



A Collaborating Technical Society  
of The Institution of Professional  
Engineers New Zealand

## Tauranga Branch Presentation

Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2025

Waikato University, Tauranga Campus,

Te Manawaroa, Level 1,

110 Durham Street, Tauranga

Refreshments: 5.30pm Presentation 6.00pm

Register [HERE](#)

## 25th Anniversary of the 18 May 2005 Storm Event

### Presented by

**Marriane O'Halloran - Ice Geo & Civil Limited & Tony Cowborne - Terrane Consultants Limited**

Join us as Marianne and Tony present their experiences during and following the 18 May 2005 extreme storm event.

The storm event was significant to the city, with intense rainfall of over 300 mm within a 24 hour period, resulting in widespread and significant damage to homes and infrastructure across the city. For context, a civil defence emergency was declared in Tauranga with more than 470 homes damaged by flooding or landslide. Of these, 53 were assessed as needing substantial rebuilding, while 14 were condemned as beyond repair. Around 400 people were evacuated from the Otumoetai, Welcome Bay, Pillans Road/Vale Street and Papamoa areas.

Very few of those who are presently working in consulting in the Bay of Plenty or within Councils were doing so at that time. Marianne and Tony will share, reflect and discuss their involvement during and following the event and provide context on our local soils/ infrastructure/ engineering good practice and how well the disaster was responded to. It also provides important background (and hopefully discussion by attendees during the presentation) to some of the geotechnical complexities within the western Bay of Plenty.

**Marriane O'Halloran** began work in the Special Projects Office of the Ministry of Works in 1983, following completion of a PhD in civil engineering, specialising in geomechanics. She moved to Tauranga after 11 years working on investigation, design and construction supervision within the Ministry and its successors. In Tauranga she worked for eight years with a consulting company that was involved with the planning, design and construction of many infrastructure projects. Between 2002 and 2023 she was a sole geotechnical practitioner, carrying out a lot of work for regional, district and city councils, in addition to private companies and individuals throughout the central North Island. She is now working on a part time basis through RiverSpace Ltd.

Marianne and her husband also had a small civil construction company for over 20 years that specialised in difficult access work, bridge, dam and tunnel repairs and the maintenance and construction of structures for the Department of Conservation. She was one of the first Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) engineers in New Zealand and was a team member for 17 years. Through this organisation and her connections with the councils, she has been involved with the responses to numerous landslides, storms, floods and earthquakes.

**Tony Cowborne** grew up in Rotorua and liked walking the hills so much he went to university and obtained degrees in geology, geophysics and geotechnical engineering. He has over 37 years work experience in both NZ and overseas. The last 20 years has been fully immersive as owner and principal of Terrane Consultants, a small specialist geotechnical consultancy, based in Tauranga but working throughout the central North Island, on myriad projects in land development, buildings, infrastructure and quarrying.

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