

3. Levee handbook

A few weeks ago we received a draft copy of the levee handbook. The draft version is still downloadable through <http://www.leveehandbook.net/download-handbook.asp>. A rapid e-mail announcement notified TC members to review parts of the handbook, which was extensively by some members.

The next phase in the preparation of the handbook will be its official launch which takes place during a small conference in the period from 2nd to 4th October 2013 in South France.



International Levee Handbook

ABOUT THE PROJECT ABOUT THE TEAM CONTACT US PROJECT AREA

A compendium of good practice, offering comprehensive guidance on the design, construction, maintenance and improvement of levees.

About the Project

Levees to defend against flooding remain a critical part of flood risk management. The effects of ongoing climate and socio-economic change have been exemplified by the serious disasters in recent years in USA (Hurricanes Katrina and Rita) and France (Tempête Xynthia) where extensive loss of life and property damage occurred following levee failures or overflows. An international team from France, USA and UK/Ireland supported by Netherlands and Germany have identified the need for a new comprehensive guidance handbook, the 1000 page expert and practitioner written handbook will enable mutual lesson-learning between the participating countries in the project consortium.

Many levees have been built up and extended over decades or sometimes centuries. Few were originally designed or constructed to modern standards and records of their construction and historical performance rarely exist. Despite their apparent simplicity, levees can be surprisingly complex structures. Evidence-based assessment, good design, effective adaptation and good inspection and maintenance are vital if levees are to perform well on the occasions when they are loaded in storm or flood events. It should be noted that levees may stand for much of their lives without being loaded to their design capacity. This can create a false sense of security in the level of protection they will provide.

Existing guidance on the assessment, design, construction, and maintenance of levees is variable in detail and scattered through numerous and often obscure documents within different countries driven by different engineering disciplines. High quality management and design guidance is essential to ensure that levees are made appropriately resilient for future extreme events, without incurring excessive cost.

The six nations mentioned above are now working together to make this vision a reality. A single, comprehensive handbook collating international practices and knowledge will help to spread consistent standards and approaches widely, with greater value for money for countries applying good practice suitable to their local conditions.

The International Levee Handbook will be a compendium of good practice, offering comprehensive guidance on the design, construction, maintenance and improvement of levees and

4. Next Newsletter

The next newsletter will be sent around at May 15th. Please provide all newsletter information to the secretary Cor Zwanenburg, cor.zwanenburg@deltares.nl.