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**WESTERN  
AUSTRALIA**

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## MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday 5th June 2019

### AUSTRALIAN CENTRE FOR GEOMECHANICS APPOINTS NEW DIRECTOR

Associate Professor Johan Wesseloo has been appointed director of the Australian Centre for Geomechanics at The University of Western Australia, replacing Professor Yves Potvin who had been director since 2000.

Associate Professor Wesseloo joined the Australian Centre for Geomechanics (ACG) in 2007 and has led the centre's premier research project, "Mine Seismicity and Rockburst Risk Management".

A highly respected mining geomechanics industry practitioner and collaborative researcher with extensive experience and knowledge across many geomechanics disciplines, he has been involved in geotechnical engineering since 1998, with experience in both underground and open pit environments.

He developed a keen interest in mining induced seismicity, in the different aspects of geotechnical risk-based design, with application in open pit and underground scenarios. Before joining the ACG, Associate Professor Wesseloo was employed by SRK Consulting, Johannesburg.

"The ACG exists to serve the mining industry and, since its inception, has developed strong partnerships with industry," Associate Professor Wesseloo said. "It also needs to adapt to a changing environment, always with the aim of continuing to do what it does well: supporting the industry through research, training and technology transfer.

"This function is as vital as ever and, with several new technologies recently entering the geomechanics field, it is also important to help narrow the gap between the state-of-the-art and the state-of-practice.

"Research deliverables must be translated into practical tools which are underpinned by a further training and education platform."

Professor Potvin will remain with the ACG as Professor of Mining Geomechanics, and will continue to champion the ACG's leading industry-focused research projects, including the Ground Support Systems Optimisation Project and the Stope Reconciliation and Optimisation Project.

He will continue to work closely with the mining industry to develop new research projects and participate on geotechnical review boards. Professor Potvin will proceed with his mandate to encourage and mentor younger geotechnical professionals with their research and career aspirations.

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The Board acknowledged Professor Potvin's outstanding and sustained contribution to geomechanical excellence and thanked him for his leadership, industry insight and vision.

"This is the right time for me to initiate this change of leadership at the ACG and let the younger generation take the centre to its next level," Professor Potvin said. "The ACG currently has a significant pool of talent ready to take more responsibilities. It is also in a very solid financial situation and a position to invest in further growth."

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**About ACG:**

*The Australian Centre for Geomechanics is a not-for-profit mining research centre based at The University of Western Australia, Perth. The ACG undertakes research, education and training activities in the geomechanics disciplines to provide industry with the necessary tools and knowledge to ensure that safety is not simply a top priority on par with productivity, but rather an ethic that guides everything. See [www.acg.uwa.edu.au](http://www.acg.uwa.edu.au)*