

TANJUNG BUNGAH LANDSLIDE: USE PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS, SAYS IEM

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PETALING JAYA: Many construction incidents are due to the contractor's failure to engage professional engineers to carry out the design, endorsement and supervision of temporary works that facilitate construction, said the Institution of Engineers (IEM).

Temporary works are the parts needed during a construction project which involve erecting longstanding permanent works.

Although temporary works are mainly the contractor's responsibility, it is important that professional engineers involved in the project – either as owner, consultant or contractor – play an active role in ensuring its safety, said IEM president Dr Tan Yean Chin in a statement on Tuesday.

"The design of temporary works shall be given the same due respect as that of the design of permanent works by professional engineers," he said.

He added that companies and contractors should employ professional engineers for temporary works, saying that these engineers would carry out the design, endorsement and supervision of temporary works that require their certification.

Tan said that it is the responsibility of the consultant to ensure that contractors comply with safety and design requirements to safeguard public interest and safety.

"The professional engineer shall ensure that the design, including analysis, calculations, drawings and specifications shall be structurally stable with sufficient details for construction are safe and buildable by contractors," he added.

Tan also said that the Board of Engineers Malaysia (BEM) has published Guidelines on the Role and Responsibility of Professional Engineers for Temporary Works during the Construction Stage.

On developments on hillslopes, Tan said that professional engineers should be responsible to determine the appropriate construction methods.

He said this should be based on the information and data available in the soil investigation report and other information.

On the Tanjung Bungah landslide, Tan said that the general perception seems to be that it was a hillside incident.

"However, based on observations, the Tanjung Bungah Development is not on the hill slope but on the land adjacent to the hill slope," said Tan.

He added that IEM is also willing to offer its technical assistance and opinion in the investigation, saying that this type of construction is common in areas with land constraints such as Kuala Lumpur and developed cities such as Hong Kong and Singapore.