

## PREFACE and ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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In August 1991, the National Institute of Building Sciences (NIBS) entered into a cooperative agreement with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for conduct of a comprehensive seven-year program leading to the development of a set of nationally applicable guidelines for the seismic rehabilitation of existing buildings. Under this agreement, the Building Seismic Safety Council (BSSC) served as program manager with the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) and the Applied Technology Council (ATC) working as subcontractors. Initially, FEMA provided funding for a program definition activity designed to generate the detailed work plan for the overall program. The work plan was completed in April 1992 and in September FEMA contracted with NIBS for the remainder of the effort.

The major objectives of the project were to develop a set of technically sound, nationally applicable guidelines (with commentary) for the seismic rehabilitation of buildings; to achieve building community consensus regarding the guidelines; and to structure the basis of a plan for stimulating widespread acceptance and application of the guidelines. The technical guidelines documents produced as a result of this project—the *NEHRP Guidelines for the Seismic Rehabilitation of Buildings* (FEMA 273) and its *Commentary* (FEMA 274)—are intended to serve as a primary resource on the seismic rehabilitation of buildings for the use of design professionals, educators, model code and standards organizations, and state and local building regulatory personnel.

As noted above, the project work involved the ASCE and ATC as subcontractors as well as groups of volunteer experts and paid consultants, and it was structured to ensure that the technical guidelines writing effort benefited from consideration of: the results of completed and ongoing technical efforts and research activities; societal issues, public policy concerns, and the recommendations presented in an earlier FEMA-funded report on issues identification and resolution; cost data on application of rehabilitation procedures; the reactions of potential users; and consensus review by a broad spectrum of building community interests.

While overall management has been the responsibility of the BSSC, responsibility for conduct of the specific project tasks was shared by the BSSC with ASCE and ATC. Specific BSSC tasks were completed under the guidance of a BSSC Project Committee. To ensure project continuity and direction, a Project Oversight Committee (POC) was responsible to the BSSC Board of Direction for accomplishment of the project objectives and the conduct of project tasks. Further, a Seismic Rehabilitation Advisory Panel reviewed project products as they developed and advised the POC on the approach being taken, problems arising or anticipated, and progress made. Three user workshops also were held during the course of the project to expose the project and various drafts of the *Guidelines* documents to review by potential users of the ultimate project product.

The final drafts of the *Guidelines* and its *Commentary* were submitted to the BSSC member organizations for balloting in October–December 1996 and June–July 1997. The final versions of the consensus-approved documents were transmitted to FEMA for publication in September 1997.

This document was developed for the Building Seismic Safety Council by ROA (Robert Olson Associates, Inc.) to serve as an additional resource to provide those considering seismic rehabilitation with insights into the complex economic, social, and political issues surrounding such efforts. The BSSC is grateful to Mr. Olson for sharing his professional expertise and participating throughout the project.

The BSSC also wishes to acknowledge the wide variety of groups that provided Mr. Olson with helpful contributions and suggestions. Special appreciation is extended to the members of the BSSC Project Committee and Seismic Rehabilitation Advisory Panel, the participants in the users' workshops held during the *Guidelines* development effort, and the Advisory Committee on Social and Policy Issues formed for this project by the Earthquake Engineering Research Institute—all of whom provided valuable advice and comments (see Appendix B for committee/panel membership lists). The BSSC also

wishes to acknowledge the efforts of Ugo Morelli, FEMA Project Officer, and his technical advisor, Diana Todd, both of whom provided thoughtful and constructive suggestions during that have immeasurably improved the products of the project.

It should be noted that recommendations resulting from the concept work of the BSSC Project Committee have resulted in initiation of a case studies project that will focus on the development of seismic rehabilitation designs for over 40 buildings selected from an inventory of buildings determined to be seismically deficient under the implementation program of Executive Order 12941 and determined to be considered

“typical of existing structures located throughout the nation.”

Feedback from those reading this *Societal Issues* volume and using the *Guidelines* documents outside the case studies project is strongly encouraged. Further, the curriculum for a series of education/training seminars on the *Guidelines* is being developed and a number of seminars are scheduled for conduct in 1998. Those who wish to provide feedback or with a desire for information concerning the seminars should direct their correspondence to: BSSC, 1090 Vermont Avenue, N.W., Suite 700, Washington, D.C. 20005; phone 202-289-7800; fax 202-289-1092; e-mail [bssc@nibs.org](mailto:bssc@nibs.org).

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