

Book review

Guide to Tendering: for Construction Projects

Roland Finch. RIBA, London, UK, 2011, ISBN 978-1-859463888, £10.00, 32 pp.

In the UK there formerly existed National Joint Consultative Committee codes of procedure but these were unfortunately withdrawn with no apparent substitute. Whatever the reasons for that, which in hindsight seem completely unhelpful to an industry much in need of practical assistance, this guide replaces the NJCC codes. It sets down a procedure for managing tenders for construction work based on up-to-date legislation.

The guide is aimed at clients, architects, surveyors, designers, engineers, project managers and others who are involved directly in the management of procurement and tendering for construction works. It can also be used by contractors, suppliers and subcontractors who experience that part of the procurement process at different stages. There is a nice blend of history with best practice, along with good, practical guidance.

There are six parts to the guide. Part 1 is a brief introduction and scope of the guide. It is important to establish both the roots and standing of this guide. Part 2 is a basic introduction in procurement strategies and mainly

centres on public procurement, which is helpful but of course it is not the only circumstance in which these rules could apply. Part 3 is about establishing a tender list, citing the primary objective of course, which is to establish that each chosen contractor will be able to successfully carry out the work that is the subject of the tender. Part 4 covers the tender rules and has a worked example. It is most important in public procurement in particular to ensure a clear set of rules for this stage of procurement. Part 5 covers the basics of a tender assessment and suggests two principal stages over which this should take place. Part 6 covers the all-important contract award stage of a construction project. The appendix includes a series of standard letters along with some European public sector minimum financial thresholds that should be noted.

There are 32 pages in A5 format including some appendices, written very much to be used as a guide. It is very easy to read, helpful, has a plain English style and construction professionals need to have this guide at their disposal. If I have any complaint of this guide, it should really be written as a neutral guide for use with any UK standard form of contract but it seems to centre on Joint Consultative Committee contracts, the building industry and the main contract itself. That said, these aspects are quite easily adjusted for by other professionals, by using the guide as a basis.

Robert Gerrard