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PRESS RELEASE

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Peru Earthquake: EERI Sends Team to Peru to Bring Back Lessons for the U.S.

A team of earthquake researchers, sponsored by the Earthquake Engineering Research Institute (EERI), an Oakland-based professional association, has joined Peruvian colleagues in investigating last week's devastating earthquake off the coast of Peru. The magnitude 8 earthquake occurred at 6:34 pm local time on August 15th, with an epicenter near Chincha Alta, Peru. The earthquake was strongly felt in Lima, 150 km to the north. According to the National Institute of Civil Defense and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 503 people are confirmed dead, with 1,042 injured. 34,410 houses have been destroyed and 4 hospitals have collapsed, according to government preliminary assessments.

The reconnaissance team, under the leadership of Eduardo Fierro, a principal with BFP Engineers, Inc., in Berkeley, California, includes civil and structural engineers with expertise in buildings, bridges, lifelines, and geotechnical impacts. The team includes senior investigators as well as younger investigators participating in their first reconnaissance. An investigation of emergency response and societal aspects will be carried out following the initial reconnaissance investigation.

Professor Marcial Blondet of the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú in Lima is participating as an in-country member of the EERI team, providing critical assistance in the field. Other members of the EERI team include: Donald Ballantyne of ABS Consulting, Inc., in Tacoma, Washington; Mikael Gartner of Nabih Youssef & Associates in Los Angeles, California, and Adolfo Matamoros of the University of Kansas. Professor Adrian Rodriguez-Marek of Washington State University is leading the Geo-Engineering Earthquake Reconnaissance (GEER) team and also serving as a member of the EERI team. EERI will collaborate with GEER to obtain detailed geotechnical input, as well as with many others in the field, including Liliana Pinto and Kent Yu of Degenkolb Engineers, Santiago Pujol of Purdue University, and Arturo Schultz of the University of Minnesota, representing The Masonry Institute. The EERI team will also be sharing information with other colleagues from England, Japan, Mexico, and New Zealand, and ASCE's Technical Council on Lifeline Earthquake Engineering.

EERI's Learning From Earthquakes Program has received funding from the National Science Foundation for over 30 years to capture lessons from damaging earthquakes throughout the world. These valuable field observations have changed codes and practices in the U.S. in every field that contributes to earthquake loss reduction. The team's observations will be posted on EERI's website as information comes back from the field, published in the *EERI Newsletter*, and disseminated broadly via the EERI website: www.eeri.org. Further information is available by contacting the EERI office at 510-451-0905 or eeeri@eeri.org.

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