



0.1 Landslides in Ireland: The Landslide Working Group and recent research

K. Verbruggen (1), R. Creighton (1), X. Pelicer (1), N Boylan (2), M Long (2), and S Murphy (3,4)

(1) Geological Survey of Ireland, Beggars Bush, Haddington Road, Dublin 4, Ireland. (2) Department of Civil Engineering, University College Dublin, Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin 2, Ireland. (3) Formerly School of Earth & Environment, University of Leeds, Leeds LS2 9JT, UK, (4) Now at: Dipartimento di Scienze Fisiche, Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II, Via Coroglio 156, 80124 Napoli, Italy.

koen.verbruggen@gsi.ie

Ireland is a geologically very stable country without a serious geohazard problem and no recent history of landslides. However landslides do occur occasionally and in September and October 2003 two separate events occurred which attracted national attention, resulting in structural damage, evacuation of buildings and pollution of water courses. Both events were broadly similar in nature, occurring on upland peat covered areas and involving complex debris flow resulting from movement of soft water-rich peat material, although differing in failure mechanism and detail. As a result of these events and recognising the lack of a co-ordinated response, the Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI), formed the Irish Landslide Working Group (ILWG) in January 2004, made up of academic and government experts drawn from the areas of geology, geomorphology, geotechnical engineering, soil science, GIS and planning. The aim of the group is; i) to compile a national database of landslides, ii) to produce a report on Irish landslides, iii) to examine the feasibility of landslide hazard mapping in Ireland. iv) to attempt to stimulate and co-ordinate necessary research in this area.

Research into Irish landslides to date can be broadly divided into; that conducted on specific failures and generally of a field descriptive and geomorphological nature, and the more geotechnical and laboratory based research into stability and behaviour of

landslide materials. Some of the latest research has included; a) An analysis of selected Ground Geophysical investigation methods of one of the most recent failures; b) Combination of remote sensing for failure location with geotechnical field and laboratory testing of peat strength and; c) Remote sensing and GIS study to carry out landslide susceptibility mapping over a specific region.

Recommendations of the ILWG include the further support of such applied research and the development and the undertaking of a National Landslide Susceptibility Mapping Programme

Keywords: Landslides, Landslide susceptibility, Remote Sensing,, GIS, Ireland.