

**Stan R. Caldwell, P.E., SECB, F.ASCE, F.AEI**  
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## **Technical Region Director's Report** **October 31, 2008**

All members of the ASCE Board of Direction are expected to communicate effectively with the constituents in their respective regions. The Technical Region is comprised of the members of ASCE's Institutes. I initiated the Technical Region Director's Report three years ago, on November 1, 2005, in an effort to keep you informed of news from the ASCE Executive Committee, the Board of Direction, and the Technical Region Board of Governors. This "special edition", the fourteenth report in the series, is my final such effort. I leave office on November 8, 2008.

I was approached on running for office as ASCE's first Technical Region Director in July 2004. Three months and many phone calls later, I finally agreed to allow my name to be put forward, without having any idea of what I was getting myself into. The first reality check was a year-long, nationwide, contested election. When Pat Natale called on August 17, 2005, I was shocked to learn that I had been elected. The following three years have gone by in a blur of activity. ASCE requires all of its Directors to submit detailed activity logs every six months. Consequently, I can accurately state that I have attended 112 face-to-face meetings in 24 locations and have participated in 78 teleconferences. Although I have generally deleted all non-critical emails, my archive of saved ASCE emails nevertheless exceeds 625 MB. When meeting preparation/follow-up and correspondence are added, my volunteer service to ASCE has averaged more than 70 days/year. I cannot complain, however, as two of my fellow Directors report that they have averaged more than 120 days/year.

Frankly, my service to ASCE over the past three years has been a labor of love. My philosophy going in was to represent the best interests of the Profession, the Society (ASCE), and the Institutes ... in that order. I have stuck with that plan, both when the respective interests aligned and when they were at odds. I have passionately advocated my beliefs, even (perhaps, especially) when it meant going against the grain and acquiring unwanted baggage. All in all, this has been an extremely rewarding experience. I have honed my leadership skills, learned a great deal from many successes and a few failures, and built life-long friendships with outstanding individuals all over the country. Also, I honestly believe that the organization is better today than it was three years ago and I would like to think that this is partly due to my efforts.

If you ever have the opportunity to serve as a Technical Region Director, I would urge you to do the smart thing and pursue it! You will find that the many rewards of service are directly proportional to the effort expended. What follows is a brief summary of some of the more notable achievements of the past three years:

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### **The Technical Region (Institutes)**

- Membership grew an astounding 19.0%, or 17,281 people, from 91,006 to 108,287.
- The Engineering Mechanics Institute (EMI) was approved as ASCE's eighth Institute. Although still on provisional status, EMI is on track for approval with full Institute status in April 2009.
- The Institute Operating Procedures were substantially revised. Among the more significant changes, annual revenue sharing was eliminated and replaced with a cap of 50% on accumulated Institute reserves. This provides an incentive for the Institutes to focus on their long-term growth, while providing an opportunity for ASCE to receive a reasonable return on its investment in the Institutes.
- The Council of Institute Leaders (CIL) was determined to be outdated and was dissolved.
- The Technical Region Board of Governors (TRBG) was extensively reorganized through a consensus-based process involving all eight Institutes. TRBG adopted new statements of its Vision, Mission, and Goals. TRBG also adopted new Bylaws with significant changes to provide flexibility in the selection and term of the Technical Region Governors.
- TRBG initiated an Institute Peer Review/Self Assessment Program, commencing in November 2008, whereby two Institutes will be reviewed/assessed annually. The goals of the program are (1) to benefit all of the Institutes through the sharing of meaningful information, and (2) to provide adequate information on the progress of the Institutes to the ASCE Board.
- Both Technical Region Directors launched a campaign in January 2008 to encourage ASCE's Sections and Branches to convert their many local technical groups into Institute Chapters. At that time, with the first three Institutes celebrating their tenth anniversaries, only 13 Institute Chapters had been established. In the past ten months, 8 new Institute Chapters have been established and 19 others are in progress.
- The Rules of Policy and Procedure regarding the appointment of volunteers to serve on ASCE's Board-level committees were amended to require the appointment of "current or past Geographic Region Governors or current or past Institute Board Members". This should greatly increase future opportunities for participation by Institute leaders in the important work of these committees.
- Last but not least, ASCE has developed an electronic paper management system which should greatly assist all Institutes with their future publications and events.

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## **The Society (ASCE)**

- Membership grew a respectable 6.2%, or 8,565 people, from 137,667 to 146,232.
- An 18-month effort to reorganize ASCE in such a way as to allow the endorsement of political candidates in the near-term, and to provide a mechanism for potentially allowing campaign contributions to political candidates in the long-term, eventually came to a vote and was defeated.
- The Building Security Council was established as a wholly-owned corporation. This activity is unique to ASCE, being very much like the U.S. Green Building Council, but addressing security rather than sustainability.
- ASCE conducted a high-level summit meeting in June 2006 and published “The Vision for Civil Engineering in 2025” in June 2007. This aspirational document has drawn unprecedented acclaim worldwide. A Task Committee to Achieve the Vision for Civil Engineering in 2025 was subsequently established to develop the implementation plan, entitled “Destination 2025: The Roadmap to Achieve the Vision for Civil Engineering in 2025”. This document will be formally distributed worldwide with great fanfare in June 2009. Taken together, these documents should eventually lead to nothing less than a substantial re-invention of our ancient profession.
- On September 15, 2006, after more than a decade of sustained effort by ASCE’s Committee on Academic Prerequisites for Professional Practice (CAP3), the National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying (NCEES) voted to adopt significant changes to the education requirements in its Model Law. One year later, NCEES sustained that decision by a broader margin than in the original vote. Effective January 1, 2020, applicants for the Principles & Practice of Engineering Exam must have earned a MS degree or 30 semester hours of relevant education beyond a BS degree. Now, ASCE’s focus has shifted to the adoption of the NCEES Model Law by the many state licensing boards.
- The Civil Engineering Research Foundation (CERF), ASCE’s first wholly-owned corporation, was dissolved. It was succeeded by the Civil Engineering Forum for Innovation (CEFI), another wholly-owned corporation. CEFI was subsequently dissolved. It may or may not be succeeded by another organizational unit, but not by another corporation.
- ASCE executed an affiliation agreement with Engineers without Borders – USA (EWB). The terms of the agreement establish long-term, very close collaboration between the two organizations. This is expected to have a positive impact on the Institutes, Branches, Sections, and most importantly, the Student Chapters.

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- ASCE has developed an ongoing Strategy Management Process, which prioritizes and coordinates action on professional and association issues over a rolling horizon of 3-5 years. This activity is now overseen by a new, top-tier standing committee, the Strategic Planning Committee.
- Finally, ASCE has embarked upon a massive and costly reconstruction of its entire online presence. This will ultimately include all of its websites, online services, databases, file servers, and everything else remotely linked to the Internet. You can expect to start seeing the results of this effort in two or three years.

I leave office with the comfort of knowing that the leadership of the Technical Region will be in very good hands. I have worked closely with Tom Rachford over the past two years and I have come to hold him in the highest regard. As I have gotten to know Ron Smith, my immediate successor, it occurs to me that the Technical Region is most probably receiving an upgrade. Certainly, Tom and Ron, working together, will constitute a first rate leadership team.

Respectfully submitted:

*Stan R. Caldwell*