

New Year's Greeting for 2013

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Happy New Year to everyone.

At the meeting of the Concrete Committee held in December 2012 I was re-elected Chairman for the next term, so for the 2 years from 2013 I will serve my second term as Chairman. Your continued guidance and encouragement is greatly appreciated.

The 2012 version of Standard Specifications for Concrete Structures will be published in 2013. Currently the Revision Subcommittee is in the stage of final modifications, and 2-day lecture meeting on the revised specifications will be held in Tokyo in March and in Osaka in April, to which you are all invited to participate. The new revisions adopted on this occasion are for three volumes: Basic Rules, Design, and Construction. The volumes for “Maintenance and Management” and “Dam Concrete” are scheduled to be published in October, about 6 months later. This is in response to the strong wish of the Revision Subcommittee who wanted to responsibly publish the Standard Specifications for Concrete Structures. We will also be holding lecture meetings in Tokyo and Osaka when these volumes are published.

Recently, it seems that the focus on social infrastructure facilities has shifted to the problems of safety and security as a result of aging. The major defeat of groups saying “From Concrete to People” and holding hostile views on the development of social infrastructure facilities is to be welcomed, but the current situation regarding the social infrastructure facilities requires caution. The accidental collapse of the ceiling board of the Sasago Tunnel in December 2012 exposed the serious condition of social infrastructure facilities in Japan. There is a strong demand to counteract the gradual aging of the various types of social infrastructure facilities including expressways and to maintain their level of safety.

The Concrete Committee is tackling the problems of durability, aging, and maintaining safety for social infrastructure facilities, mainly concrete structures. However, the problems are not simple as to be limited to a single field. We are now assiduously studying the theme on what should be done to maintain and improve the safety of social infrastructure facilities. The planning, design, construction and maintenance of good, safe, and secure social infrastructure facilities is the responsibility of concrete engineers, and at the same time it is what we have to work hard at. We want to strive to provide genuinely useful technologies for society and for people.