

General Practitioners March 2023

Newsletter

Welcome to the first newsletter for 2023.

Summer seems to have missed us this year and instead we have been plagued with cyclones and a ridiculous amount of rain in some parts of the country, causing devastation in particular to the North Island. We hope all our members, friends and families have stayed safe and hopefully relatively unharmed.

This newsletter we have a great Lessons Learned from Martin Pratchett on a disciplinary case study involving a near vertical cut left exposed on the boundary close to a neighbour's house. We have also included an article on learning from complaints and how to avoid them happening. We are hosting another EGP webinar on 12 April that we would like to encourage you all to attend. We have included a list of a few other upcoming webinars, that may interest our members, later in the newsletter. Take a look at the Slack Channel update summary to see what has been discussed recently and sign up if you have not already.

Have you done any interesting EGP projects lately? Share your photos for others to view on Slack, or alternatively submissions can be sent to general.practitioners@engineeringnz.org. Again, I would like to encourage you all to submit your Lessons Learned to include in future newsletters. This is anonymous and a great tool to help other engineers to not repeat the same mistakes. We are also asking for you to submit photos that you think best describe Engineering General Practice, so that we can showcase exactly what we, as EGPs, do.

Tamlyn Adams, Editor

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Message from the Chair

Kia ora everyone.

2023 – My dreams of a better year seem to be a little shattered. We are dealing with unprecedented events in the North and East. One observation for myself is that, in amongst the misery that our

weather events have created, there are some stories where our engineering designs have saved property and helped relieve anxiety for clients. An example of this is the value of in-ground palisade walls protecting property from unstable ground.

Your committee is getting into gear for the year. We have some webinars planned and have been negotiating with SESOC for another slot at this year's conference. We will be in touch soon to advise what we will be presenting, on behalf of Engineering General Practitioners. Part of this will be looking for some involvement from our members – so if you think you have something you would like information on or possibly something you could present on, please get in touch with myself, Kelly Pilkington or Ian Watson. This can be done on our website or email tech.groups@engineeringnz.org.

There is some work coming out soon, on safety in design, a tool to help with identifying complexity in your projects. Some work on the contribution or difficulties arising from vertical steel corrugated sheet cladding among other things. Another topic of ongoing interest to EGP's is how to keep ourselves from landing in disputes and the immense toll that having to deal with complaints places on our wellbeing. We are intending that this will be an ongoing conversation through webinars and possibly at the SESOC conference.

Martin Pratchett, from Engineering New Zealand, has been working on the complexity tool and will be rolling out a case study on this soon. This is a strong interest for me because EGP's often have difficulty articulating what it is about their work that is complex – and this is essential to the assessment process for CPEng. Complexity is often confused with complicated, but complicated work is not necessarily complex. I believe that complexity is the key to being a professional engineer. The case study will give some idea of how the tool will work when it is released later in the year. The case study will be a draft version of how the tool teases out the hidden aspects of even a simple project revealing how and why it is complex.

Another interest of mine centres on the relationships we build with clients, architects, and contractors. The key to these is communication and I believe that the view of not getting too close to those we work for, or those whose work we oversee, is a misguided one. I am preparing a presentation on this for later in the year. My contention is that integrity, honesty, and good communication is the key to good relationships and that in turn, these lead to good designs, satisfactory outcomes for owners and better engineering outcomes for the community.

I am looking forward to the year ahead in spite of the start we have had.

My best wishes to you all and take heart in the idea that our services are even more important to our communities than they have ever been.

Nga Mihi

Pete van Grinsven

Chair EGP SIG

The EGP One Question Survey

This issue, we are asking Engineering General Practitioners:

Should it be a requirement that all geotechnical jobs have an allowance for entering the data into the New Zealand Geotechnical Database (NZGD)?

- Yes this will be helpful to everyone in the end and it is not that much extra work
- Yes only to all jobs where a full geotechnical report is provided and it can be allowed for in the quote.
- No it is not beneficial to the client currently so why should they pay for it, only enter it when specifically requested by the client

For those that are not aware of the NZGD, have a look at the following link and sign up, very helpful to get an idea of the geotechnical parameters around your site without testing.

[Log In \(nzgd.org.nz\)](https://nzgd.org.nz)

CLICK TO TAKE THE SURVEY

In the last issue we asked:

Which would you like most for 2023?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
More hours of work in general i.e. more income	0.0%
The same hours but better-quality work i.e. more job satisfaction	41.2%
Fewer hours of work ie. more time for non-work activities and family	58.8%

Interesting that money does not seem to be the driving decision on this survey vote with majority of our voters wanting to work less hours, but not far behind is better quality work.

Learning Opportunities

The biggest opportunities to learn from are not when things go right, but when they go wrong. The best way to learn from your mistakes is to recognise what went wrong and how you, and others, can avoid making the same mistake again.

Click on the links below to read some anonymous learning opportunities submitted by two different contributors:

1. Disciplinary Committee Upheld Complaints - Boundary Cut

Do you have a learning opportunity that would be of interest to your fellow EGP members? Please submit your examples for others to learn from. Download the Learning Opportunities form here and send it to egp.sig.anonymous@gmail.com

EGP Slack Channel Update

Nick Calvert

The EGPSIG Slack channel provides a useful forum for technical discussion. The committee recommends that all our members are active on the Slack channel. There are many ways to know when content has been posted, but I find the best way is to get a notification through the system tray on my computer. Follow this link to sign up and install the EGP Slack Channel: <https://egp-sig-nz.slack.com/archives/CUHB068FJ>. If you have any issues or questions regarding the Slack channel, feel free to email your questions to tech.groups@engineeringnz.org.

Since the last newsletter, discussion continues to be lively and interesting. The following is a summary of the recent topics of discussion:

- A question was raised on people's opinions of the likely workload in the coming year
- Clarifying the use of the Certificate of Design Works
- How to go about preparing a PS4 where the work was not specifically inspected
- Discussion of the live load to use within an elevated swimming pool
- Discussion over the seismic demands to apply to roof strap bracing in residential homes
- Discussion over what the durability requirements are for different timber preservatives
- A member raising a question over the failure modes in timber connections for the new AS/NZS1720
- The Engineering New Zealand Engineering Practice Manager provided a link to an ADNZ webinar on common Building Consent Problems
- Members asking for remote construction monitoring support
- Discussion over the amount of time concrete should be left prior to installing structural steel
- Design of precast concrete boundary fire rated walls
- Design of retaining walls constructed over public services
- Discussion over the implication of floods on waffle slab design – the potential for floating
- How to design residential bracing when the bracing stops more than 100mm above the bottom plate

Do you have any interesting photos from your EGP jobs? Share them on the EGP-Photos Channel on Slack. We have some great pictures of a large, reinforced concrete palisade wall from Mark during and after construction. Great to see what we are working on out there.



We ask all members to continue to be active on the Slack channel because the more activity, the more beneficial the content is for everyone. If you missed out on any of these, go have a look at the discussions and feel free to add your input.

Engineering New Zealand Board Voting

Voting for the 2023/2024 Engineering New Zealand Board elections is currently open and closes at 12 noon on Friday 10 of March, so make sure you get your votes in.

We would like to put forward a special mention of Kennie Tsui, who has done an amazing job in making our EGP voice heard and providing feedback to our committee and members on progress of our issues and/or concerns raised through Engineering New Zealand.

If you are not sure who to vote for, we would highly recommend Kennie as she gets the job done, considering the best interests of everyone involved and is a great representative for the EGP.

Your invitation to vote would have come from the email address: iro@electionz.com if you can't seem to find it.

Learning From Complaints

Martin Pratchett

In most cases, it's not substandard engineering that makes clients complain. Instead, weak or non-existent contracts, or a lack of soft skills and understanding how to deal with difficult clients are behind most concerns.

Read the full article of common complaints and what you can do to avoid them from the link below:

[READ MORE](#)

Upcoming EGP Webinars

The EGP has recently been rolling out a few great webinars for our members with a few other exciting ones lined up. Below are some webinars that may be of interest to our members coming up soon, otherwise please refer to the Engineering New Zealand link below for a full list of upcoming webinars:

Date	Webinar/Course
06/03/2023	Climate Action & Energy Retrofit of Traditional & Heritage Buildings
10/03/2023	Do's and Don'ts of Computer Modelling
15/03/2023	Let's Get You Chartered
15/03/2023	Foundation Design for Potentially Liquefiable Soils
16/03/2023	Timber Design Society 2023 Series 2
04/04/2023	Soil Engineering Coupled Processes and Applications

18/10/2022	Embedded Retaining Walls (Course online)
12/04/2023	EGP – Avoiding Complaints by Martin Pratchett as well as introduction to our Slack channel by Nick Calvert
19/04/2023	Maintaining Your Chartership: Reassessments

UPCOMING WEBINARS

As a voluntary committee, we want to bring you quality content to support your work as a General Practitioner and we hope you'll join us for our next webinar. If you have ideas for future webinar topics, please get in touch, we would love to hear from you.

If you missed the webinar last week on "Improving health and safety outcomes for the construction sector through better design practise", you can watch it through the link below:

[VIEW WEBINAR](#)