



IB group meeting - February 2018

Executive summary

Background:

The ACE International Business Group (IBG) meets quarterly and in accordance with IBG's communication strategy we publish below the Executive Summary of the meeting held on 22nd February 2018.

Key topics discussed:

- Meeting format and agenda
- FIDIC
- Brexit
- Impact of Brexit on UK membership of the government procurement agreement
- IEUK
- Communications strategy and update
- Guest speakers – Corporate Responsibility for Duty of Care
 - Andrew Murdoch - WYG Commercial and Legal Director
 - Simon Marr – WYG Risk and Security Divisional Director

Meeting summary notes:

1. Meeting Format and Agenda – changes to the format and agenda were introduced as follows:

- Meetings to take place at 10.00 start for a duration of 3 hours.
- More focus required to improve relevance of internal and external speakers.
- Action driven Minutes of Meeting to be produced.
- Chair to have interim reviews with the Co-Vice-Chairs to agree strategy and target activity each quarter.
- Agreed a key objective for the IBG is to provide support to ACE member firms in managing the Risk/Opportunity of working internationally particularly in the post Brexit era.

This will be supported by three main work streams each led by a member of the IBG as follows:

1. Communication strategy – Steve Oliver
2. Operational risks including contract, regulation, jurisdiction and interface with FIDIC – (Joseph Infante)
3. International development via Multi/Bi lateral donor funding and IFI's – (Suraj Rana)



2. FIDIC

- Next **FIDIC** annual International Infrastructure Conference is in Berlin 9th - 11th September with the theme “**Mobility and Smart Infrastructure**”. FIDIC has much more to offer members than just the Rainbow suite the contracts available and is a very influential organisation. With the proximity of the venue to the UK and the potential for differentiating with Smart Technology this event is strongly recommended for IBG members.
- **EFCA (European Federation of Consulting Engineers)** – The meeting reviewed a proposal from EFCA for greater alliance with the ACE. This proposal will be tabled at the next ACE Board meeting.
- **ACE Middle East Group** - The meeting reviewed a proposal for a more formal operating platform. This proposal will be tabled at the next ACE Board meeting.

3. Brexit

- Members may wish to explore mitigating strategies for Brexit such as options to establish a legal corporate entity within the EU that would provide access to the EU markets post Brexit.
- The role of ACE in the national debate of what the Brexit deal should look like and how it may affect our industry is of some concern. IBG believes the ACE should balance the need to be active, to inform as well as lobby the Government and to provide thought leadership whilst ensuring that ACE represents views from all its members. IBG agreed that the Chair would raise this at the next ACE Board meeting.

4. GPA

The Government Procurement Agreement is a World Trade Organisation (WTO) treaty intended to ensure open and transparent conditions of competition in government procurement markets. This is worth an estimated US\$ 1.7 trillion annually to GPA members.

A paper was discussed and identified that as it stands currently the UK would cease to be a member of the GPA after it leaves the EU and therefore UK firms' access to public procurement in GPA signatory countries would end. For the UK to acquire independent membership after 29th March 2019, it would need UK legislation and agreement by all signatories.

A full text of the GPA can be found [here](#).

5. IE:UK

Infrastructure Exports: UK is a government/industry partnership which is still in



its infancy and is targeted at Government and businesses in the UK working together to form consortia to create Government supported UK bids for Infrastructure projects. IEUK is part of the DIT under Brian Gallagher CEO DIT Infrastructure. Members are invited to feed intelligence on prospective opportunities as well as contact the DIT to be kept informed on workplans related to on-going IEU work.

6. Communications Strategy and Update

Steve Oliver in conjunction with Ben Freedman will lead on this work stream. Tam Simmons (ACE Head of Marketing and Communications) prepared an update for the IBG and acknowledged that work underway within the ACE. There will be an IBG page and the graphics designer is currently working on the website. The IBG web page will contain a directory of its members and contact details.

7. Guest speakers: Obligations for Duty of Care when staff are working overseas

Speakers from WYG, Andrew Murdoch – Commercial and Legal Director and Simon Marr – Divisional Director Risk and Security; presented on the risks and obligations of employers to safeguard staff when deployed on international projects. Whilst it is widely recognised that employers must do everything to keep its employees free from harm, the application and obligations in Tort are much wider and go deeper than most would expect. Strong advice supported by case studies brought such risks to a sobering colour and clarity.