

# CONtact Singapore



## Foreword

*by the President*

**David Shuttleworth**  
*President*

This is our first newsletter since the AGM on 26 May 2011 when the new Council was formed and I would like to welcome all the new members and thank the former council for their contributions and hard work over the previous year.

The CIOB Singapore Centre has had a busy time so far this year with a series of evening talks and social events held and the annual International Construction Conference in conjunction with NUS under preparation which is planned for 13 October 2011 at the Goodwood Park Hotel. The theme for this year is "The New Dynamics of Project Management - The Way Forward" and we hope this will provide an opportunity for many professionals in construction to come together and exchange ideas, theory and knowledge on current project management methods in practice.

The theme is a continuation of the CIOB policy to promote better and more efficient management of projects and we are looking at a new era of project management which encompasses innovation, technology, increasing efficiency and cost controls as well as factors affecting Project Management here in Singapore and other countries such as foreign labour, etc.

Promotion of improved project management at the current time is very

timely because the construction industry is still very busy in Singapore. There was a perception that things would quieten down after the completion of the Marina Bay Sands project, however this has not been the case as there are many ongoing exciting projects underway such as the various Down Town Lines, the Marina Bay Coastal Expressway, several major hospitals and the Cruise Terminal to name but a few. These are very demanding projects.

It is therefore our aim at the CIOB Singapore Centre to raise the CIOB profile to assist in enhancing the management skills and expertise of our members at all levels and I would ask that they try to participate in as many of our events as possible in order to benefit from our initiatives over the next year.

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## New Council for Year 2011/2012

*President* **David Shuttleworth**

*Vice President* **Nicolas Moossa**

*Honorary Treasurer* **Wilson Cheung**

*Committee Members* **Christopher Chuah**

**Tristan Allan**

**Joseph Tong**

**Anand Jude Anthony**

**Gilbert Lau**

**Mozommil Hussain**

**William Kam**

# Report on Annual General Meeting 2011/2012 and Talk on CAR Policies and Subrogated Actions

*Anita Kathirayson is Branch Manager of CIOB Singapore*

CIOB Singapore's Annual General Meeting (AGM) 2011 was held on 26 May 2011 at the Goodwood Park Hotel. In keeping with last year's format, the meeting began with a talk by Jonathan Choo from DLA Piper on CAR Policies and Subrogated Actions. This was followed by the AGM proper and light refreshments after.

The talk by Jonathan focused on the key clauses in C.A.R Policies (insuring clause, exclusion clauses, reasonable precautions clause, claims notification clause and subrogation clause), the various roles played by insurers, loss adjusters, experts and lawyers in the insurance process and it also addressed the beauty of subrogated actions - especially from the point of view of the contractor.

After the talk, the AGM began with the current President, Mr David Shuttleworth briefing the members on the fruitful year that CIOB has had beginning with the CIOB endorsed Hill Masterclass last July at the Goodwood Park Hotel where he gave a brief introduction on CIOB and CIOB's marketing paraphernalia was also given out.

The other events organised by CIOB Singapore included:

**August 2010**

*Social Networking Night at Chijmes.  
Attendance about 30*

**September 2010**

*Talk on Infrastructure Developments and Investment Opportunities in Sri Lanka by Anil Changaroth from Aequitas LLP.  
Attendance about 20*

**October 2010**

*Talk on Behavioural Safety Management by John Birchall formerly from Marina Bay Sands.  
Attendance about 35*

**December 2010**

*Christmas Networking Event at Hyde Bar at Boat Quay.  
Attendance about 25*

**February 2011**

*Talk on Building Defects by Nicolas Moossa from BSD.  
Attendance about 40*

**May 2011**

*Social Networking Event at Chijmes.  
Attendance about 20*  
  
*AGM and Talk on Construction Insurance by Jonathan Choo from DLA Piper and AGM.  
Attendance about 20*



The President said that the idea was to have evening talks with more interesting topics and to try to move away from mainstream construction topics if possible. Potential future topics could include working in the Green Zone in Iraq and the new Changi Race Track.

CIOB will also look to be working closely with organisations such as SIB, SISV and SCL to organise possible joint events and to share knowledge, etc.

A new council was then re-elected with Mr Shuttleworth being voted in as President for another term. He thanked the previous council for their hard work and said that CIOB planned to organise more interesting activities to encourage more participation among members and to attract new members.

After the meeting, members adjourned for light refreshments and drinks.



# Evening Seminar “Defects in Buildings: Lessons from Failures” on 25 February 2011 at SMU

***Gilbert Lau is Head of Department (Assets) at Building System and Diagnostics Pte Ltd and a Committee Member with CIOB Singapore.***

On a Friday evening, Mr Nicolas Moossa (B.Eng, M.Sc, Certified GMP, MCIOB, MIES) talked about Hammurabi, butterflies and doctors. At this CIOB evening seminar in February this year, Mr Moossa shared his personal experiences on defects and failures in buildings and a systematic approach to tackling building defects.

Mr Moossa guided us through examples of failures in various building materials; spotting the tell-tale butterfly shaped glass fragments in shattered tempered glass due to nickel sulphide, pop outs in basement floors and ceilings due to alkali-silica reaction and staining in granite slabs due to biotite impurities.

While today we embrace technology

and other productivity factors and drivers, one can often overlook doing a thorough functional analysis of the system to be put in place. Is the function of a coating on a plane to provide protection or for aesthetic reasons?

Mr Moossa further drew parallels between medical pathology and building pathology where understanding causes or possible causes of failures and creating an expert system would help in abstention, mitigation, reconstitution and circumvention measures.

During the extended Q&A session, everyone had something to share on the topic and one could see that this topic was dear to all of us not only as building



professionals but also as property owners and users.

That was again a great talk from Mr Moossa and I personally look forward to the next one.

## First CIOB Singapore Social Event of 2011 on 6 May 2011 at Chijmes

***David Shuttleworth is Managing Director of Foremost Consultants and current President of CIOB Singapore***

On Friday 6 May of this year due to the overwhelming success and popularity of the previous event held there in April last year, we hosted yet another CIOB social event at the Hog's Breath Bar down in the depths of Chijmes that evening.

This event is one of several that we hold throughout the year and they provide an

informal platform for members, colleagues and friends to network and socialize in good surroundings.

Unlike last year I had arranged my travel schedule so as not to be in a foreign country that same afternoon and having to rely on airlines adhering (or not as the case may be) to their Friday afternoon flight schedules, so I actually arrived at the start of the proceedings.

The attendees as usual were a good mix of the regulars, a few (but never enough) CIOB members but also quite a few non members, guests and friends which made for an interesting evening. Of particular note was a good turnout by our colleagues from the Singapore Institute of Building (SIB) with whom we intend to look into hosting joint events in the future if possible.

As always many people stayed on even after the event had finished, which is perhaps a measure of how much they enjoyed it (or the benefits of an extended Happy Hour!)

Although we try to vary the location of events, this particular venue and location has proved to be very popular with attendees and all credit must be given to the staff of the Hog's Breath for the excellent service we received all night and hopefully we will return next year to the same place.

We have to thank our Social Secretary Tristan Allan for selecting and organising all the social events and trust that he will continue his good work in the coming year. We are already planning for the Christmas event and are looking for volunteers for the position of Father Christmas, so if there are any takers please contact Tristan or Anita at the CIOB office.



# Evening Seminar “Dynamics of Building a Borderless Brand” on 28 July 2011 at SMU

*Mozommil Hussain is an Associate with Smallwood, Reynolds, Stewart, Stewart & Associates Pte Ltd and a Committee Member with CIOB Singapore*

With the recent global economic recession affecting all aspects of the construction industry, and some quarters still continuing to do so, the emphasis on ‘business development’ has become prevalent, especially in a weak and very competitive global market. With this in mind, CIOB Singapore organised an evening seminar on 28 July 2011 at the Singapore Management University and invited Mr Raymond Kwok, Director (Business Development) at Jurong Consultants, to give a presentation on the topic *“Dynamics of Building a Borderless Brand”*.

Mr Kwok’s presentation was very fascinating and gave an insightful account on ‘Branding’ and how it plays a pivotal role for organisations to market themselves, and their products or services, on a global platform. The presentation was primarily focused on companies operating in the South East Asia region, notably Singapore, and covered the following key points:

1. Who are the ‘Branded’ and What makes a ‘Brand’?
2. How to be ‘Branded’?

In addressing the first point, Mr Kwok compared a number of international Multi-National Corporations (MNCs) against locally based corporations and conceded that, though the locally based corporations were good, they were not as recognisable as the international MNCs who, over the years, have established their brand identity and

loyalty on a global level; this was aptly illustrated in his rather amusing but pertinent story “Rolex or Polex?”. He went on to explain that to be ‘Branded’ companies need to create a ‘Brand’ that is built on quality, consistency and image, irrespective of whether the product or service is being targeted at the low, mid or high end of the market. This was illustrated in his study of McDonalds, an international MNC providing simple low-priced food products versus Tung Lok, a local company providing superior high-priced food products.

In addressing the final point, Mr Kwok demonstrated that is not impossible to become ‘Branded’ and to achieve it one must “know yourself” by confronting the brutal truths, and “know your others” by looking long term. This was reinforced

by his analysis on organisational leadership and citing of Frederick Herzberg’s ‘Motivation to Work’ diagram.

In essence branding is aptly summarised as: *“Identity is character; a set of characterisations that flesh out someone or something. This becomes a brand only when effort is put in to communicate it to target audiences, and to sustain this messaging over time”* - as highlighted in *Brand Singapore by Koh Buck Song*.

Mr Kwok concluded his presentation by focusing on ‘Singapore Inc’ and how the country has marketed itself to become a globally recognised brand and, moreover, how it is continuing to develop its brand through its ‘E21 Mission’ think tank.



# War for Talent – Employee’s Market

*Tristan Allan is Director of 3C Synergy and a Committee Member with CIOB Singapore*

Amongst all the complex factors which led to the Global Financial Recession, the Lehman Brothers collapse in September 2008 saw an accelerated knock-on effect throughout industries around the world. Singapore’s construction market was no different and the focus changed to become an ‘Employer’s Market’ meaning companies could ‘pick & choose’ the best of the best.

Fast forward to the present day approximately three years on and the market paints a different picture. Today the market has recovered somewhat (although still with great uncertainty ahead), and candidates are becoming more and more particular about who they would like to work for. Not so long ago, candidates were grateful to be given interview opportunities, however now candidates are in the driving seat and are being highly selective when picking out the best opportunities in the market. Here we have a clear example of an Employee/Candidate driven market.

As the economy in Asia recovers, the demand for talent increases. With the amount of construction activity in Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Hong Kong and China, Singapore construction related companies are going to have to work harder to find ways of retaining staff and garnering their ‘Employer of Choice’ status.

3C Synergy has offices in Singapore and Hong Kong and is in a good position to comment on current market trends. Hong Kong is currently experiencing one of its busiest construction periods with the Express Rail Link (XRL), South Island Line (SIL), West Island Line (WIL) and many drainage projects. The demand for strong technical staff is fierce.

It is a known fact that Hong Kong companies are actively targeting Singaporean construction staff to work in Hong Kong. With the attraction of higher salaries and large-scale projects, the migration from Singapore to Hong Kong may increase.

Singapore has its fair share of Construction projects too and with Down Town Line 3 (DTL3), The Singapore Sports Hub and the National Arts Gallery to name a few, the demand for competent technical staff will increase as the projects progress. (The DTL projects that have been awarded are Engineer’s design and not design and build, hence the smaller value) Most of the contracts have already been awarded.

With the increasing restrictive requirements imposed by Singapore on overseas technical staff, the influx of candidates that have experience working on similar construction projects may decline. Couple this with Hong Kong companies targeting Singapore-based candidates, one can envisage talent shortages in the near future. Although the Hong Kong government also has certain

quota restrictions on incoming talent, many industry folks are musing that these restrictions will likely relax in the short/medium term, to allow completion of the major infrastructure projects.

Whilst experienced Singapore-based candidates head overseas, the void that is left, cannot always be filled by local staff. Unless the restrictions on entry for overseas technical staff is reduced and Singaporean construction companies review their mindset about employing overseas technical staff, there may be a talent shortage issue in Singapore.

As this is an ‘Employee’s Market’, Singapore-based construction companies would do well to find innovative ways to attract and retain their staff, and work on their image perception in the market, as well as invest in their employee offerings, to remain competitive employers.

It is no longer just a case of Company V’s Company, but also Country V’s Country. Hence companies can no longer take a passive role when it comes to talent attraction.



# And About Time Too – A Review of “Guide to Good Practice in the Management of Time in Complex Projects” by CIOB

*Peter Jacobs, CIOB Vice President, and until recently Delivery Director at the 2012 Olympic Village, reviews the CIOB’s new protocol on time management.*

Keith Pickavance is a recent Past President of the CIOB with a passion for good time management and a wealth of experience. In his preface to this guide, which he instigated, he explains how the CIOB began a five-year plan to provide standards, education, training and accreditation in time management.

Research in 2008 revealed that time management skills and techniques had not kept pace with the technology available and that traditional intuitive methods were unlikely to be successful on complex projects.

These findings confirmed my own views, formed over the last 35 years involved in complex projects, that time has so often proved to be the most valuable asset yet the hardest to manage.

One problem is that there is no common standard for schedules across the industry, so the clear definitions laid down in the guide could prove of real use to practitioners. People talk about “levels” of schedules, or executive summaries, without

ever necessarily being in agreement about what these are. Also, different forms of contract and popular software packages use different terminology and lay down different processes in time management, adding to the confusion, a problem I believe the senior construction managers on the Olympics would recognise.

But a major benefit of the methodology explained in the guide is that it’s not linked to any particular scheduling technique or form of contract, but covers in detail all the key stages, including quality control and communication of the process and outputs.

The guide will be beneficial to academics and students learning the basics of time management, but it could also become a reference document for all parties involved in the delivery of complex projects, including senior managers and clients. Educating senior managers to understand and manage the reports generated from the schedules and making use of the data to make the right decisions is equally important.

The guide provides a definition of a “complex project”. However, it does recognise that “complexity” can be subjective and depend on the experience and attitude of the various stakeholders, so its recommendations can also be applied to “simple” projects if appropriate.

The term “programme” is swiftly dismissed as historic and “is not used in connection with the management of time in complex projects”. However, I suspect many readers will agree that the word programme is heard every day on major construction sites!

On the majority of projects, particularly complex projects, the standard of our planning, scheduling and particularly record keeping is simply inadequate for the demands and aspirations of the 21st century. Our management of cost has become much more sophisticated over the last decade, making good use of the technology available.

This guide, and the education and development of schedulers that will follow will help the industry make similar progress in the management of time.

But will the guide become an industry standard for time management, and training and performance for schedulers? Before this happens, we need a change in culture, to aspire to a place where our time management is as sophisticated as our cost management. The perennial question is: “Is it up to the construction companies, or the clients?” And the perennial answer is: “A bit of both.” Clients need to specify this, but contractors need to champion it.

*(Article taken from CIOB’s Construction Manager Magazine January 2011 issue. Guide to Good Practice in the Management of Time in Complex Projects is published by Wiley Blackwell and CIOB and is available at [www.constructionbooksdirect.com](http://www.constructionbooksdirect.com)).*

## Forthcoming.....

### CIOB – NUS International Construction Conference on 13 October 2011

The CIOB-NUS International Construction Conference will be held on 13 October 2011 at the Goodwood Park Hotel. More details on the conference can be found on our website <http://www.ciob.org.sg/events>

We look forward to seeing you there.

## Your Contributions

The Institute welcomes suggestions and contributions to our newsletter from all members.

Please forward articles and suggestions by e-mail to [akathirayson@ciob.org.sg](mailto:akathirayson@ciob.org.sg)

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