

Book review

Civil Engineering Procedure 6th Edition

Thomas Telford, London, 2008, ISBN 978-0-7277-3524-9, **£20.00, 172 pp.**

The sixth edition of *Civil Engineering Procedure* is a welcome update of this seminal introduction to project development. The book is a particularly valuable reference for students and candidates undertaking their ICE professional review, as it has been for many generations of candidates since the first edition in 1963.

Eleven chapters discuss every aspect relating to the design, construction and commissioning of a scheme, including financial, legal and managerial issues. Each chapter covers a different element of the project, from the initial identification of the need for a scheme through to its final operation and maintenance. There is an extensive bibliography for further reading and an appendix that compares the most common model forms of contract. This update covers not only the traditional client–consultant–contractor relationship, but also PFI and PPP arrangements, including the SPV relationships required to implement such an arrangement.

The book was produced by the ICE's expert management panel and although many senior practitioners each drafted a chapter it reads as if it were written by a single author – a considerable achievement for which they must be congratulated.

It is a measure of how rapidly the civil engineering profession has changed over the past 50 years that six editions have had to be produced. Earlier editions, while of historical interest to show how procedures have developed and the industry has changed, are unlikely to be of much

practical use today, and students should ensure that they read and understand this sixth edition. The layout and clarity of the text ensure that the topic is comprehensively covered, and easy to read and to understand.

There are a few points that can be disputed. One chapter states that for local government in the UK, 'compulsory competitive tendering (CCT) legislation requires their DLOs to compete for most work with independent contractors'. This legislation was abolished a decade ago and replaced with a requirement for best value to be demonstrated; this may involve some form of external competition but other methodologies can be employed.

Similarly, and perhaps far more contentiously, another chapter states, 'Many people in the developed world may agree to try to reduce pollution. The developing world will have to continue these same polluting activities in order to maintain employment and services, let alone compete and develop'. This assertion goes against the grain of everything that ICE is trying to achieve and is an increasingly disputed topic at international conferences on development and environmental protection in recent years.

Finally, it is disappointing to note that the stunning graphic showing the Millau viaduct is not named or explained in any way, and its engineer, Michael Virlogeux, goes without credit.

Given the importance of this handbook to, and use by, students and candidates undertaking their professional review it is hoped that an amendment will be quickly produced to rectify these errors.

Ian Jenkinson