

USSD COMMITTEE ON LEVEES CHARTER

Approved by the Board of Directors on 7/22/15

COMMITTEE DESCRIPTION

Levee Committee mission is to promote good engineering practices in all aspects of levee safety and advocate for the role of levees as part of a broader flood risk management strategy. Levee Committee goals are aligned with the 2014-2018 Strategic Plan as follows:

Advocate:

1. Build awareness of the importance of levee safety by participating in target national and international conferences, workshops, seminars and other industry activities that lead to a better understanding of levees and their role in broad flood risk management.
2. Support implementation of a Levee Safety Initiative in accordance with Title III of the Water Resource Reform and Development Act of 2014. Promote establishment of a strong National Levee Safety Program consistent with the recommendations prepared by the National Committee on Levee Safety (NCLS) in their report to Congress (NCLS, 2009).

Educate:

1. Facilitate technical discussion, training and exchange of knowledge in levee site investigation, design, construction, operation and maintenance, inspection, and risk assessment.
2. Encourage the use of best engineering practices so that levees are designed, built and operated safely, efficiently, and economically.

Collaborate:

1. Partner with USSD and International Commission on Large Dams (ICOLD) technical committees and other national and international professional

organizations to identify collaboration opportunities and eliminate duplicative efforts.

2. Provide a forum for industry review of technical publications, manuals, guidelines, regulations and other technical publications related to levees.

Cultivate:

1. Identify and promote research and development needs to advance state-of-the-art technologies and best practices for levee safety.
2. Support development of an international community of practice on levees and flood risk management.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Levee Committee was established by the Board of Directors (BOD) of USSD in 2010. Currently, there is no equivalent ICOLD committee, but plans are underway to create a levee-focused workgroup under the European Club of ICOLD. Current membership of the USSD Levee Committee includes individuals from a variety of different organizations, both public and private, representing levee owners and regulators, academia, and consulting engineers. The annual meetings of the committee are open to all who have an interest, or a possible interest, in the field of levee safety.

The Levee Committee is charged with promoting best practices for levee safety, collaborating with other national and international professional organizations interested in levees and supporting the development of a strong National Levee Safety Program. The Committee keeps the general membership informed through timely publication of reports and white papers, announcements in the Newsletter, input to the committees section of the USSD website, and in the organization and execution of periodic workshops. The Committee collaborates and/or assists with other committees in developing and promoting education and training activities under the four imperatives of the 2014-2018 Strategic Plan – Advocate, Educate, Collaborate, and Cultivate.

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

Levee Committee was established in 2010 under the leadership of Peter Hradilek (Chair) and Eric Halpin (Vice Chair). Committee activities to date focused on growing levee-related technical tracks at annual USSD conferences, developing workshops focused on levee safety, developing strategic relationships with target professional organizations and advocating for a National Levee Safety program. The Committee held three levee safety workshops:

- Workshop on levees, October 2009, Sacramento, CA

- Workshop on levees, November 2010, Memphis, TN
- 81st Annual ICOLD Meeting, August 2013, Seattle, WA

Additional notable accomplishments of the Committee include:

- Founding member of Levee Safety Coalition – a partnership of ASDSO, USSD, NAFSMA, ASCE and DFI in cooperation with USACE to promote levee safety,
- Coordination of review and input to the International Levee Handbook,
- Collaboration with Deep Foundation Institute on Workshop on Levee and Coastal Rehabilitation, February 2014, Miami, FL, and
- Advocacy efforts in support of Water Resource Reform and Development Act of 2014.

RESPONSIBILITIES

None noted as assigned by BOD.

CHAIR, AND VICE CHAIRS AND RELATED RESPONSIBILITIES

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GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Specific initiatives for a three year period beginning in 2014 are listed below:

Advocate:

1. Lead International Levee Handbook (ILH) roll out in the US. The International Levee Handbook is a compilation of good practice, offering comprehensive guidance on the design, construction, maintenance and improvement of levees and describing the international state of the art on these matters. An international team from France, USA and UK/Ireland, Netherlands and Germany coordinated by CIRIA (Construction Industry Research and Information Association) begun working on the document in 2009. After four years of international collaboration, the 1350-page handbook was published in 2013.
2. USSD Levee Committee will develop a rollout plan for the US and will work together with CIRIA, ILH international team, Levee Coalition and other professional organizations to organize a series of webinars, training sessions and presentations at key conferences to promote the International Levee Handbook. A three-tier coordinated launch campaign is envisioned. The roll-out can start with an ILH overview webinar, broadcasted multiple times using as many channels as possible, and short presentations at key conferences. The goal of the first round is to generate awareness and familiarize target audiences with the content and the structure of ILH. As envisioned, the initial webinar will utilize materials developed by CIRIA and presented up to ten times over a two to four month period through the Levee Coalition member organizations. The webinar will be supplemented with flyers distributed to the membership and placed in newsletters/magazines. Once the word is out, the next tier of webinars could focus on individual chapters or specific topics. The second tier of webinars will utilize presentations developed by ILH chapter teams. Finally, more in-depth one to three day technical training sessions, dedicated conference tracks or workshops could be developed for specific areas of interest.

3. Support National Committee on Levee Safety, USACE and other Federal and State agencies in carrying out a Levee Safety Initiative in accordance with the provisions of Title III of the Water Resource Reform and Development Act of 2014. Specific activities will be determined in coordination with the National Committee on Levee Safety and may include 1) participation in standing committees to advise the Committee regarding specific technical levee safety issues, 2) assistance with the development of national levee safety guidelines; 3) review of the draft guidelines; 4) development of technical materials and training to promote levee safety; 5) organization of seminars, workshops and online meetings on specific technical issues related to levee safety.

Educate:

1. Solicit and encourage international presentations at the annual USSD meetings and other conferences to share experiences and best practices from other countries.

Collaborate:

1. Participate as a member of the Levee Coalition.
2. Coordinate USSD participation in the Midwest Levees and Rivers Technical Exchange, October 2014.
3. Organize 2016 USSD/DFI International Symposium on Seepage Control and Remediation.
4. Collaborate with the USSD monitoring committee on a levee instrumentation white paper.
5. Provide a forum to review technical publications related to levees (e.g. USACE guidelines).

Cultivate:

1. Establish a working group (USACE, ASCE, ASDSO, NCLS, ASDSO, USSD, others?) to inventory research and development (R&D) efforts related to levee safety. Identify future R&D needs related to levee-safety and prepare recommendations to the R&D steering committee (Ferguson, Gutierrez et al). Establish partnerships with Universities and R&D centers conducting research in the field of levee safety.
2. Support development of an international community of practice on levees and represent USSD in levee-related activities at ICOLD

MEMBERSHIP

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