



SESOC's Position Statement – Sustainable Design

Recognition of the environmental impacts of our work has long been an important part of our profession, as included in the Engineering New Zealand Code of Ethics. There is currently a growing focus on how to address this concern, in a way that recognises the ongoing importance of balancing environmental, economic, social, and cultural sustainability initiatives and outcomes on projects.

New Zealand's net-zero-carbon legislation requires all industries to contribute to the carbon reduction journey and this is no different for the Construction and Structural Design industries. The Building and Construction sector currently accounts for around 15% of New Zealand's annual carbon emissions (MBIE,2021); and around half of this is through the materials used in buildings and infrastructure.

SESOC recognises that carbon emissions reduction requirements will have a significant impact on structural engineering practice in the coming years. In fulfilment of our purposes as a society, we will encourage and support structural engineers to meet these emissions reduction requirements by (i) promoting excellence in design, (ii) disseminating relevant knowledge, (iii) promoting and participating in education and training of structural engineers (iv) providing a forum for communication, (v) participating in the development of standards and guidelines as appropriate, (vi) promoting safe economical construction in accordance with relevant standards, and (vii) working with like-minded organisations.

As examples of these initiatives in support of New Zealand's net-zero-carbon targets, SESOC:

- welcomes and supports the Whole-of-Life Embodied Carbon Emissions Reduction Frameworks, part of MBIE's Building for Climate Change Programme.
- encourages our members to engage with, understand, and undertake embodied carbon assessments for their projects and report the results widely to increase the overall 'carbon literacy' of the industry (and clients) ahead of the expected mandatory reporting requirements from Central Government.
- has established a Sustainable Design Task Group which has begun to collect guidance, training and other useful resources [HERE](#). This provides a starting point for all structural engineering professionals interested in upskilling and becoming conversant with the language of sustainable design and embodied carbon reduction strategies.

- welcomes and supports the promotion by a number of leading structural engineers of a “Structural Engineers Declaration” encouraging Companies to change the way they work.
- Will continue to facilitate opportunities for continuing professional development on the subject of sustainability and emissions reduction as they relate to structural engineering practice in New Zealand.