Aims and Missions of our Joint Seminars

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This newsletter reviews the past joint seminars organized by the Subcommittee of International Relations of the JSCE Concrete Committee (Chairman: Prof. Hamada, Kyushu University) and briefly explains recent activities concerning the joint seminars.

The subcommittee was organized in 2005 to disseminate Japanese concrete technologies around the world. We publish three newsletters each year (four before 2018) regarding concrete technologies in Japan and the activities of the JSCE Concrete Committee.

The subcommittee also has organized 15 joint seminars in other countries, mostly in Asian, such as Indonesia, Mongolia, Vietnam, Thailand, and The Philippines. One of the primary purposes of these seminars is to widely disseminate information about the JSCE Standard Specifications for Concrete Structures because these specifications are derived from recently developed concrete technologies in Japan. The joint seminars are a highly effective way to describe the JSCE specifications and transfer our expertise to other countries.

Nevertheless, foreign administrators cannot easily adopt the JSCE specifications. First, national specifications have a historical context. For instance, some developing countries have adopted BS or Russian codes because they are former colonies of England or Russia. In such cases, these former colonies cannot easily fully adopt the JSCE specifications. Second, Japanese engineers are able to design and construct concrete structures using foreign specifications. In other words, there is no strong motivation for developing countries to stipulate JSCE specifications in their contracts. Third, most specifications documents are written in Japanese and foreign engineers have difficulty understanding them.

To overcome the above issues, the subcommittee has proposed a new policy for disseminating JSCE specifications. First, we must clarify the strengths of Japanese concrete technologies. Standards are often created when the engineers or companies need a rule or reference to categorize the quality of different technologies. For instance, if a company has high quality construction methods or materials but there is no specification to clarify their quality, administrators cannot tell the difference between low and high quality technologies. In such cases, both administrators and engineers require specifications. Thus, knowing the strengths of Japanese concrete technologies is important. Second, we must focus on specific topics covered by the JSCE specifications but not by the foreign specifications. Topics not covered by foreign specifications can be identified through the needs of foreign engineers. Therefore, we must also clarify the needs of foreign engineers.

The subcommittee has actively held joint seminars with other countries primarily to learn about the needs of foreign engineers and, if the target topic is confirmed, to introduce Japanese technologies and the JSCE specifications. So far, we confirmed that concrete technologies concerning fly ash are a promising topic in Asian countries. Seminars regarding fly ash have been held in Indonesia twice, and a special session on fly ash was organized by Prof. Ishida (University of

Tokyo) at CECAR8. This year, we plan to hold a seminar in Indonesia.

The subcommittee provides opportunities to hold seminars to investigate the needs and topics of other counties. Please contact us if you are interested in Japanese concrete technologies.