Appendix B

GENERAL CONSTRUCTION NOTES

(Ignore notes which are inapplicable)

1. **Occupational health and safety is a priority!** All necessary precautionary measures must be undertaken to ensure safety of the team. Particular attention must be given to deep excavations where gentle sloping back of soil or shoring must be applied to prevent possible soil collapse. Where risks are foreseen, these must be reported to the Occupational Health and Safety Agent employed by SANBI, who may need to seek further advice. In addition, no excavated earth or other materials should be stockpiled within a distance of one metre from the edge of any excavation. The one metre wide strip along the edges of all sides of an excavation should at all times be kept clear of objects such as lumps of clay, rocks or tools that could injure workers in the excavation if they were to fall in.

2. Check all dimensions on site to determine if any amendments to the designs are necessary. Note the required final height of the structure relative to the original ground level. The responsible engineer must be consulted before any changes are made to dimensions.

3. Excavation must be carried out to the final levels. Soil must be placed in areas best suited for re-use, for example, when building an earthen diversion embankment, the soil excavated should be used immediately in building up the embankment (on condition the excavated soil is of suitable quality). The excavated soil should alternatively be stockpiled immediately upstream of the site of the proposed wall. The topsoil must be stockpiled separately from the subsoil.

4. Where soil is to be the foundation for non-soil structures (for example, gabions and rafted weirs), all sand deposits must be removed and the floor well compacted while the soil is at optimum moisture content.

5. In instances where the addition of Gypsum (CaSO4) has been specified for the amelioration of a dispersive soil, mixing must be carried out off site, after which it must be transported to the construction site.

6. When the final level of the soil construction has been reached the previously stockpiled topsoil must be added as an extra height and planted to suitable vegetation (unless other provision for protection of the structure has been specified).

7. When backfilling soil against concrete or gabion work, extra care must be taken to ensure that a waterproof join with the structure is, as far as possible, achieved. Compaction must be carried out in layers as specified by the engineer. Material containing organic matter must not be used for this backfilling purpose.

8. Ensure that the correct steel reinforcing, as specified, has been delivered to site. Ensure that the minimum cover, as specified by the engineer, is achieved at all times. All welded steel mesh joins must have an overlap of at least 200mm and must be securely tied with 2mm building wire. At least three rings at 150mm spacing are required. Where reinforcing bars are used, bars at joins must be overlapped as per the distance specified

on the drawings. Particular attention must be paid to ensure the correct placing of steel reinforcing (particularly steel mesh with different bar sizes).

9. Before placing concrete on a rock foundation, carefully chip away any loose surface layers and wash away all debris. New surfaces must be painted with a cement slurry prior to the placing of the concrete.

10. Ensure that all shuttering is strong and well supported. It is recommended that the concrete be placed in layers no greater than one metre per day. The shuttering must be well oiled on the inside to prevent the concrete from sticking. Spacers between shuttering must be placed every one metre, both vertically and horizontally, with a minimum of two in both directions.

11. Note that when mixing concrete it is preferable to use a full pocket of cement with each mix. The specified cement water ratio must be maintained at all times.

12. The poured concrete must be "rodded" to ensure proper compaction. Never add more than one metre height of concrete in any one day, and attempt to lay the concrete in even, horizontal layers throughout the length of any section. Check the specifications for any requirement of expansion joints. The shuttering should be left for at least two days before stripping. Wetting the concrete while it is curing will make for a strong construction. Backfilling of soil against the completed structure may only be done after a period of at least seven days.

13. The use of "plums" in concrete: in some instances it may be feasible and economic to reduce the amount of concrete in mass gravity structures, by replacing up to 33% of the volume of concrete by the judicious use of suitable hand sized quarried rock. Where this is specified the rocks (purchased as handstone) must be so placed that there is always a minimum cover of 50mm between the rock and the shuttering, as well as between any two adjacent rocks. This should only be done where it is stated on the drawings that is permissible.

14. The standard procedures for the opening up and wiring together of gabion baskets and mattresses are well documented, and supplied with every delivery of the products. They must be strictly adhered to in all respects. Ensure that the lids of the final (top) baskets are always folded down and wired in a downstream direction.

15. Where rock-filled gabion baskets are used for the construction of keywalls, the trenches must be dug wide enough so that sufficient access is available to properly backfill and compact all the way around them. Making the trench only wide enough to receive the baskets is not acceptable, as water will eventually find its way around the structures and cause problems.

16. Where structures are to be built in dispersive soils, the following should be noted:

    - Impermeable cut off wall (at least 500mm deep) to be constructed under spillway section of the structure
    - Key walls to be impermeable

- Impermeable barriers to be constructed between key walls and spillway section of structures

17. Sloping and vegetating gully banks where specified:

    Where the gully is no more than approximately 1.0 metre deep, and the catchment area small (say ten hectares), the topsoil of the site immediately adjoining the channel is removed and stockpiled in a safe place nearby. The subsoil thus laid bare is excavated at a slope not less than 1:3 (V:H) and deposited in the gully. This deposit is carefully compacted while in a moist state. The topsoil is now returned to the sloped area, and spread as evenly as possible over it. Vegetation suitable to the site is planted. The additional advantage to this idea is that, as the channel cross section is made shallower and wider and established to vegetation, so the chances of floodwaters overflowing into the adjacent flood area will be that much greater. Note that the base of the modified channel should be planted to strong, hydrophitic plants while the outer edges will require plants more suited to drier regimes. It must be emphasised that the stockpiling of the topsoil and its replacement is vital, especially where very erodible subsoil is present. Failure to do this will be tantamount to a waste of money and effort.

18. The orientation of all wetlands and interventions is to be taken facing downstream i.e. left bank and right bank are to be identified **facing downstream**.

19. The Bill of Quantities for the various rehabilitation interventions only included revegetation in those instances where the engineer considered the re-vegetation of the denuded area as important due to the size of the area affected or due to the risk associated with scouring and erosion.