

The Specification and Role of the Engineering Geologist

In geotechnical control and guidance documents in Hong Kong an “Engineering Geologist” is considered as an appropriate person to carry out specific tasks, e.g. PNAP 85, PNAP161, PNAP61, WBTC 6/2001, SPR 1/2002 etc.

In order to identify persons who are considered appropriately qualified for such work, the IMMM (HK Branch) proposes the following specification for an "Engineering Geologist", based on the range of duties and requirements as they apply to Hong Kong. This initial definition has purposely avoided the need for extensive review or a professional interview and has been designed to allow its adoption by other organisations in Hong Kong with engineering geologists members.

An Engineering Geologist is a geologist with appropriate engineering training and responsible experience.

A Geologist is a person who has obtained an initial degree in geological sciences.

Engineering training in Hong Kong is normally by means of a second degree with significant engineering content e.g. MSc in Engineering Geology. Alternatively professional experience can be verified by a professional engineering qualification such as Chartered Engineer.

Responsible experience should be gained in the application of engineering geological skills to civil and geotechnical engineering and should be confirmed by a relevant professional qualification such as MIMMM.

In summary the IMMM consider that an Engineering Geologist should have the following:

- Geological degree
- Engineering training
- Relevant experience
- Professional qualification

Some tasks of an engineering geological nature (see Engineering Geological Skills below) can be competently carried out by suitably experienced geotechnical engineers or geologists. However, to ensure an integrated approach to the planning, design, construction and maintenance of civil engineering works, the input provided by an Engineering Geologist by means of the application of engineering geological data, principles and interpretation is necessary in order that the geological factors affecting the works and their associated risk are properly recognised and mitigated.

The IMMM (HK Branch) will now seek industry wide views on the above-proposed specification of an “Engineering Geologist” before the next AGM (i.e. March 2004).

List of IMMM (HK Branch) Members with Declared Engineering Geological Skills

Notwithstanding the above, many IMMM members carry out engineering geological tasks in Hong Kong. A list of those members who have volunteered their relevant professional information is now being compiled and will be placed on our web site. This list will state the member’s individual qualifications, training, experience and level of expertise in various engineering geological skill areas.

The usefulness of the List will be reviewed in 6 months time to determine its relevance to the profession.