

ICE to produce best-practice guide for UK construction clients

The Institution of Civil Engineers has set out to produce a definitive best-practice guide for UK construction clients. **Sue Kershaw** of the Olympic Delivery Authority and **David Hutchison** of Parsons Brinckerhoff report.

The Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE) has embarked on a major new initiative to identify best practice in UK construction project procurement and delivery. The aim is to furnish UK construction clients with the tools and information they need to answer the following questions.

- What makes a good client?
- How can this be assessed?
- What makes a good client superlative?
- How does good client behaviour lead to project success?

The initiative is being led by Sue Kershaw, ICE executive board member and head of programme management at the UK Olympic Delivery Authority's transport team, and David Hutchison, ICE vice president with responsibility for finance and business management and Scotland area manager for Parsons Brinckerhoff.

New expert panel

ICE's learned society committee, working through its best-practice knowledge panel, has recently appointed Kershaw to chair a new expert panel on best practice in project procurement and delivery.

In addition to Kershaw and Hutchison, other members of the panel are Peter Hansford, Nichols Group director; Nelson Ogunshakin, ACE chief executive; Ian Gardner, Arup director; Mike Napier, Costain strategy and development manager; and Leon Heward-Mills, ICE's publisher.

The panel believes there are many examples of good client practice in the UK construction industry as well as many organisations promoting best practice. However, it also believes these initiatives could be brought together under one banner and their outputs shared across the industry for everyone's benefit.

Vision and aims

The vision for the best practice in project procurement and delivery panel is to

- create a tangible deliverable for ICE members and industry exploring and providing guidance and leadership on project best practice
- define the key functionality and attributes of the client role in defining project requirements, outcomes and success and actively making it happen
- engage with stakeholder networks and identify areas of mutual benefit and interest
- showcase the impact of the new ICE learned society.

The principal aim is to produce a guidance document for clients on best practice in procuring and delivering UK construction projects in September 2009. The guide will be available in both hard copy and electronically from the ICE website.

It is envisaged the guide will cover the following topics

- business case alignment
- project integration and interfaces
- scope definition and management
- project governance, structure and organisation
- programme management
- procurement strategy and management
- supplier relationships
- cost management and trending
- risk, value and opportunities management
- stakeholder management
- legislative requirements
- health, safety, quality and environmental management
- sustainability
- design management
- contract management
- management of construction
- commissioning and operation
- decommissioning and disposal.

A benchmarking facility is also being considered to enable clients to determine where they are in terms of best practice. An EFQM-type excellence model¹ may be produced so that cli-



ICE plans to bring together examples of good client practice, such as the £5.8 billion High Speed 1 project completed on time and within budget in November 2007

ents can have themselves assessed, independently if necessary, and gauge their progress towards excellence in procurement and delivery.

Promotional campaign

The expert panel intends to promote its activities to ICE members and the UK construction industry widely between now and the launch—including press articles, seminars, mailings and meetings. Input will also be obtained from as many interested parties as possible.

The initiative is an important piece of work that will help ICE move forward to a position of greater influence and importance, in accordance with its members' wishes. Over the past few years ICE has been through a process of regionalisation and revitalisation, including a revamp of its learned society to a more outward-looking and influential role.²

Best practice is one of five new knowledge themes and the best practice in project procurement and delivery expert panel is seen as a model for the new learned society in action.

References

1. See <http://www.efqm.org> (last accessed June 2008).
2. STEEDMAN S. ICE reinvents its learned society role. *Proceedings of ICE, Civil Engineering*, 2008, **161**, No. 2, 51.

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