

## Editorial

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Welcome to the December 2013 issue of *Management, Procurement and Law*. This year has been extremely successful for the journal. Six issues have been published this year compared to four issues in each of the previous years since the journal was launched in 2006. I am confident that we have increased not only the frequency of publication but also raised the quality of the papers in the spirit of continuous improvement. Building on the reputation and expertise of the *Proceedings of the Institution of Civil Engineers* series, the journal has clearly established itself as a distinctive high-quality international journal.

The scope and focus of the journal is clearly civil engineering. However, we find the journal cited also in fields such as mechanical engineering, building, technology and environmental science. Furthermore, the journal has an international outlook, as seen in the geographical distribution of its authors and coverage of the papers published. The journal is clearly well positioned to maintain and strengthen this global reach. It has an established worldwide subscription base backed by a dedicated international editorial panel – we currently have 15 non-UK panel members.

Perhaps uniquely among journals in the management, procurement and law fields, *Management, Procurement and Law* publishes fully peer-reviewed scholarly papers, which are read by both academics and practitioners. The journal is subscribed to by government departments, universities, engineering organisations, consultancies, contractors and other influential organisations in the construction industry. The papers published in the journal are academically robust while having direct relevance and impact in civil engineering practice.

The reach and impact of the journal will continue to attract both high-quality papers and high-profile authors. There is every expectation that the journal will continue to go from strength to strength. Three themed issues are planned to cover topics including education and training of civil engineers, building information modelling and knowledge management in construction. On this note, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all members of the editorial board and the publishing team at the Institution of Civil Engineers for their hard work, dedication and service to the work of the journal.

This issue has one briefing, four papers and one book review with contributions from an international authorship drawn from Australia, South Africa and the UK. The value for money in financing of infrastructure investments through

public–private partnerships (PPPs) remains a subject of debate particularly at a time when governments worldwide are grappling with unbalanced budgets, high levels of public sector debt and less-than-efficient capital markets. The briefing by Pearson and Pontin (2013) outlines a range public–private sector models and reforms to procurement processes that governments and their advisors can put in place to attract the much-needed private sector finance and secure better value for money for service users and taxpayers.

Africa could indeed benefit from PPPs in infrastructure provision perhaps more than any other part of the world. However, there are a number of challenges that must be overcome, including concerns over market size, affordability and payment risks. Other challenges include strengthening legal and regulatory frameworks, managing non-commercial risks and the state of under-developed local capital markets. It is estimated that meeting Africa's infrastructure needs requires implementing an ambitious programme of investment and maintenance to the tune of US\$93 billion per annum (Foster and Briceño-Garmendia, 2010). The study by Evdorides and Shoji (2013) contributes to this debate and examines the potential for PPPs in road infrastructure services in developing countries. Taking Zambia as a case study the paper confirms that the key obstacles include the availability of funding and lack of political stability and control. However, the involvement of multilateral agencies may improve project development and reduce risk in such projects in Africa.

In the area of occupational health and safety, the concept of a safety climate is now recognised as an essential contributor to improved occupational performance in construction. For this reason, the subject has attracted considerable attention in research and in the literature in recent years (Wamuziri, 2013). I found the study by Cooke *et al.* (2013) very interesting. The research reveals that supervisors play a crucial role in defining the safety climate in a sub-group, such as a construction site, and that work groups develop their own distinct safety climates, which are influenced by the behaviour and responses of first line supervisors. This is particularly important in construction where the safety climate may vary from site to site and will certainly vary between site and corporate headquarters. For construction companies seeking to develop strong and supportive safety climates throughout the organisation, the consistency of behaviour and communication by first line supervisors in their interactions with employees is crucial.

The environment is now a key area both strategically and operationally for both public and private sector organisations. This is certainly the case in sustainable development of infrastructure projects that meet human needs, including water supply, sanitation and waste management, housing and shelter, energy generation and distribution, transportation, industrial processing and the development of natural resources. For such large-scale infrastructure projects, the public sector will always remain a major client. Sourani and Sohail (2013) report results of research that investigated the key factors that enable UK public sector clients to address sustainability principles in construction procurement. Using a triangulation approach involving a Delphi exercise and semi-structured interviews and discussions, they identify a range of factors that are important in sustainable procurement. These are grouped into knowledge and perception factors, organisational and management factors, political and regulatory factors, logistical, contractual, instrumental and financial factors.

Continuing professional development (CPD) is the systematic maintenance, improvement and broadening of knowledge and skills. It covers both technical and professional topics throughout an individual's working life. CPD is the subject of the final paper in this issue (Strasheim and Hugo, 2013). The paper presents an evaluation of a 4-week construction-management CPD programme for mid-career professionals in South Africa. The programme has been shown to benefit individual participants, their employers and the wider construction industry. Although the programme presents some challenges, the authors opine that it has had a major impact on the competitiveness of the South African construction industry. Clearly, the CPD programme provides a model that could be replicated to develop and retain important skills in the construction industry in other disciplines and in also in other parts of Africa.

I thoroughly enjoyed reading the papers in this edition. I found their content informative and the research rigorous.

I commend them to you and look forward to reading your views and feedback.

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