

FOREWORD

Five years have passed from the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake. Many observations after the earthquake have much stimulated Japanese researches and activities in earthquake engineering. Additionally, the two devastating earthquakes in Turkey and Taiwan occurred last year, and they made us again realize the importance of the earthquake preparedness of each society.

In Japan, seismic evaluation, retrofitting, and upgrading programs for existing buildings in public use have been promoted recently by a national law to prepare a destructive earthquake in the future. These years I have been involved in the improvement of seismic evaluation method and upgrading techniques, especially for existing steel gymnasiums in schools, which are particularly important, because they are expected to serve as a refuge after a destructive disaster. Through these voluntary works, I realized still a big gap exists between scientific or academic standpoint and actual practice in the seismic program. Further efforts are needed to establish a better network for increasing earthquake preparedness among academic fields, practical fields, and even non-expert fields.

Last year was the 50-th anniversary of the establishment of the institute of industrial science. On this commemorative occasion, the institute decided to seek a new position towards the future, especially, more open to the society. The institute decided to move its research place from old Roppongi campus to new Komaba-II campus. Most of ERS members in IIS have already moved to the brand-new office, and wish to serve as a center for earthquake engineering towards the new Millenium.



Kenichi Ohi, Dr. Eng.
Associate Professor
Deputy Director of Chiba Experiment Station
Institute of Industrial Science
University of Tokyo