

Procurement: Is going to tender your only option?

POOLING KNOW-HOW KEEPS ACRA MEMBERS' SKILLS WELL HONED

“Going to tender does not necessarily guarantee owners the most successful project outcomes.”

This is a claim strongly argued by many highly regarded specialist contractors today.

Many options

In the wider construction industry, a number of alternatives have been tried with mixed success, including:

- negotiated contracts
- BOOT projects
- partnering
- construction management
- alliances.

But few of these have been tried in the concrete repair industry.

Government authorities and strata managers often hold that, as guardians of others' purses, they must get concrete repair work done for the lowest price. **But the “lowest price” on paper often fails to deliver the best value for money.**

Design-and-construct projects (around for many years) allow the owner to share, or even pass on, the responsibility for achieving the design outcomes.

This method of procurement has now achieved greater acceptance in the concrete repair industry, particularly at the high technology end of the market.

Alliances share

Recently, some public sector projects have been procured by forming an “alliance” where the designer, the owner and the builder work together to develop the project and share the risks as well as the financial rewards.

Can such an approach work in the concrete repair

industry? Is there merit in departing from the well-worn path of going out to tender on every project? Are owners better off negotiating directly with their preferred contractor or should they get as many prices as possible and pick the cheapest?

Seminar enquiry

These questions were raised during a recent ACRA seminar and a broad range of opinions was aired both by the attending consultants and contractors.

The consensus was that only by embracing these alternative methods and using them in appropriate situations will we learn the true value they can add to our industry.

Debate ups skills

ACRA actively draws debate and opinion from the concrete repair marketplace to improve the knowledge and skills of its members.

ACRA also plans to run:

- “practical” on-site seminars such as hydro-demolition demonstrations and technical discussions on when and where to consider types of products and technologies
- discussion forums to gain insight into infrastructure and asset owners' opinions of the concrete repair market.

Others welcome

Watch the ACRA website for upcoming dates and topics: **non-members welcome!**

Better still, join this prestigious association and share a growing knowledge pool contributed to by member consultants, contractors, materials suppliers and asset owners. ■