



Interpreting the Environment &
Pioneering Change

THE SOUTH AFRICAN ASSOCIATION OF CONSULTING ENGINEERS

Forum

GLOBAL SERVICES – ENHANCED PARTNERSHIPS

Cecil Rose, President of The South African Association of Consulting Engineers (SAACE) and Graham Pirie, CEO, SAACE recently returned from the well-attended 2007 International Federation of Consulting Engineers (FIDIC) Conference held in Singapore. This annual event played host to almost 70 member countries out of a total of 75, with South Africa being well-represented with 21 delegates at the conference.

ship contracting' also known as 'alliancing', 'turnkey' or 'partnering'. Pirie notes that, "Alliancing can also be considered, Partnering for Profit". It has become the method of choice in Australia and while it requires a better understanding of the risk/reward relationship, it represents a more flexible vehicle overcoming the negatives of purely price based competition and in dealing with a uninformed client base. In this regard the World Bank is still contemplating the

coincidence that Malaysia is No. 2 in the world rankings of competitiveness relating to government procurement of advanced technology products.

In short it was demonstrated that there is a definite link between the use of QBS, a strong consulting industry and a productive and competitive economy. There were frequent references to the *modus operandi* of Management Consultants who have mastered the concept of selling solutions and value. Pirie comments that, "Perhaps we should learn from them rather than denigrating them."

There was also a session devoted to sustainable construction which globally is moving to centre stage, especially since 40% of energy related to green house gases are related to buildings. Many countries, including South Africa, have set up Green Building Councils to address these issues and create increased awareness.

Once again SAACE's Young Professional Forum (YPF) did South Africa proud at the conference. Khelane Ndwandwe was tasked with summarising a plenary session and our own Young Engineer of the Year, Michele Kruger, was nominated to the International YPF Executive, with Kieren Brown as her alternate.

FIDIC produces a huge number of essential tools to assist firms in the marketplace including policy statements guideline documents and contract documents such as the newly created Design - Build - Operate Contract (Gold Book) that was launched via a dedicated one day workshop at the conference. Other guides currently under development include: Definition of Services Guide; Design Documentation Guidelines; and the Construction Monitoring Guide.

For more information visit the FIDIC website for copies of all the conference presentations www.fidic.org/conference/2007/talks/.

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Cecil Rose and Graham Pirie attending the FIDIC 2007 Conference.

The theme of the conference was 'Global Services – Enhanced Partnerships' and it is interesting to note that in this context most of the world is in a massive growth phase centred on infrastructure with the resultant supply/demand challenges for the construction sector. Lack of skills is the order of the day globally with the resultant problems relating to delivery as well as inadequate maintenance and upkeep of infrastructure. Central to this investment in the developing economies relates to infrastructure provision as a means of uplifting people out of poverty but the resultant environmental degradation threatens to reverse any gains. Hence, the need to embrace the concept of sustainable development.

The construction boom worldwide has also forced clients to accept new delivery mechanisms particularly what is termed 'relation-

It was stated at the conference that consulting engineering procurement methodologies should be embedded in the countries overall strategic innovation system and that brain drain is a consequence of the incorrect approach where solutions are chosen based purely on price. Best practice procurement methodologies recognising 'value' enhances a country's competitiveness and eliminates the tendency towards brain drain. It was noted that the consulting industry grows fastest in countries displaying a progressive knowledge economy. It is the role of the Consultant, the Association and the Government to develop and lead the agenda particularly where a weak institutional framework exists in the public sector. The Malaysian methodology relating to the selection and appointment of consultants is very impressive and it is considered as no

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