

Editorial

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As in previous editions of the *Management, Procurement and Law* journal, the articles in this issue cover a wide range of topics across the spectrum of management, procurement and law. A topic to be incorporated in future *Management, Procurement and Law* issues through 2011 and 2012 will be the developing role of NEC3 contracts and collaboration in both private- and public-sector procurement strategies. A call for papers is included for this reason.

As Crossrail now prepares to award the first of its main construction contracts, the first briefing, by Terry Morgan, explains how risk management has already benefited the project and why its adoption by the supply chain is critical (Morgan, 2011). The benefits of this positive approach to risk management have already been seen in a number of engineering-led changes which have translated into better value for money – for example, contracts have been packaged in order to mitigate interface risk between different contractors.

The second briefing, by John Anderson, offers a strategy that could be used by client bodies to try to ensure good health and safety performance on their projects (Anderson, 2011). The author believes that ‘Expecting that the best will be achieved’ in health and safety terms without client involvement is wishful thinking, and may get nowhere. Accordingly, an 11-point strategy is suggested to assist clients, a strategy that was successfully adopted for the construction of the Dublin Port Tunnel.

The first paper, by Roger Allport, looks at ways of improving the decision-making for major urban rail projects (Allport, 2011). The author, having spent his career developing many metro projects around the world, became convinced that often these projects fail to deliver complete success and therefore confidence was undermined. For that reason, the author decided to undertake practical research to identify what could be done to improve things. His research was based on case studies of nine newly-opened metros in Asia and the UK. The research revealed a range of experience in widely differing environments, complex reasons for lack of success and many opportunities for doing better. The case studies revealed much improved implementation delivery but, critically, continuing poor operational success that undermines the metros’ core purpose. Metros are shown to be a particularly problematic type of major project, strategically important, inherently very risky and requiring effective management often by inexperienced sponsors.

The second paper, by John Corcoran, stemmed from the author’s experience on a tunnelling contract in Belfast where there had been an alarming increase in the accident frequency rate for the contract and no indication that the situation was likely to improve (Corcoran, 2011). The solution was to find ways of connecting with the workforce; to work together to improve the existing safety culture; and ultimately to reduce the number of accidents. This paper describes the various health and safety initiatives that were used to repair communications between the site management and the operatives, and, once things started to improve, how the lines of communication were continued on a regular basis. The conclusion reached was that engaging the workforce certainly did make a positive difference.

The stated objective of the third paper (Oladapo, 2011) was a study into the analytic hierarchy process (AHP) using real-life project data. AHP, as a method of contractor selection that eliminates the shortcomings of the ‘lowest bidder’ approach commonly used in the construction industry, has in previous papers mainly been reported using conceptual models in contractor selection with hypothetical data. The results of this study showed that the AHP method selected a contractor other than the one with the lowest tender price as the best contractor. The contractor with the lowest tender price was ranked third by the AHP method. This shows that the two methods differed much in their ranking of the contractors and seemed to justify the extra efforts that the more complex AHP method requires compared to the ‘lowest bidder’ approach.

The fourth and final paper, by Barry Clarke, describes two pathways developed by the Joint Board of Moderators for educating engineers in the workplace, both of which create a flexible approach to achieve the necessary learning outcomes and development objectives (Clarke, 2011). This flexible approach allows engineers to take advantage of opportunities that arise and fit their education and training to their career path. The schemes are the employer-managed scheme, aimed at those responsible for training, and the self-managed scheme, aimed at graduates who wish to manage their own education in the workplace. The paper highlights the structure of the schemes, the plans to achieve the necessary learning outcomes and the means of assessing their level of competency.

There then follows a discussion on extension of time claims. Ian Mackay responds to the recently published briefing concerning the use of critical path networks in extension of time claims

(Lester, 2010), expressing reasons as to why he prefers linked bar charts over network diagrams – namely because they are easier to understand. In his reply, Albert Lester disagrees that linked bar charts are easier to understand than network diagrams and cites a practical illustration from a past project to demonstrate this.

Finally there are two book reviews, one on the *ICE Manual of Health and Safety in Construction* and the other on *FIDIC Contracts: Law and Practice*. If you are thinking of purchasing a textbook on either of these subjects, I am sure that you will find the reviews helpful.

I am confident that this edition should contain something of interest for every reader with an interest in management, procurement or law. The editorial advisory panel very much welcomes your comments both constructive and otherwise. Through your valuable feedback we can gauge the readership interest in the various topics and thereby steer the direction of future issues of the journal. We look forward to hearing from you.

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