

E-NEWSLETTER 3  
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# Built Environment Industry Innovation Council



Chair, Sue Holliday

Hello to all our stakeholders,

Welcome to the 3rd edition of the Built Environment Industry Innovation Council (BEIIC) *E-newsletter*. Since the last e-newsletter in October 2009, I have travelled to the United Kingdom (UK) to attend the CIB World Building Congress, the Council has met a further three times and there have been developments on our current projects and new projects initiated.



In early May I travelled to the UK to attend the CIB World Congress. The congress was hosted by the University of Salford at the Lowry Centre in the urban renewal area of Salford Quays. There were several keynotes and a series of breakout sessions. Approximately 500 people from all over the world attended.

The key impression to emerge from the congress was the strong links in the UK between academic thinking and industry. The key universities represented: Salford, Loughborough and Reading all have research institutes funded primarily through industry, with the support of government organisations such as the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) (equivalent to Australia's ARC) and Technology Strategy Board (a business-focused organisation dedicated to promoting technology-enabled innovation across the UK). There are large numbers of PhD students working on different issues for industry through this program.

At the conclusion of the Congress, John McCarthy AO, a member of the Council, commenced as President of CIB for a period of three years. The next CIB Congress will be held in Brisbane in 2013.

For more information on the CIB World Congress 2010 go to: <http://www.cib2010.com/>

After the Congress, I met with a range of innovation experts in London. It is clear that the drive for innovation in the UK construction industry is focused on procurement reform, skills development, structural reform and tools. Much of this is promoted through demonstration projects which are selected according to their achievement of key KPIs. Government is an active partner in fostering this debate. Several initiatives have been established which include active participation by the construction industry: the Strategic Forum, Constructing Excellence and a position in government titled the UK Chief Construction Advisor. In particular the government has taken an active role in reforming the procurement processes for government initiatives. As in Australia, it is by no means perfect, but 10 years of engagement has emphasised the importance of partnership between government and industry in supporting innovation.

BEIIC will be making further recommendations to government as a result of this trip.

## Council Meetings

The Council is well underway in achieving its 2010 milestones from its [2009-2014 Strategic Plan](#), including the development of a Framework for a Community Engagement Strategy for the Built Environment and a project to critically examine current regulatory frameworks. The Council is also seeking evidence of the economic productivity to be gained through increased uptake of building information modelling technologies in the Australian built environment industries, including design, construction and facility management.

Over the course of the last three meetings the Council also received a range of presentations relevant to our 2010 milestones:

- Sustainability Victoria provided an overview of their organisation and opportunities for collaboration
- Bruce Taper from Kinesis presented their report – Urban Planning, Information Technology and Evidence Based Decision Making for Emissions Reduction in our Cities
- The Department of Finance and Administration provided a presentation on Innovation in Procurement: A Commonwealth Approach to Risk Management and Improving Budget Certainty.



BEMP 2010 was recently held in Canberra and BEIC was one of the supporting organisations again. This year BEMP focussed on strategic planning for Australian cities now and into the future, and they released an audit of capital city strategic plans. This Discussion Paper, 'Spotlight on Australia's Capital Cities is an assessment of city planning systems' which was commissioned by the BEMP host organisations, in support of the Council of Australian Government's (COAG) capital city strategic planning reforms. Professor Ken Maher, Chairman of Hassell and a member of the Council presented at the 'Breakthrough Strategies for Australia @ 35 million' theme. More information on BEMP is available on their website: [www.bemp.com.au](http://www.bemp.com.au)

## BEIC Support for Green Skills Training Initiative

On Council's recommendation the Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research (DIISR) provided co-funding to the Victoria University to develop a consolidated green skilling curriculum, specifically focused on retrofitting skills for qualified tradespeople in the construction industry. This training initiative is also supported by the Victorian Government through the Department of Planning and Community Development.

Two Council members along with a representative from the Construction and Property Services Skills Council are part of the steering committee for this project, providing advice from an industry perspective and ensuring the outcomes can be applied nationally.

The objective is to deliver a knowledge-based course for retrofitting and renovating homes to enable greater sustainability.

The course will be directed at construction industry trades people and will provide an opportunity for up skilling tradespeople and providing additional career paths in the construction industry. It is proposed that the course will run over three days. The first day will provide the general knowledge required for retrofitting, the second day will focus on specific components relevant to trades skills, and a third day will be required to cover the OH&S issues.

We look forward to seeing the results of the Training Course Trial to be run in late July 2010.



## BEIC Regulation Framework

The Council considers regulation of building and the built environment as a catalyst to innovation. Effective regulation assists development and takes up of innovation. Poor regulation hinders innovation regulation.

Regulation of the built environment is broadly covered by planning regulation – dealing with land use and the placing of buildings and infrastructure, building regulation – dealing with the buildings themselves, and processes for the design and construction of urban infrastructure, regulation of the building and construction industry and the relationships between them.

As a starting point the Council wanted to get stakeholder views and ideas on problems with existing regulation in the built environment and on the potential to use regulation to support innovation. Such views would cover the priorities for reform and enhancement, and how governments and regulators implement these reforms in the most effective and efficient way.

The Australian Construction Industry Forum (ACIF) has been given a grant to engage with stakeholders and report on priorities for reform and enhancement of the regulation environment to support innovation. The focus of the engagement and report is to identify useful steps that can be practically implemented at Commonwealth, state and territory government level that will significantly improve innovation in the built environment itself, and the processes used to deliver and maintain buildings and infrastructure.

## Innovative Community Engagement

In order to engage the broader community in the idea of sustainable built environments, it would be helpful to demonstrate through a range of visualisation and community engagement techniques what such built environments would look like. It can be argued that people desire a more sustainable environment; however few would willingly give up their “quality of life” to achieve this. Consequently, this desire for sustainable built environments needs to encapsulate the multiple expectations of diverse social groups, including issues of affordability, quality, amenity, security and healthy living.

To this end the Council, through (DIISR) engaged Arup to develop an industry 'Framework for Community Engagement'. The Framework identifies key elements of a sustainable built environment that is more desirable, affordable and durable; determines how best to visualise, describe or convey this future in order to engage with the broader community; and considers other ways to engage the broader community in the idea of a more sustainable built environment. The complete report can be found [here](#).

## Building Information Modelling Economic Productivity Research Project

The Council through its Built Environment Digital Modelling Working Group is seeking evidence of the economic productivity to be gained through increased uptake of building information modelling technologies in the Australian built environment industries, including design, construction and facility management.

Adoption of digital technologies within the built environment offers significant gains for the industry through improved productivity and building life cycle performance. Digital tools that improve design, collaboration and communication in the construction industry are becoming more critical. Digital modelling tools can also be used across the entire built environment to accelerate ecological and economic efficiencies’ and to help solve the social and ecological. A benefit of using these new technologies will be the opportunity to improve the ‘science’ behind various analysis tools, such as thermal and environmental sciences, through providing richer data sets that encourage the development of more sophisticated tools.

DIISR has provided co-funding to BuildingSMART to undertake the Building Information Modelling Economic Productivity Research project. The final report will be available towards the end of 2010.



## Industry Speaks Workshop

An Industry Speaks Workshop was held on 23 April 2010 to engage with stakeholders and industry representatives to discuss and provide recommendations addressing six themes: procurement, tools and technology, materials and products, refit (residential), skills and green building (commercial).

The Council is currently finalising a workshop outcomes report that will summarise key issues and recommendations. This report will be distributed to stakeholders by the end of July 2010.

## Innovation Initiatives eBooklet

On December 8 2009, the BEIC held a workshop for Industry Associations interested in finding out more about the work of BEIC. Before attending this meeting Industry Associations were asked to provide a brief one page synopsis of their association, their current and future initiatives and what's new and innovative.

Six months on, the Department invites Stakeholders to contribute or update their information to the eBooklet. Further information can be found on the Council's website. [Innovation Initiatives eBooklet](#). A request for new contributions and updates on current contributions to the eBooklet was sent out last month. Please advise the Secretariat (contact details below) if you haven't yet received this information.

For those associations not previously contacted and who would like to submit a contribution please forward your contact details to the Secretariat and information will be forwarded to you.

## Engagement with the Council

On behalf of the Council, I welcome built environment industry stakeholders bringing forward views and information to the Council. I would be delighted to meet with industry representatives and where time permits, invite brief presentations to the Council on issues of interest to our work.

As Council Chair I have been invited to present at a variety of meetings and conferences including: the [Deakin Lectures](#), an [Australian Building Codes Board](#) meeting and the [Australian Universities Building Education Association Conference 2010](#).

The Council is best contacted through the Secretariat in DIISR. Contact details, Council membership, current projects, Strategic Plan and publications are on our website at: [www.innovation.gov.au/beic](http://www.innovation.gov.au/beic)