



December 5, 2005

Mr. Steve Richards  
TCEL President  
ETTL Engineers & Consultants, Inc.  
1717 East Erwin  
Tyler, TX 75702

Dear Mr. Richards:

As you know, TCEL is affiliated with ASFE/The Best People on Earth as a Regional Organization, and pays ASFE an annual fee to support the relationship. The question might arise, What does that money buy TCEL as an organization concerned about the welfare of all its members, and what does it buy individual members?

Frankly, we believe that the money is a genuine bargain, considering what ASFE does for the profession in general, and TCEL member firms in particular. Consider these benefits:

1. Availability at less than half the retail price of a huge array of materials developed for firms exactly like those that comprise TCEL (Many TCEL members that also are members of ASFE participated in the development of these materials.)
2. When ASFE develops new materials, ASFE gives TCEL members the opportunity to purchase them at special introductory rates that are as much as 75% off the retail price.
3. ASFE programs all are available at the ASFE member rate; e.g., BackYard Seminars, Project Management Training Program courses, and Fundamentals of Professional Practice (a 50% savings worth some \$3,800 per person).
4. TCEL members may attend ASFE meetings at member rates (typically a savings of about \$700 per person).
5. ASFE issues to TCEL members a special electronic edition of the *ASFE NewsLog*. Each issue contains a wide range of information designed to help firms exploit opportunities and avoid pitfalls.
6. The ASFE office is available to assist. All questions are answered.

7. TCEL members enjoy the benefits of ASFE's service to geotechnical engineers in particular. Consider how ASFE defended TCEL members' interests when it came to ASTM, for example. More recently, ASFE stood up strongly for the rights of geotechnical engineers when it came to a new model contract developed by the Engineers' Joint Contract Documents Committee (EJCDC). EJCDC voted to approve an engineer/civil engineer model that included a pay-if-paid provision. Thanks to ASFE, both ACEC and ASCE reversed their positions. A far more reasonable contract provision will emerge. Likewise, ASCE developed a standard procedure for the design of foundations for residential structures built on expansive soils. ASFE encouraged the profession to once again speak out forcefully against prescriptive standards. As a consequence, the proposed standard will be published as a reference document, not as a standard practice.
8. ASFE has pioneered in the development of concepts that benefit TCEL members every day; e.g., limitation of liability and *Recommended Practices for Design Professionals Engaged as Experts in the Resolution of Construction Industry Disputes*.
9. ASFE supports the enhanced image of geotechnical engineers, construction materials engineering and testing (CoMET) firms, and other "earth engineering" organizations through advertising in national media and the development of articles and columns for publications such as *GeoStrata*, *CE News*, *Deep Foundations*, *Water and Wastewater Products*, and *Foundation Drilling*. ASFE spends close to \$100,000 each year on these endeavors.
10. ASFE is championing the needs of CoMET firms, by aggressively pursuing the issue of duplicative accreditations and certifications, by pointing out in various magazine articles the value of high-quality CoMET services, and by developing a variety of materials to help CoMET firms enhance their management (e.g., audio education programs for field representatives, model daily field reports, *Field Representative's Guide*, *Risky Business* electronic game/training system, and forthcoming, new model contract).
11. ASFE played a significant role in elevating the stature of "environmental professionals," as defined in EPA all appropriate inquiry regulations. Finally, thanks to ASFE, environmental professionals can be genuine professionals.
12. ASFE has been spending \$25,000 per year to support Engineers Without Borders – USA, helping to create a pool of talented engineers with leadership abilities, and giving opportunities to TCEL members who want to gain exposure and attract "the best and the brightest."
13. ASFE believes in the mission and value of TCEL, and encourages its Member Firms in Texas to join and become active in TCEL

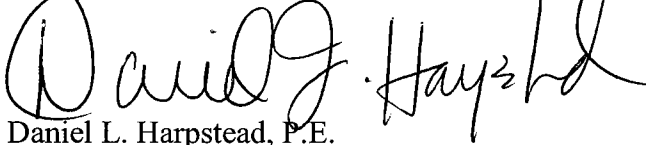
14. Through ASFE, TCEL can become more involved in issues that it might otherwise not become involved in, at TCEL's discretion. This includes involvement on certain ASFE committees, such as Emerging Issues and Trends.
15. TCEL members regularly receive news updates and alerts from ASFE, permitting/encouraging them to participate meaningfully in issues that affect their future.
16. ASFE is a ready reserve that needs to be maintained. It supports the entire profession. Certainly it merits at least some token support from those that are not members. Just as certainly, such support serves as insurance, to help ensure ASFE will be there when needed.

ASFE has provided outstanding service that has benefited TCEL members in addition to our own. We are anxious to learn about other steps we could be taking. That demonstrates the character of ASFE, and underscores why the Regional Organization concept can be so important.

What else can we do to help TCEL? That, Mr. Richards, is something only TCEL can say. We hope to hear from you on exactly that topic!

Sincerely,

**ASFE / THE BEST PEOPLE ON EARTH**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Daniel L. Harpstead". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Daniel L. Harpstead, P.E.  
President