

Zeitschrift: IABSE congress report = Rapport du congrès AIPC = IVBH
Kongressbericht

Band: 12 (1984)

Artikel: Conclusions to main theme A: the structural design process

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-12106>

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Conclusions to Main Theme A The Structural Design Process

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After the opening of the first session of the congress by The President of IABSE, the general reporter gave a short introduction into main theme A "The structural design process". He explained the various aspects of engineering design and pointed out some future trends. The first main speaker illustrated the specific problems of planning and construction of offshore structures with emphasis on areas with low temperatures. The second contribution gave an overall view of the actual techniques and the future development in bridge design, in particular with regard to cable-stayed bridges.

After coffee break four speakers elaborated their view about four different aspects of design: Problem identification and planning, choice of structural concepts, structural design process with seismic considerations and major construction and other failures.

Session A was too short to deal with all main problems related to design. But the variety of experiences and examples that were presented showed in an impressive manner that the engineer's work should not only concentrate on structural analysis, loads and forces or materials. The engineer should approach design on a broader basis. He should be aware of the general functions of a structure and its interdependence with the environment. A further, important outcome of this session was the statement, that design is not a well known and already established science, but it is a skill which needs permanent training and future development.

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