

FIDIC Conference London 2009

Summary of discussion points and
actions

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FIDIC Conference London 2012

From 14 – 16 September 2009, ACE hosted the annual conference of FIDIC. The theme of the conference – sustainable solutions to global challenges – led to a number of actions arising for industry and its representatives. These are summarised below, along with key discussion points from the business sessions.

Actions

FIDIC will:

- Send a statement to governments worldwide urging a workable agreement at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen, December 2009.
 - Promote sustainability benchmarking for cities.
 - Promote the FIDIC code of ethics and values more effectively.
 - Produce policy statements to aid its Member Associations' advocacy activities.
 - Facilitate Member Associations in sharing best practice globally.
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Member Associations will:

- Promote professionalism, transparency and integrity amongst their member companies, particularly through conditions of membership.
 - Ensure that activities are resourced appropriately as far as possible, with a particular focus on advocacy activities.
 - Build appropriate and effective alliances and relationships with stakeholders, including other industry bodies, governmental organisations and clients.
 - Benchmark the consultancy and engineering industry within their countries against other professions.
 - Help clients to build up knowledge bases.
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Consultancy and engineering businesses will:

- Proactively promote solutions to society's issues, by participating readily in the political and public debate.
 - Manage and report on issues of integrity and business values.
 - Invest in people, particularly the next generation of engineers.
 - Develop a culture of collaboration and trust.
 - Work in partnership with each other, government and society.
 - Embed sustainable development principles in all company activities.
 - Invest in research and knowledge development.
 - Support and promote FIDIC and the Member Associations.
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Summary of discussion points

The following is a brief summary of discussion points from each of the business programme sessions.

Monday, September 14

Plenary session: opinion leaders

- Chris Mole MP – reminded of the scale of the climate challenge. Enforceable CO₂ targets are needed, and the UK is leading the way.
- Ian Tyler, Balfour Beatty – success takes a long time to develop, but one mistake can undo all of the hard work.
- Keith Clarke, Atkins – the scale of the recession is enormous. Society must be decarbonised, and ways of working will have to change fundamentally. Set standards now that we know will not be good enough in years to come; incremental improvements.
- Petter Eiken, Skanska – focus on reducing costs and improving quality. Technology is a driver of change, but people are also key. Consultants must take the lead.

Seminar 1: global challenges and responses

- Industry should provide thought leadership.
- Carbon accounting is necessary, as is focus on “embedded water” in products.
- Society’s norms and expectations need to be adjusted to make significant progress.
- Raise the profile of FIDIC and similar organisations.
- Learn the language and motivations of politicians.
- Establish clear communication and collaboration within the engineering profession.
- Create standards now, and embed them in industry practices.
- Leverage more investment in research and development.
- Demonstrate to public and political world the consequences of *not* investing in research and development.
- Engineering businesses should lead by example.

Seminar 2: mobilising engineering resources

- UK society does not seem to value engineering. Where are the figureheads (e.g. Richard Branson) for engineering?
- Failure to invest in people will “dumb down” the industry.
- Clients do not invest enough in thinking or planning in the early phases of jobs – need to make the link between knowledge and the returns.
- Investing 10% more in engineering creates 30% more jobs and delivers 50% more infrastructure.
- Start the education process early – increase awareness of, and commitment to, engineering.



- Schools should have “sustainability ambassadors” drawn from the engineering profession.
- Work with governments to encourage more interest in engineering careers.
- Invest in the right people – including investing in thinkers (who often are not do-ers).
- Key people are key – invest in and support leadership and management.
- Invest in people knowing that a proportion will leave the company. They may then return with a wealth of experience.
- Focus on succession planning.
- Use technology to ensure that work is done by the right people in the right places.

Seminar 3: future funding of infrastructure

- Infrastructure is critical for developed and developing worlds, but the challenges are different.
- Africa faces significant issues, particularly in funding new developments.
- Developed world is now more inward-looking due to the recession. Less investment in developing markets.
- Developed world requires more intervention and re-engineering of processes, e.g. investment in infrastructure.
- Developing world requires more effort by international organisations; markets need to be distorted, otherwise sufficient investment in mass education etc will not be achieved.
- Engineers need to take initiative in promoting solutions to the world’s issues.
- The rest of the world should share responsibility, especially for Africa.

Tuesday, September 15

Plenary session: clients’ perspectives

- John Armit, ODA: ODA are driving sustainability across the Olympic projects. Clients must set goals on sustainability, skills, responsibility etc, and have drive suppliers to think differently.
- AP Mull, Tata: consultancies must adapt solutions to local conditions, communities and cultures. India needs to focus more on life cycle costing approaches.
- Terry Morgan, Crossrail: Crossrail need to put right skills and employment mechanisms in place. Young Crossrail has been very encouraging.
- Li Shirong, CIOB: different solutions are needed for different cultures. Sustainable development and economic growth can happen simultaneously.

Seminar 4: regional and country hot-spots

- Rapid urbanisation and formation of mega cities are driving growth.
- Clients and consultants must act ethically.
- Solutions must be integrated to deal with interconnecting issues.
- FIDIC should recognise those consultancies that do work sustainably.



- Consultancies should act as trusted advisors to clients, and help government procure effectively.
- Cities should benchmark themselves against progress indicators.

Seminar 5: sector hot-spots

- Water consumption is rising; more flexible/resilient supply needed.
- Integrated, cross-sector responses are needed.
- Focus on investing in R&D and training.
- Engineers should engage in the political process more often. Political process is often too slow to respond.
- The UK needs a new nuclear workforce and supply chain urgently.
- Clients need to be comfortable with collaborating with consultancies.

Seminar 6: localised mega-projects

- Sustainability means many things to many people in many situations. Clearly defined goals and processes are critical from the outset.
- Carbon criticality is central to sustainable design practice.
- Industry can contribute to the policy formation process.
- Sustainability must be integral to business culture of consultancies, clients, suppliers, contractors and asset users.
- Sustainability goals must be established from the outset of a programme, then cascaded and embedded down to the day-to-day level.
- Provide manageable, practical tools for designers to integrate sustainability into projects.
- Local requirements and conditions should be part of the solution.
- Programme and project delivery methods need to be fundamentally changed to reflect sustainability goals.
- Regional governance should be used to translate national goals to local conditions.
- Member Associations should aim for a working set of commonly used sustainability standards.

Seminar 7: a voice for the industry

- FIDIC should provide a global advocacy policy statement for Member Associations to use.
- Engineers should engage proactively with the political process.
- Strong advocacy delivers results and should be invested in.
- Understand what politicians are interested in; refine and test the message.
- Individuals, businesses and Member Associations must demonstrate commitment to advocacy.



Seminar 8: promoting skills and raising standards

- Engineers have responsibility to be part of the decision making process.
- Rewards for engineers should be better across the board.
- Training for employees and clients must be invested in.
- Engineering businesses must promote their industry more effectively.
- Young professionals must be included and engaged with, particularly through new ways of working.

Seminar 9: a coordinated approach

- There is a social mandate for all to act and cooperate.
- Representative bodies in each country should consolidate or form alliances to speak with one voice.
- Businesses should be proactive and share knowledge with each other.
- Best practice templates should be used to facilitate networking.
- FIDIC and Member Associations should produce more industry insights (e.g. State of the World).
- UK Chief Construction Adviser model could be useful in other nations.

Wednesday, September 16

Plenary session: industry leaders' perspectives

- Flemming Pedersen, Ramboll: industry must act ethically, think globally and “reveal the secret” if it is to be trusted to lead.
- John Dionisio, AECOM: the industry is in good shape, but needs to address preparedness and be ready to act differently.
- Paul Zofnass, EFCG: the industry is an exciting place, and is coping better with the recession than many others.