



CIB NEWS ARTICLE

International Council for Research and Innovation
in Building and Construction

Providing a global network for international exchange and cooperation in research and innovation in building and construction, in support of an improved building process and of improved performance of the built environment.

June 2006

Around the Task Groups and Working Commissions

TG59 – People in Construction

Meeting Report 3rd Meeting held in Bahamas, May 2006



by

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The third meeting of CIB Task Group TG59 took place in Grand Bahama Island (Bahamas) on Friday 5th May 2006, in conjunction with the ASCE/CIB Leadership and Management Conference. This was seen as a good opportunity to engage the North American research community in the work of the Task Group.

Focus

There was a discussion around the dual focus of the Task Group (which was stated as exploring both how the performance of the sector could be improved through its people and how the lives of those within the sector could be improved through better employment practices). It was universally agreed that these were not mutually exclusive goals.

It was believed that establishing ways of improving leadership with regards industry improvement may fall outside the current scope of the current TG59) and possibly into W065), but there remain definite synergies to exploit in this area. It was also agreed that much of the change needed was cultural in nature, and so positive links with TG23 were essential in this regard.

R&D Themes

Participants discussed their people and labour market related research. The discussion revealed the similarities between the issues facing the US industry and those prevalent within the UK. Recurring themes concerned:

- skills shortages (both in a qualitative and a quantitative sense),
- labour migration (and the benefits and challenges that this raised),
- health, safety and welfare issues (particular in relation to foreign labour which is becoming more prevalent in both the US and UK sectors and in the need to improve the quality of on-site facilities which was believed to delimit the ability of the sector to improve its people management performance),
- motivation (both in terms of incentivising the industry's workforce and in terms of understanding the career needs of craft workers),
- the need for behaviour change (both with regards operatives attitudes towards productivity and safety and managerial attitudes towards leadership and project resource management),
- training and development (especially in terms of how skills needs are changing with process),



- automation and construction technology developments (and their impact on the skills and knowledge requirements of the industry), and
- knowledge management (particularly with regards to tapping into the knowledge of blue collar workers).

In the lively discussion that followed, participants agreed on the need for a greater focus on the workforce and on labour issues in construction research. There was a high level of interest amongst many of the participants in taking part in future meetings of the Task Group. Several expressed an interest in working on collaborative research projects aimed at exploring how labour market issues play out in different cultural contexts.

Additional Information

For additional information about the CIB TG59 meetings please contact the Coordinator and Regional Sub-Coordinator: Robyn Gordon at robyn.gordon@linkages.ca and Andy Dainty at a.r.j.dainty@lboro.ac.uk.

You can find more information on the activities of CIB TG59 at www.cibworld.nl/website - section "Databases" - database "Commissions - type TG59 in the search field "Commission number".