



## CIB NEWS ARTICLE

International Council for Research and Innovation  
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### Around the Task Groups and Working Commissions

#### W113 – Law and Dispute Resolution

### STUDY GROUPS on COPA and LARC

by

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Two CIB W113 Study Groups were proposed by the 'Construction Law Task Force' of the Centre of Infrastructure & Construction Industry Development (CICID) at The University of Hong Kong (HKU). These Study Groups were approved by CIB W113 and are now up and running. They are:

- the Study Group on Legal Aspects of Relational Contracting ("the LARC Study Group") and
- the Study Group on Comparative Study on enforcement of Payment and Adjudication in Construction Contracts in Singapore, Hong Kong and Mainland China ("the COPA Study Group").

Their aims are both to develop relevant collaborative synergies and co-operation between Hong Kong, United Kingdom, Singapore, USA and other international counterparts, and to conduct study and research for the facilitation of exchange of information, knowledge, ideas and experiences between construction industry practitioners and academics.

The joint co-ordinators of the COPA Study Group are Philip Chan, of National University of Singapore (NUS) and Gary Soo of Gary Soo's Chambers, Hong Kong and University of Hong Kong (HKU). Present COPA members include George Ofori of NUS, Jim Mason of University of the West of England, Jin Wu and Mohan Kumaraswamy of HKU, and Sam Chan of the Hong Kong SAR Highways Department. The present COPA focus is on the areas of payment and adjudication issues in construction contracts in Singapore, Hong Kong and Mainland China.

In May 2007, the Ministry of Construction (MOC) China approved a research proposal submitted by the COPA team from CICID in collaboration with the Beijing University of Civil Engineering and Architecture. The project is entitled 'Comparison Study of measures

facilitating construction payment between Mainland China and some developed jurisdictions'. This is due to be completed in mid-2008. Meanwhile, the COPA Study Group has also prepared a proposal for a joint research project between NUS and HKU to compare the legal regulations in these jurisdictions for enforcement of payment and adjudication in comparison with the practice and options adopted elsewhere.

The joint co-ordinators of the LARC Study Group are Mohan Kumaraswamy, of HKU and Jim Mason of University of the West of England. LARC focuses on the contractual rights, remedies and repercussions, and other legal ramifications of partnering, alliancing and other forms of relational contracting. Other group members currently include, Issaka Ndekugri of University of Wolverhampton, Motiar Rahman of University of Glamorgan, Cynthia Tsao of University of Cincinnati, Aaron Anvuur, Jacky Chung and Thomas Ng of HKU, Dan Lam from Leighton Contractors and Gary Soo of Gary Soo's Chambers, Hong Kong and HKU. The LARC Study Group sees itself as a useful forum for sharing of case studies and comparing perspectives on legal issues from the point of view of different jurisdictions. While planning to develop further in these areas in general, it will target specific issues like the relative enforceability of "good faith" provisions in some recent construction contracts.

Both Study Groups were introduced to the wider CIB community at the CIB Congress in South Africa in May 2007, with COPA being introduced by Philip Chan, and LARC by Jim Mason. COPA and LARC meetings were held with visiting overseas counterparts in Hong Kong in June and August 2007 respectively. It is hoped to develop collaboration and synergies among practitioners and academics worldwide and to identify

legal options with case studies for comparative review in their respective focus areas. Research plans and activities are in progress as above. Those interested to contribute to the studies or to know more about the research of the Study Groups are welcome to email Gary Soo to [gklsoo@hku.hk](mailto:gklsoo@hku.hk) or Mohan Kumaraswamy to [mohan@hku.hk](mailto:mohan@hku.hk)

### Additional Information

Regular news about the activities of COPA and LARC Study Groups will appear in the W113 web site at [www.cib113.com](http://www.cib113.com).

For additional information about the CIB W113 please contact the Coordinators: Paul Chynoweth [p.chynoweth@salford.ac.uk](mailto:p.chynoweth@salford.ac.uk) and Ronald Craig [r.w.craig@lboro.ac.uk](mailto:r.w.craig@lboro.ac.uk).

You can find more information on the activities of CIB W113 at [www.cibworld.nl](http://www.cibworld.nl). Search under Databases / Commissions / type W113 in the search field Commission number.



*Meeting of COPA in June 2007. Photo shows Mr Jin Wu, a PhD research student at HKU; Mr Sam Chan of the Hong Kong SAR Highways Dept.; Prof. Mohan Kumaraswamy of HKU, Associate Professor Dr. Philip Chan of the National University of Singapore and Joint Co-ordinator of COPA; and Mr Gary Soo, of Gary Soo's Chambers, Hong Kong, Adjunct Professor at HKU and Joint Co-ordinator of COPA.*



*Meeting of LARC in August 2007. Photo shows Mr Gary Soo, Chairman of the CICID Construction Law Task Force and Adjunct Professor at HKU, Prof. Mohan Kumaraswamy of HKU (present co-ordinator of LARC), Dr Cynthia Tsao of University of Cincinnati, Mr Sammy Wan of ATAL and part-time PhD research student at HKU, Mr Aaron Anvuur and Mr Gangadhar Mahesh, both PhD research students of HKU.*