

Types of Cases and Scopes of Work¹

According to when the forensic expert consultant is engaged, the types of cases can be categorized in three groups:

- When a "condition" surfaced
- When an accident occurred
- When litigation is already in progress

In these cases, typical scopes of work, hence the activities of the expert consultant, would include the following:

When a "Condition" Surfaced

Depending on the client's requirement, and/or the severity of the situation, the scope of work may be one of the following (in the order of increasing effort):

- Simple visual (due-diligence) inspection, oral or written letter-report of observations only
- Inspection, quick-and-tentative opinion, report
- Inspection, some analysis, opinion, report
- Inspection, probing and testing, analyses, opinion, report
- Inspection, probing and testing, document reviews, analyses, report

When an Accident Occurred

And the consultant is engaged immediately after:

- First-response and preliminary assessment
- Development of investigation strategy
- Fact-gathering and document review
- Probing and testing
- Engineering analyses to determine cause(s) and responsibilities
- Reporting
- Litigation support (see "When litigation is already in progress")

When Litigation is Already in Progress

When the consultant is engaged some time after the failure:

- Cataloging and review of documents
- Engineering analyses
- Review of other experts' reports
- Review of deposition transcripts
- Writing of report
- Meetings with attorney/client
- Writing affidavit
- Assisting attorney with expert disclosure
- Assisting attorney with questions for depositions of others
- Preparing for and giving own deposition
- Preparing for and participating in dispute resolution
- Assisting attorney in preparation for trial
- Giving expert testimony at trial

¹ [Reference](#) (with some text editing): Robert T. Ratay, Ph.D., P.E., "Professional Practice of Forensic Structural Engineering", Structure (A Joint Publication of NCSEA | CASE | SEI), July 2007