



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

USE OF SCRAP TYRES IN EARTH RETAINING STRUCTURES

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RETAINING STRUCTURES**

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By

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**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia in
Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Science**

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Abstract of the thesis submitted to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfillment
of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science

USE OF SCRAP TYRES IN EARTH RETAINING STRUCTURES

By

LOH WOOI CHUAN

April 2008

Supervisor : Professor Bujang Bin Kim Huat, PhD

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In Malaysia, a huge quantity of scrap tyres are produced every year resulting in environmental hazards. In addition, present recycling techniques for scrap tyres consume only a very small amount of the unwanted tyres. With this in mind, this research aims to assess the technical feasibility of using whole scrap tyres as one of the elements of retaining structures. The purpose of this thesis is to demonstrate, through an experimental laboratory investigation and full scale testing, that a reinforced tyre system from scrap passenger car tyres can be used to produce engineered retaining structures for civil engineering construction. This research study is divided into three main parts: a study on the physical and mechanical properties of passenger car tyres and attachments, behaviors of reinforced scrap tyre retaining structures with cohesive material, and cost comparison of a reinforced scrap tyre system with other conventional retaining structure systems.



It was found that the physical and mechanical properties of scrap passenger car tyres are tremendously strong. Various attachment systems were studied in terms of mechanical properties and costs. Polypropylene rope was found to be the most cost effective attachment system with comparable strength to scrap tyres.

A 5m high full scale reinforced scrap tyre system been constructed using in-situ cohesive material. 2100 scrap passenger car tyres were used for the construction of a 7m long x 5m high slope. Instrumentation like pressure cells and settlement plates were installed to monitor the behavior of the system. Methods of construction and precautions during the construction stage were discussed in detail in this study. It can be concluded that the reinforced rubber tyre system is suitable for application in retaining structures. It improves the mechanical properties of the soil either anisotropically or isotropically.

Cost comparison between reinforced scrap tyre systems and other retaining structure systems were studied. Reinforced scrap tyre systems can be used as alternative cost effective retaining structure system with wall heights less than 6m. This system would be one of the best recycling techniques for scrap tyres because it consumes huge amounts of unwanted tyres with minimum energy consumption.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk Ijazah Master Sains

KAJIAN PENGGUNAAN TAYAR SISA UNTUK DINDING PENAHAN

Oleh

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Di Malaysia, banyak tayar sisa dihasilkan setiap tahun dan menyebabkan pencemaran alam sekitar. Kaedah kitar semula tayar sisa yang sedia ada hanya dapat mengitar semula kuantiti tayar sisa yang terhad and kebanyakan tayar sisa dibuangkan ke tapak lupusan. Untuk mengatasi masalah tayar sisa, kajian ini mengkaji keberkesanan mengitar semula tayar sisa sebagai bahan binaan dalam pembinaan dinding penahan. Kajian ini akan menunjukkan proses tayar sisa yang sepatutnya dibuang ke tapak pelupusan dikitar semula dan dijadikan bahan binaan dalam dinding penahan. Kaedah ujikaji, ujian dan percubaan pembinaan skala sebenar dinding penahan daripada tayar sisa dilakukan untuk menunjukkan keberkesaan dinding penahan yang inovatif untuk penggunaan dalam bidang kejuruteraan awam. Kajian ini dibahagikan kepada tiga bahagian. Bahagian satu merangkumi kajian terhadap sifat fizikal and sifat mekanik tayar sisa kereta and sistem ikatan tayar. Bahagian dua merangkumi kajian terhadap sifat dan keberkesaan apabila dinding penahan tayar sisa diisi dengan tanah liat. Bahagian ketiga akan mengkaji



perbandingan dari segi kos pembinaan dinding penahan tayar sisa dengan sistem dinding penahan yang sedia ada di Malaysia.

Didapati sifat fizikal and mekanik tayar sisa adalah sangat kuat. Banyak sistem ikatan tayar sisa dikaji untuk mengikatkan tayar sisa menjadi lapisan tayar. Kos dan kekuatan pelbagai sistem ikatan telah dikaji. Tali Polypropylene didapati paling ekonomi dan kuat berbanding dengan sistem ikatan yang lain.

Satu percubaan pembinaan skala sebenar dinding penahan tayar sisa setinggi 5m telah dibina menggunakan tanah liat yang terdapat di tapak pembinaan. 2100 tayar sisa telah dikitar semula untuk pembinaan dinding penahan setinggi 5m and selebar 7m. Peralatan seperti pengukur tekanan tanah dan plat pemendapan telah dipasang dalam dinding penahan percubaan untuk mengkaji sifat dan keberkesanan sistem inovatif ini. Kaedah pembinaan dan langkah berjaga-jaga semasa pembinaan telah dibincang dalam laporan ini. Kesimpulannya, dinding penahan tayar sisa sesuai dan selamat digunakan untuk tujuan kejuruteraan awam.

Perbandingan kos pembinaan dinding penahan tayar sisa dengan sistem dinding penahan yang sedia ada telah dikaji. Dinding penahan adalah ekonomi untuk ketinggian kurang daripada 6m. Penggunaan tayar sisa untuk pembinaan dinding penahan adalah cara yang sesuai untuk mengitar semula tayar sisa kerana kuantiti tayar sisa yang banyak dapat digunakan.

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I certify that an Examination Committee has met on 14th April 2008 to conduct the final examination of Loh Wooi Chuan on his Master of Science thesis entitled "**Use of Scrap Tyres in Earth Retaining Structures**" in accordance with Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Act 1980 and Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Regulations 1981. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the degree of Master of Science.

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DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis is my original work except for quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously, and is not concurrently submitted for any other degree at Universiti Putra Malaysia or at any other institutions.

LOH WOUI CHUAN

Date: 23 June 2008



TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
	ABSTRACT	ii
	ABSTRAK	iv
	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	vi
	APPROVAL	vii
	DECLARATION	ix
	CHAPTER	
1	INTRODUCTION	
	1.1 Background	1
	1.2 Problem Statement	6
	1.3 Objective and Scope of Studies	10
	1.4 Thesis Organization	10
	1.5 Expected Outcome of Research	12
2	LITERATURE REVIEW	
	2.1 Introduction	12
	2.2 Overview of Tyre	12
	2.2.1 Classification of Scrap Tyre	17
	2.3 Worldwide Scrap Tyre Problems	19
	2.4 Current Management Option for Scrap Tyre	23
	2.4.1 Scrap Tyre for Civil Engineering Application	24
	2.5 Slope Failure in Malaysia	35
	2.6 Earth Retaining Structures	39
	2.6.1 Gravity Retaining Wall	40
	2.6.2 Internally Stabilized System.	44
	2.7 Reinforced Soil	46
	2.7.1 History and Development of the Reinforced Soil	46
	2.7.2 Theory and Concept of Reinforced Soil	49
	2.8 Design Guidelines of Reinforced Earth Retaining Structure	54
	2.8.1 Define Wall Geometry and Soil Properties	57
	2.8.2 Performance Criteria	58
	2.8.3 Preliminary Sizing	59
	2.8.4 Earth Pressure for External Stability	59
	2.8.5 Sliding Stability	60
	2.8.6 Overturning Stability (eccentricity)	60
	2.8.7 Bearing Capacity Failure	61
	2.8.8 Overall Stability	62
	2.8.9 Settlement	64



	2.8.10 Internal Stability Check	64
2.9	Summary of Literature Review	67
3	MATERIAL & METHODOLOGY	
3.1	Introduction	72
3.2	Physical & Mechanical Tests for Scrap Tyre	74
	3.2.1 General Tensile Test	76
	3.2.2 ASTM D4595 Tensile Test	81
3.3	Physical & Mechanical Tests for Attachment System	86
	3.3.1 Wire Rope & U-clip	87
	3.3.2 Polymer Rope	87
	3.3.3 Testing Procedure for Wire Rope & Polymer Rope	90
3.4	Full Scale Trial Scrap Tyre Earth Retaining Structure	92
	3.4.1 Introduction	92
	3.4.2 Basic Soil Engineering Laboratory Test	94
	3.4.3 Field Density Test	97
	3.4.4 Construction Procedures	99
	3.4.5 Instrumentation & Monitoring	108
3.5	Cost Comparison between Scrap Tyre Earth Retaining Structure and Various Earth Retaining Structure Systems	116
4	RESULTS & DISCUSSION	
4.1	Introduction	119
4.2	Physical & Mechanical Properties of Scrap Tyre	119
	4.2.1 General Tensile Test	122
	4.2.2 ASTM D4595 Wide Width Tensile Test	128
4.3	Physical & Mechanical Properties of Attachment System	134
	4.3.1 Wire Rope & U Clip	135
	4.3.2 Polypropylene Rope	136
4.4	Soil Engineering Laboratory Test	138
	4.4.1 Particle Size Distribution Test	138
	4.4.2 Atterberg Limit Test	141
	4.4.3 Modified Compaction (Proctor) Test	142
	4.4.4 Shear Box Test	145
4.5	Field Density Test	146
4.6	Design of Full-Scale Trial Scrap Tyre Earth Retaining Structure	148
	4.6.1 Define Wall Geometry and Soil Properties	148
	4.6.2 Performance Criteria	149
	4.6.3 Earth Pressure for External Stability	150
	4.6.4 Sliding Stability	150
	4.6.5 Overturning Stability	150
	4.6.6 Bearing Capacity Failure	152
	4.6.7 Internal Stability Check	152
	4.6.8 Overall Stability	155



4.7	Instrumentation & Performance of Full Scale Trial Scrap Tyre Earth Retaining Structure	158
4.7.1	Settlement Plate	158
4.7.2	Vibrating Wire Earth Pressure Cell	165
4.8	Cost Comparison between Scrap Tyre Earth Retaining Structure and Various Earth Retaining Structure Systems	167
5	CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS	
5.1	Conclusion	171
5.2	Recommendations	173
	REFERENCES	175
	BIODATA OF STUDENT	182



LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
2.1	Materials Used In The Manufacture Of Tyres.	15
2.2	Typical Composition Of Manufactured Tyres By Weight.	16
2.3	Sizes Of Different Grinded Tyre.	18
2.4	Indicative Price In USD Of Different Grinded Tyre.	18
2.5	Examples Of Civil Engineering Application For Scrap Tyres.	25
2.6	Comparison On Design Of Tyre Wall And Some Important Findings From The Tyre Wall Experiences.	34
2.7	General Features Of Six Slope Failure Types In Malaysia.	37
2.8	Factors Contributing To Slope Failures.	38
3.1	Percentage Of Retained Strength Of Different Knots.	89
3.2	List Of Field Testing And Laboratory Testing Carried Out During The Construction Period.	105
3.3	Computer Software And Assumptions Used In Preliminary Design Of Various Retaining Structures In This Study.	117
4.1	General Tensile Test Results On Scrap Tyre.	123
4.2	Results Of Statistical Probability Analysis On Scrap Tyre General Tensile Test.	126
4.3	ASTM D4595 Tensile Test Results On Precut Scrap Tyre Samples.	129
4.4	Results Of Statistical Probability Analysis On The Scrap Tyre ASTM D4595 Tensile Test.	132
4.5	General Tensile Test Results On Wire Rope Attachment.	135
4.6	General Tensile Test Results On Polypropylene Rope Attachment.	136
4.7	Results Of Sieve Analysis On In-Situ Cohesive Soil.	139



4.8	Results Of Atterberg Limit Test.	141
4.9	Relationship Between Moisture Content, Bulk Density And Dry Density Of The Tested Soil Samples.	142
4.10	Summary Of Shear Box Test Results.	145
4.11	Results Of Field Density Tests.	146
4.12	Pull Out Capacity Of Tyre Mat Reinforcement At Different Overburden Depth.	154
4.13	Results Of Settlement Plate Monitoring At SP1.	159
4.14	Results Of Settlement Plate Monitoring At SP2.	160
4.15	Results Of Settlement Plate Monitoring At SP3.	161
4.16	Comparison Of Theoretical And Field-Measured Lateral Earth Pressures.	167
4.17	Cost Estimation Per Linear Meter For Different Types Of Retaining Wall System Versus Height Of Wall.	168



LIST OF FIGURES

Figure		Page
1.1	Typical Application Of Retaining Structures.	1
1.2	Statistic Of Landslides And Fatalities Reported Between 1974 To 2004 In Malaysia.	3
1.3	Historical Performance Of Road Maintenance Allocation.	8
2.1	Different Components Of A Radial Tyre.	15
2.2	3D View Of Anchored Or Tied-Back Tyre Wall With Paraweb System.	29
2.3	Cross Section Of Scrap Tyre Wall Reinforced With Wovem Geotextile In Batam, Indonesia.	30
2.4	Example Of Scrap Tyre Retaining Structures Using Truck Tyre.	32
2.5	Example Of Shallow Slides That Need Immediate Repair Works To Be Carried Out To Prevent It Trigger Bigger Failure.	39
2.6	Forces Acting On A Gravity Wall.	40
2.7	Stone Pitching Wall.	41
2.8	Gabion Wall Beside Highway With Advantage Of Its Flexibility And Rugged Construction.	42
2.9	Tentative Dimension Of Reinforced Concrete Cantilever Wall In Preliminary.	43
2.10	An Example Of MSE Wall.	44
2.11	Typical Cross Section Of Terramesh System.	46
2.12	Remaining Of Ziggurat And Closer Look Show Woven Mat Of Reed Laid Between Sand And Gravel.	47
2.13	Main Components In Henri Vidal's Reinforced Earth System.	49
2.14	Geogrid Acting As Resistance Element Provide The Necessary Resistance To The Component Material To Allow The Vertical Slope.	51

2.15	Actions Of Reinforcement In A Direct Shear Test.	52
2.16	Potential External Failure Mechanisms For A Reinforced Earth Structure.	56
2.17	Sequences Of External Stability Computational.	57
3.1	Flow Chart Show Methodology Of Scrap Tyre Earth Retaining Structure Research.	73
3.2	Selected Scrap Tyres For General Tensile Test.	76
3.3	Overall View Of The Universal Tensile Machine Manufactured By Nuremberg Works Germany.	77
3.4	Prefabricated Metal Jaw Designed To Hold Scrap Tyre For General Tensile Test.	80
3.5	Attachments Must Be Maintained In A Vertical Straight Line During The Test; Tilting Of The Attachment Would Give Lower Strength On Scarp Tyres.	81
3.6	Zwick / Z-100 Tensile Test Machine At Emas Kiara QA/QC Laboratory.	84
3.7	Tyre Specimens Cut From Tested Scrap Tyres In The General Tensile Test Prior To Carrying Out The ASTM D4595 Test.	85
3.8	Setup Of Wire Rope And U Clip For Tensile Testing At IKRAM Laboratory.	91
3.9	Setup Of Single Loop And Double Knotted Polypropylene Rope Attachment For General Tensile Test At IKRAM Laboratory.	91
3.10	Cross Section Of The Full Scale Trial Scrap Tyre Retaining Structure.	93
3.11	Setup Of Field Density Test Using Sand Replacement Method Carried Out Within Tyre Mat Layer.	98
3.12	Stockpile Of Scrap Rubber Tyres Prior To Construction.	101
3.13	Both End Of Polypropylene Ropes Were Protected With Masking Tape Prior To Cutting With Gardener Scissors.	102



3.14	Tying Of Scrap Tyres Using Polypropylene Ropes With Anchor Bend's Knots.	102
3.15	Excavation Of Failed Slope And Debris Using A Backhoe Excavator And The Excavated Material Was Stockpiled.	103
3.16	Compaction Of The Base Of The Platform With A 1-Tone Roller Compactor.	103
3.17	Laying The 1 st Layer Of Scrap Tyres In A Mat Configuration. Each Tyre Was Tied Together Using Polypropylene Rope.	104
3.18	The Bottom-Most Tyre Mat Layer Was Backfilled With A Crusher Run And Compacted With A 1-Tone Roller Compactor.	104
3.19	Backfilling Of Tyre Mat Layer With Recycled In-Situ Cohesive Material.	106
3.20	Completed Scrap Tyre Retaining Structure With Turfing In The Facing Of The Scrap Tyres.	107
3.21	Schematic Drawing Showing Components Of The Settlement Plate.	109
3.22	Settlement Plate Monitored Using Standard Leveling Techniques.	112
3.23	Vibrating Wire Earth Pressure Cell And The Armored Cable Placed Inside The Precut Trench.	115
3.24	Taking The First Reading With A Portable Readout Unit Immediately After Installation Of A Pressure Cell.	116
4.1	Distortion Of Tyre Specimen During General Tensile Test When Side Wall Of Tyre Was Not Removed.	122
4.2	Typical Failure Pattern Of The Scrap Tyres During The General Tensile Test.	124
4.3	Normal Distribution Curve Of The Ultimate Tensile Strength Of Scrap Tyres Tested Using A General Tensile Test At IKRAM Material Laboratory.	127
4.4	Typical Failure Pattern Of The Scrap Tyres After The ASTM D4595 Tensile Test.	130

4.5	Normal Distribution Curve Of The Ultimate Tensile Strength Of Scrap Tyres Tested Using The Astm-D4595 Tensile Test At Emas Kiara Laboratory.	133
4.6	Particle Size Distribution Curve Of In-Situ Cohesive Soil.	140
4.7	Relationship Curve Of Dry Density Vs Moisture Content Obtained Using Modified Compaction (Proctor) Test.	144
4.8	Cross Section And Dimension Of The Proposed Full-Scale Trial Scrap Tyre Earth Retaining Structure.	148
4.9	Result Of Overall Stability On Unreinforced Earth Retaining Structure Or The Existing Site Condition.	156
4.10	Result Of Overall Stability On Reinforced Scrap Tyre Earth Retaining Structure.	157
4.11	Profiles Of Settlement Versus Progress Of Filling Activities For The Construction Of The Trial Scrap Tyre Retaining System At SP1.	162
4.12	Profiles Of Settlement Versus Progress Of Filling Activities For The Construction Of The Trial Scrap Tyre Retaining System At SP2.	163
4.13	Profiles Of Settlement Versus Progress Of Filling Activities For The Construction Of The Trial Scrap Tyre Retaining System At SP3.	164
4.14	Lateral Total Earth Pressure Versus Progress Of Filling Activities For The Construction Of The Trial Scrap Tyre Retaining Structure At PC1.	166
4.15	Lateral Total Earth Pressure Versus Progress Of Filling Activities For The Construction Of The Trial Scrap Tyre Retaining Structure At PC2.	166
4.16	Cost Comparison Of Various Earth Retaining Structure Systems .	169



CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Soils, unlike solid rocks, generally have low strength. It is therefore often not possible to cut or build a high vertical cut and slope in soils without the aid of an earth retaining structure (Huat et al., 2006). The purpose of an earth retaining structure is to withstand the forces exerted by the retained ground, and transmit these forces safely to the foundation (GCO, 1998). Retaining structures are one of those structures that are often built to retain ground for construction of infrastructure, building platform and also to repair slope failure. Their typical use can be shown in Figure 1.1. A retaining structure and each part of it, is required to fulfill fundamental requirements of stability, stiffness, durability, etc., during construction and throughout its design life (GCO, 1998). Many types of retaining structures are in use in Malaysia. Those common types of retaining structures including stone pitching wall, crib walls, gabion walls, reinforced concrete wall and mechanical stabilized earth (MSE) wall.

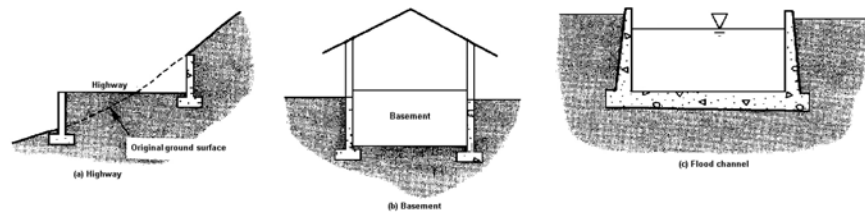


Figure 1: Typical Application Of Retaining Structures. (Huat et al, 2006)

Rapid development since decades ago has brought Malaysia growth in population, growth of economy and improvement of lifestyle. Limited suitable low lying areas have increased the demands of development towards hilly areas. A good land transportation network system is needed in order to accomplish the rapid development. Hence, more highways and road upgrades are needed for passing through hilly terrain. Referring to a survey done by the Public Works Department of Malaysia in 2003, the total length of roads has increased from 21,914km in 1980 to 78,433km in 2003 and an estimated 30% of the roads traverse hilly and mountainous areas (PWD Malaysia, 2004a). In year 2000, total cost for state road maintenance was RM 335 million and 20% of it or RM 67 million was allocated to slope maintenance (JICA & JKR, 2001). The rapid development of hilly areas for road works and housing has also caused an increase in slope instability problems. This fact can be proved in statistics of landslides and fatalities reported between 1974 to 2004 in Malaysia as shown in Figure 1.2. It is clearly shown that the need of earth retaining structure is increasing, either for slope remedial works or our infrastructure system.



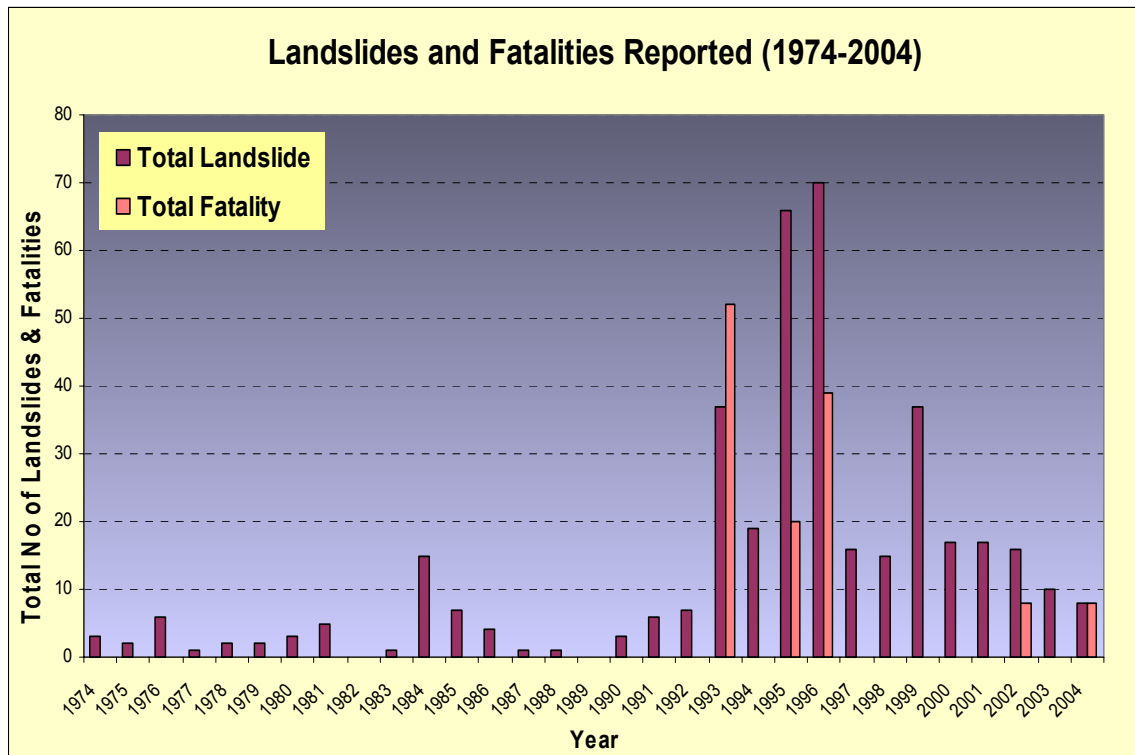


Figure 1.2: Statistic Of Landslides And Fatalities Reported Between 1974 To 2004 In Malaysia. (PWD Malaysia, 2004a)

Used tyres are a blight of our civilization. In year 2002 alone, 8,198,745 units of scrap tyre been generated in Malaysia and 60% of the scrap tyres are disposed via unknown route (Sandra, 2006). The figure provided is not including millions of scrap tyres which previously already stockpiled or disposed in our country. Today, scrap tyre issue has become a serious national problem in many developing countries as well as developed countries (RMA, 2007;UTWG, 1998;Chang, 2001). Research into the application of scrap tyre for civil engineering fields has started some years back in developed countries. Scrap tyres could be used as subgrade fill and embankment fill, backfill for wall and bridge embankments, septic system, drain fields, beach erosion control, and sound attenuation system (RMA, 2007). Example of application of whole tyres as construction

materials can be found in Long (1993) and Garga & O'Shaughnessy (2000), while those of shredded tyres are given by Drescher & Newcomb (1994), Abbott (2001), Amirkhanian (2001), Okba et al. (2001), and RMA (2007). In Malaysia, the present local recycling techniques of scrap tyres only consume a very small amount of the unwanted tyres. The percentage of scrap tyres being recycled is not comparable to the growth in scrap tyres (Sandra, 2006). Thus, a need still exists for the development of additional uses for scrap tyres in Malaysia. With the above problems in mind, feasibility study on potential use of whole scrap tyres for earth retaining structures has been investigated. The use of whole tyre without shredding is probably more preferable because energy is not wasted in further processing.

Soil is the most abundant and least expensive construction material. Soil is strong particularly loaded in compression, but soil is weak in tension. With the inclusion of reinforcement that are strong in tension like steel bar, geogrid, geotextile, it can produce a composite material that combine the best load carrying features of both component (NCHRP, 1987). This resultant composite material is referred as reinforced soil. Reinforced soil concept been widely used to construct earth retaining structure. When numbers of whole scrap tyres are tied together to make a mat configuration, filled with soil, and then placed in successive layers, the resulting structure can be used as a retaining structure. The above mentioned concept of using whole scrap tyre to reinforce soil was done in France in 1976 (Long, 1996). Until 1996, more than 500 earth retaining structures using scrap tyres and soil have been built in France, Algeria, England, Canada and USA (Long, 1996). Whole scrap tyres have been successfully used to construct earth