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INVESTIGATING THE EXISTENCE OF COMMON AND AGREED DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION PROCESS AMONG CONSULTING PROFESSIONALS

RESEARCH REPORT

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ABSTRACT

The prevalence and persistence of problems of late project delivery, cost overruns, poor quality and many others, coupled with the lack of concrete solutions to eliminate the causes of these problems over many years have driven construction industries around the world to reconsider their design and construction processes that are used to deliver projects. A government led study in the UK recommended re-thinking the design and construction process; learning from the manufacturing industry. The process protocol was developed as a result, in order to bring about a common and agreed project delivery process. Other construction industries around the world have considered adopting similar models, believing change intended to introduce process-thinking for consistency and standardisation is required to improve project delivery.

In South Africa, the existence of a common and agreed project delivery process is not clear. This study has endeavoured to explore the current phenomenon among professional councils and bodies on the existence of a common and agreed design and construction process. The research is a general opinion survey without the need for a statistical analysis. Therefore, utilising the qualitative research method was deemed to be most appropriate at this high level stage.

From the research findings, it has been concluded that while there are six stages recognised by all professional councils and associations, these stages are not used as a project delivery process. The six stages are only applied to the measurement of the professional fees due at a given stage though not applied the same way by all professional disciplines. The underlying details in the stages overlap between disciplines in some instances and are inconsistent as well.

The general consensus, from the research participants, is that a more defined and agreed process is required. The government has already taken the lead with the initiative of developing the Infrastructure Delivery Management System (IDMS) for public infrastructure projects. There is unanimous agreement among the research participants that the IDMS would be appropriate to be applied throughout the industry as a starting point for process standardisation.