

Best wishes as we enter the year 2021.

During 2020, the spread of COVID-19 brought inconvenience to people around the world in all aspects of life, work and social interaction. The activities of scholarly groups, including the JSCE Concrete Committee, were affected by the pandemic like everything else. In the past, the Concrete Committee, as well as the subcommittees and working groups that operate under it, held regular gatherings in the meeting room of the Japan Society of Civil Engineers in Tokyo. However, the risk of infection on public transport and during face-to-face meetings led us to move over to online Internet-based meetings. Though the new and unfamiliar ways of working were initially confusing, we are now able to do most of our work online and our activity has recovered to its previous level.

The JSCE Concrete Committee has a system of research subcommittees that procure members through open recruitment. This system has supported Japan's research potential in concrete engineering and drives the development of new areas of research. It also effectively functions as a place for young engineers and researchers to work together. Last year, even in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, several subcommittees held online seminars to disseminate their findings to public. This bodes well for the future of the Concrete Committee.

One important mission of the Concrete Committee is to periodically revise the JSCE Standard Specifications for Concrete Structures to ensure that they keep up with technological progress and social change. These revisions take place every five years. With the next edition due to be published between 2022 and 2023, the work of revision has just started. As well as updating the content in line with changing times, we plan this time to publish an electronic version of the specifications in addition to the conventional print version. This is quite natural in the construction field, where we are seeing great advances in the use of information technology.

Further, given the importance of disseminating this important information to an international audience, we have decided to provide an English translation of the upcoming revision of the JSCE Standard Specifications for Concrete Structures. Though we have done this in the past, this time we are looking to raise the international recognition of this important publication by strategically distributing the English version, thereby supporting greater international understanding of Japan's concrete technology.

The Concrete Committee is looking forward to a successful 2021; may it also be a good year for all of you.

Takumi Shimomura
Chairman of JSCE Concrete Committee
Professor, Nagaoka University of Technology