



International Federation of Consulting Engineers
The Global Voice of Consulting Engineers

Selection and Engagement of Consulting Engineers

FIDIC Briefing Note

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Background

The international engineering federation FIDIC (the International Federation of Consulting Engineers) believes that its member associations and their members should strive to achieve the highest degree of quality and standards.

FIDIC has always had policy statements that it expects its members to follow to ensure high standards of service in the infrastructure industry. These standards are reflected in FIDICs contracts, policy work, events and committees.

Selection and Engagement of Consulting Engineers

The Consulting Engineer's role is to put expert knowledge at the disposal of his Client. It is important that the Client and Consulting Engineer should proceed on the basis of mutual trust and co-operation. In the professional relationship, the Consulting Engineer identifies with his Client's aims.

Selection and engagement

In order to achieve the desired relationship, Clients are advised to follow six basic steps:

- Draft outline terms of reference for the project.
- Consider possible professional services, such as; investigations and reports; detailed design and preparation of contract documents: arrangements for a contract; services-during-construction: and acceptance of works, commissioning of systems, and solutions of final account, considering the importance of the various tasks, and the special skills, knowledge and competence required for them.
- Identify possible Consulting Engineers from: previous experience, or advice from a National Association of Consulting Engineers or other source.
- Select a Consulting Engineer, on the basis of his ability, considering technical competence, managerial ability, special expertise, previous experience, available resources, professional integrity, quality assurance systems, and independence from other interests.
- Discuss with the selected Consulting Engineer important issues, such as; the project, its purpose, budget and time-schedule; the professional services required, and the ability of the Consulting Engineer to provide them; project Organisation and working relationships; any special political, social or environmental considerations; the availability of staff and facilities; and conditions of engagement and remuneration.
- Conclude an Agreement appointing the Consulting Engineer.

Comprehensive agreement

The Agreement should confirm the scope of services and remuneration for them. The particulars should include the time-schedule for the services and interim payments. The general conditions should prescribe an equitable balance of rights and obligations between the Client and the Consulting Engineer, based on the responsibilities they respectively undertake. The responsibilities ascribed to the Consulting Engineer should be confined to responsibilities for the services entrusted to him.

Change in scope

The Agreement should allow for the possibility that additional or amended services may become desirable or necessary as the project proceeds. When the scale or duration of the services is uncertain, the conditions and terms of remuneration should be sufficiently flexible to accommodate changes. The underlying principle is that the Consulting Engineer should assist his Client, and subject to his Client's instructions, be able to help deliver the Client's best interests for the project.

FIDIC recommends:

- Member associations and their members engage with clients and ensure that their expertise and skill is aligned with that required to perform the required services.
- All parties should act in the best interests of mutual trust and co-operation.

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Endnotes