in the same place as the warranty providers expectations and wondered who would take the first step in upping the factors of safety.</p> <p>JH stated they were now referring to later guidance. ABo said the Eurocode is a British Standard which has existed for 11 years, and standards were updated in 2015, and felt the industry should stop talking about British Standards and Eurocodes. It was agreed the issue lay with communication and education.</p> <p>AH stated there was a wider issue in terms of warranty providers and had seen some clients looking to change their warranty providers at a late stage. ABo asked if the warranty providers should be challenged, if they are insisting on something to their standards but their standards are demonstrably out of date, this needs to come from an organisation rather than an individual and wondered if FPS and AGS should be challenging these organisations to ensure they are keeping their internal documents up to date and current. It was agreed there is little discussion on engineering judgement and it was very much higher factors of safety without flexibility. CJ asked who was insisting on the use of out-of-date documents, and AR stated it was most often the British standard 8110 used by Engineers from house builders and architects. TS stated there was a competency issue and stated there was a real race to the bottom.</p> <p>CJ stated he felt the issue was one that should be picked up with the Commercial committee to provide a combined response.</p> <p>JH wondered if it would be worth running a webinar to educate house builders. It was agreed this would be worthwhile.</p> <p><b>Action: CJ to investigate organising a CPD webinar on the matter</b></p> <p>MP asked if a concise list of warranty providers could be created. It was agreed house building developers and warranty providers, however as suggested by JH and ABo, the warranty providers need to be sold the benefits of moving to the new standards.</p> <p><b>Action: CJ to make Commercial Committee aware</b></p> <p><b>Action: Creation of a list of builders of warranty providers – Committee Members to send a list through to CJ</b></p> <p><b>Action – circulate copy of guidance</b></p> <p><b>g) Integrity Testing Guidance review</b></p> <p>It was agreed the first step was to capture information and then set up a task group to review this information where sonic logging had picked up anomalies which had to be investigated intrusively or by design. CJ mentioned PH had defined a sheet, and this had been circulated to FPS Member's to complete. CJ to chase completion and then instigate a task group.</p> <p><b>Action: Re-circulate the list – to respond sooner rather than later.</b></p>	<p>CJ</p> <p>CJ</p> <p>CJ</p>
4	<p><b>CIRIA – Update of 1970's Piling Guides</b></p>	
	<p>AB gave an update from an FPS perspective and stated the guides had gained some momentum since the previous meeting, with a new project manager, and some intensive interest from a range of consultants. AB stated Coffey had submitted a bid, alongside Cementation, Bauer and Aarsleff. CIRIA are going to discuss the guides with sponsors and a review panel and decide the next steps.</p> <p>MP said the key thing was things were moving forward and when the drafts take shape, there will be an opportunity to influence and input. AB stated he will feed back progress to the committee.</p> <p>JH asked how it will differ from the ICE Manual on Geotechnical Engineering. AB stated the key word was the CIRIA Guide is a Piling Guide, and it will be quite challenging to ensure the new guide complements, expands and signposts other guides.</p>	
5	<p><b>Improving Ground Investigation Data</b></p>	
	<p><b>a. Guidance on Minimum Site investigation requirements for foundation design &amp; GI Questionnaire results</b></p> <p>CJ stated he had spoken to JB, who felt he needed to do some further investigation on the results of the survey he had undertaken with the committee to get sufficient and quality SI data.</p>	

	<p>CJ stated they had mentioned approaching GE Magazine, and potentially pushing the issue with Build UK and talking to them about how to get in front of main contractor members.</p> <p>CJ said he had put this approach to the Executive Committee of the FPS, who said they were in support, and also had spoken to the AGS, who felt this was a good starting point but needed to go deeper, and CJ was in the process of organising a call with Julian Lovell, Sally Hudson and to develop a combined communication campaign to educate people about ground investigation, geotechnical risk, and the data flow through the project to ensure everyone is getting what they need to produce quality designs and build quality piles.</p> <p>JH mentioned an email CJ had circulated about speaking at Geotechnica on the matter.</p> <p>TS felt if you were to look ahead at Tier 1 Contractors, House Builders etc, they are looking at modular construction in relation to sustainability etc, which require foundations that do not move much, and felt that the piling industry was going in the opposite direction. TS felt that stitching the two together would need much stronger ground investigation data to enable the use of Eurocodes to design foundations with a lower factor of safety.</p> <p>MP stated there is the quality of the SI being specified and the transfer of the data, which both need to be improved to get the right data to the right people. MP felt the flow of information and both elements need to be targeted.</p> <p><b>Action: Link with the Commercial Committee</b></p> <p>CJ stated he hoped the meeting with the AGS would take place in the forthcoming weeks, and he would speak with JB about the questionnaire results and the next actions.</p> <p>MP wanted to raise awareness of the use of the AGS format for using the capture the digital data wish had been pushed via HS2, and the profile of the AGS data will be increased, and how this will spread through projects.</p>	CJ
6.	<p><b>Eurocodes &amp; Execution Codes</b></p>	
	<p>ABo mentioned Project Team 6 had finished it's work and there were new drafts of part 1,2,3, which were currently with the SC7 committee, which will have editorial changes before being sent out for the official enquiry period with each country, for the drafts, which will then need to be submitted in October. The SC7 groups had been reorganised so they were not subject led but based on testing the code, with another group looking at the code for new users, in parallel with the enquiry with national standards bodies. ABo stated there will be items that need to be reviewed, and this will need to be done later in 2021. ABo stated September would be the time to review the document due.</p> <p>DH stated he was chairing one of the task groups.</p>	
7.	<p><b>Technical note on base of pile reinforcement</b></p>	
	<p>OF referred to a note he had created with Emily Wood which had been circulated prior to the meeting, to review an issue that occurred on a few sites where the designer was very concerned about the corrosion of cage at depth and felt that an FPS statement would have been helpful to share with the designer. OF stated he had not received any comments. DR said he would like to suggest adding in at the base of the pile any forces are presumably negligible and should not affect the structural performance. Cba stated he had not encountered the problem before and in reading the statement there were some sentences which were quite bold statements, especially around oxygen not existing at the base of pile, and stainless steel captured in concrete does not corrode, and MP suggested the use of softer statements opening with words like 'typically corrosion does not occur when stainless steel is encased in concrete'. MP suggested OF made the tweaks suggested and urged others to submit further comments if they felt necessary.</p> <p>MP felt the document should be published as a position paper once the tweaks were made. AB wondered if it would be worth adding references to the document around the evidence relating to corrosion. It was agreed this should be added, and the word 'accepted' at the beginning of the document should be agreed. OF asked if CB could send an email to clarify his comments.</p> <p><b>Action: Publish the position paper to the FPS Website once the amends have been made.</b></p>	MB
8.	<p><b>ICE Manual of Geotechnical Engineering Guidance Update</b></p>	

	AB mentioned he was still progressing with his updates to the document.	
<b>9.</b>	<b>Any other business</b>	
	<p><b>Rig Bearing Pressure Spreadsheet Workshops</b> DB asked about the next workshops. CJ mentioned the workshops were being re-worked in format, and the dates were not confirmed. MB stated she would circulate a note when the workshops were ready to be run again.</p> <p><b>Next meeting location</b> A discussion took place about meeting locations for the coming year. It was agreed the next meeting should be virtual. CB mentioned a hybrid solution may be an option for future meetings with multiple screens. JH mentioned the use of company offices, and CJ stated anything that could be done to save costs would be worthwhile.</p>	
<b>10.</b>	<b>Further Meetings</b>	
	<p>To start at 10am and held online via webex.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9th September</li> </ul> <p><b>Further 2021 Meetings</b> (10am-12pm):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4th November (location TBC)</li> </ul>	