

Executive Summary from ACE IBG November 2018

The ACE IBG meeting held on Thursday 22nd November 2018 was hosted at Royal Haskoning London Office in Westminster, in the shadow of Westminster Abbey and Houses of Parliament. We were once again fortunate to be joined by Hannah Vickers CEO of the ACE for the entirety of the meeting. The meeting was chaired by IBG Chairman and ACE Board Member, Clive Anderson Managing Director of WYG.

Guest Speaker Major Rich Phillips of 170 Engineer Group Royal Engineers joined as a guest for the entirety of the meeting. The IBG also welcomed a new delegate in Edgardo Para – Principal Procurement Consultant at Crown Agents.

Craig Huntbatch of Royal Haskoning explained the domestic arrangements for the day. The meeting Safety Share, centred on allowing time for travel both Public Transport and Driving as we move into the winter months. Clive Anderson gave an example of making sure sufficient Due Diligence is undertaken on supply chain partners in international projects with an example of a supplier of cars and drivers where only 3rd Party Insurance existed rather than fully comprehensive cover. Neal Blackman explained the cultural challenges of rolling out H&S initiatives across an international business. The Group then discussed the important factors around Duty of Care and legal responsibility/liability. An earlier presentation by WYG Legal and Security Team summarised this to the Group. Anna Braden of Beales agreed to have a review of the presentation (on the ACE- IBG Website) and provide further guidance if necessary.

Following a debate around HMG's mandating the use of NEC 3 and now NEC 4, Anna Braden of Beales agreed to look at possible guidance to explain the key facts. In particular the NEC 4 Professional Services Contract, where Defined Costs and Fess along with incentivisation is included. The recent ACE member survey for guidance on International working had a low response leading to an unrepresentative sample. It was agreed this survey would be re-run with the target audience being IBG delegates. Future ACE member surveys to have improved communication.

Hannah Vickers explained the latest update of the ACE Middle East Group and EFCA would be discussed at next week's ACE Board, any agreed actions will be referred back to the IBG for review. The Group discussed feedback from those who attended the recent ACE CEO Conference held at EBRD HQ. It was considered a success but the agenda was too ambitious with insufficient time allowed for the panel sessions. Perhaps future panel speakers should have very limited speaking time or indeed simply open the floor to allow more discussion. Hannah gave an overview of the ACE initiative around the "Future of Consultancy" this will be reviewed at the ACE Board meeting on Tuesday 27th November with the intention of the international component to be championed by the IBG.

The meeting discussed the three focus areas for the IBG

- a. Steve Oliver and ben Freedman continue to work on improving outcomes and communications both internal and external of the IBG. In addition each IBG meeting to be planned well in advance with targets for each quarter. Clive Anderson agreed to refresh the quarterly meetings of the Chair and Vice Chairs Steve Oliver of MLM and Suraj Rana of IMC. The IBG WhatsApp Group is considered to be working well but membership to be reviewed and adjusted to make sure it includes all IBG delegates. Ben Freedman gave a positive review of the new ACE website and agreed to continue feedback to Tam Simmons at ACE.

- b. Joseph Infante and Ja Da Conceicao of Turner and Townsend have been leading on the contracting risks, closer ties with FIDIC and broader engagement with the FIDIC suite of contracts. Debate held around broader engagement with Nelson Ogunshakin in his new role as CEO of FIDIC and Gavin English with his Board position with FIDIC. Hannah Vickers keen to engage in these future discussions with the potential aim of ACE/IBG having some representation on the various FIDIC Special Interest Groups.
- c. Closer links to the Bi Lateral and Multi-Lateral donors. It was noted that DfID felt inappropriate for them to have honorary membership of the IBG as considered a potential Conflict of Interest but recommended closer ties with DfIT would be sensible going forward. The Group reviewed the DfIT Infrastructure Experts Group established in July 2017, made up of 22 organisations from across industry. It remained a surprise that whilst a number of member firms were listed as members the ACE were not, whereas British Expertise International are. A further review of the guidance note prepared to support work with International Donors to be undertaken.

The Geo Political discussion points for the meeting were inevitably BREXIT and the current three option scenario of PM May's Deal, no BREXIT or a NO Deal BREXIT. The Group agreed the dystopian future of a No Deal BREXIT would be a horrendous outcome for the economy but further research needed into the impact on International Consultancy. There was also a lively debate around the recent events linked to Saudi Arabia and UAE, this once again underlined the very real risks of work in the Middle East. All agreed this increased the Ethical questions of working in the these jurisdictions but generally most business would continue to follow HMG guidance associated with trade in the region. IBG members thanked Beales for their very useful paper setting out risks associated with working in Iran. A good discussion around the opportunities emerging from HMG planned support and investment in Africa through such vehicles as the "Prosperity Fund". IBG to prepare a short guidance note on this to support member companies in understanding the information available in the Public Domain.

Guest Speaker Major Richard Phillips of 170 Engineer Regiment.

- d. Rich is a Chartered Civil Engineer, and Level 3 Force Protection Engineer. Prior to his current post he worked as the Critical National Infrastructure Cell. He developed the analysis tools that are now used as part of the CNI analysis tool kit that is taught and used across the Corps of RE. A published author in the Royal Engineer journal.
- e. 170 (Infrastructure Support) Engineer Group delivers engineer intelligence, infrastructure, programme management, facilities management and engineering consultancy capability, in order to enable operational effect for Defence and the wider UK Government.
- f. Planning for the deployment to South Sudan began in 2015, however the challenges of getting to Juba and Malakal should not be underestimated. Roads are virtually non-existent for several months a year and supplies are brought by barge along the river Nile. "Op TRENTON, the UK's support to the UN mission UNMISS. At circa 400 troops, Op TRENTON is one of the UK's largest deployments currently and is based around the provision of medical facilities, access to water, and technical support to other contributing UN nations. The deployment is very much about support infrastructure, however Force Protection troops, Infantry, Medics etc make up the

rest of the deployed force. The programme is about improving living conditions for the UN soldiers and deployed support as opposed to the refugees. One of the main aspects was the original deployment of a Specialist Team Royal Engineers had to fend for themselves at the very tip of support. Design followed by construction, but in a similar guise to Camp Bastion, there was nothing that the UK could call home, hence it deployed, built its home and support facilities, protections etc before providing for others.

- g. In addition to logistical challenges Rich explained the challenges of infrastructure funding by the UN, H&S concerns working in South Sudan and the challenges of working with a multi-national mission such as the UN.
- h. The ACE and IBG thanked Rich for his interesting presentation and recognised the similar challenges experienced by member firms working internationally. A broader engagement between ACE and The Institution of Royal Engineers (Inst RE) appears appropriate as the ICE already hold annual Joint Professional meetings with the Inst RE.