**Why CPT is the “best” geotechnical tool**

CPT testing has become increasingly more popular in recent years due to the availability of CPT equipment, the rapid nature of the testing and the applicability of the test results to geotechnical design. In New Zealand, the CPT test is now a routine geotechnical investigation tool used on a variety of construction projects ranging from single house sites to major infrastructure projects. The CPT presents a ‘new’ way of investigating the ground as opposed to the conventional methods of hand augers, shear vanes, Scala penetrometer and machine boreholes with SPT tests. Geotechnical investigations now commonly use a combination of CPT testing along with these more conventional methods. Despite the uptake of CPT testing in recent years, it is the author’s opinion that CPT is still underused and underutilised. More weight is typically placed on the results of conventional investigation methods without understanding the uncertainties surrounding those methods (particularly Scalas, hand held shear vanes and SPT tests). In comparison, the CPT can provide more accurate information in a near continuous manner with depth. Developments in correlations to soil parameters and direct design methods, make the CPT increasingly more reliable for geotechnical design. The amount of data obtained from a CPT test in a relatively short time, makes the test one of the most cost effective methods available. When all is considered, the CPT may be the ‘best’ geotechnical tool.

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