

50-YEAR HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES (USA) ARMY ENGINEERS COASTAL ENGINEERING RESEARCH BOARD (CERB)

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The U. S. Army Coastal Engineering Research Board (CERB), established on 7 November 1963 by Public Law No. 172, of the 88th USA Congress, has had a major impact on the field and profession of coastal engineering for over 50 years. The CERB replaced the Beach Erosion Board (BEB) (created in 1930) and provided oversight to the Coastal Engineering Research Center (CERC), now the Coastal and Hydraulics Laboratory. The greatest names in USA coastal engineering and science have served on the CERB and helped to define the course of USA coastal research and practice.

The CERB's charge was to serve as an advisory board to the US Army Engineers Commanding General and provide advice and guidance to the CERC on coastal engineering research. The Board also is a Federal Advisory Committee of the US Army. November 2013 marked CERB's fifty years of service. In recognition of this milestone, a study was conducted, and a report prepared that summarizes the 50- year history of the Board.

In establishing the CERB, the Congressional committee specified that *"the proposed Research Board is highly desirable.... The research functions are increasing in volume and importance. Such research functions would be retained and strengthened by the establishment of the Coastal Engineering Research Center, with guidance provided by a civilian board to furnish an element of continuity."*

The Board is presided over by the Army Corps of Engineers Deputy Commanding General for Civil and Emergency Operations (DCG-CEO) who serves as President of the Board. It also consists of three additional senior military officers who are Commanders of coastal or Great Lakes divisions and three prominent civilians who are internationally recognized in the field of coastal engineering. Thorndike Saville, Douglas Inman, Morrough P. O'Brien, Robert Weigel, Robert Dean, Tony Dalrymple, Billy Edge, and Bernie LeMehaute, are just a few examples of the many prominent coastal leaders who have served on the CERB. Between the first CERB meeting held at CERC in April 1964 and the CERB's 50th anniversary in November 2013 there have been 90 formal Board meetings. The CERB has held meetings on every USA coast including the Great Lakes, Hawaii, and the Arctic Ocean. In addition, in June 2007 the CERB held a "fact-finding mission" visit to the Netherlands hosting discussions with coastal researchers, practitioners, and managers from several European countries.

Over the half-century history of the CERB, twenty-three distinguished civilian authorities have served on the Board; twenty-five DCG-CEO have served as President; and eighty-two Division Commanders have been members of the Board. The Commander of the US Army Engineer Research and Development Center is the Executive Secretary of the Board. The function and accomplishments of the CERB have evolved over time

as the Corps has changed and as the coastal engineering profession has grown.

Oral history interviews served as the primary basis of the 50th anniversary report. Nineteen interviews of past general officers, civilian members and Army Engineers senior leaders were conducted. These interviews covered the individual's career, activities, and impressions of the CERB, with the final questions focused on the impacts of the CERB to coastal engineering, the Corps of Engineers, and them personally. In addition, various historical documents as well as the minutes and attendance logs for each meeting were reviewed and analyzed to understand the evolution and impacts of the CERB.

This presentation will include a review of some of the contributions of the CERB to the coastal engineering profession. Landmark documents such as the Shore Protection Manual and the Coastal Engineering Manual are directly the result of CERB deliberations. Major CERC research initiatives relating to coastal inlets, integrated modeling, dredging and dredged material, sediment transport, coastal mapping systems, data management, and Regional Sediment Management came directly from recommendations of the CERB. Many research products, project applications, and laboratory or field experiments were rigorously reviewed and influenced by the CERB. The work of the CERB continues with new members and new challenges and continues to influence directions in USA coastal research.

REFERENCE:

Pope, Joan (2017) The U.S. Army Engineers Coastal Engineering Research Board: 50 Years of Service to the Nation (1963-2013), US Army Engineers Office of History, 131p.