STEEL INDUSTRY GUIDANCE NOTES

Allocation Of Design Responsibilities in Constructional Steelwork

The British Constructional Steelwork Association (BCSA) together with the Association for Consultancy and Engineering (ACE), the Association of Consultant Architects, the Construction Confederation, the insurance brokers Griffiths and Armour, the Institution of Structural Engineers and the Steel Construction Institute have joined together to publish guidance on the 'Allocation of Design Responsibilities in Constructional Steelwork'. The aim of this publication is to identify the requirements for the production and exchange of accurate, timely and detailed information for projects involving steelwork.

Objectives of the guidance

The objective of the guidance is to achieve accurate and timely information flow. The primary method of doing this was to form a steering group from all areas of the construction industry to ensure wider particiapation and appreciation of the final document. It was also vital that it could be used with other industry's recognised procedures and guidance documents – the new CIC Services Schedules, the RIBA Work Stages and the National Structural Steelwork Specification. It also had to be usable with any method of information exchange: hard copy or web-based, such as the Avanti Standard Method and Procedure.

Finally, it was agreed at the start that the guidance should not be tied to any one procurement approach; it needed to be applicable to all.

The further aims of the project were set out as follows:

- To achieve more efficient and cost effective working procedures.
- To reduce wasteful practices in our manufacturing systems.
- To maintain our competitive position in the market through improving services to our clients
- To minimize health and safety issues at design stage as well as on site (by avoiding 'retro-fix' works at height)
- To avoid late and expensive variations
- To eliminate the 'Cries of Despair' from BCSA member companies!

Audience for the guidance

The guidance is aimed at the small to mid-size building projects: the feeling was that very large projects would not require such guidance but that it might be too complicated for the very smallest project – although the principles will be applicable to all. The guidance is also specifically designed for buildings, not bridges.

The Guidance

The publication is split in to three parts: firstly, the definitions. Not many roles are defined. For example there is no 'main contractor', no 'architect'. Largely, the guidance has followed the modern practice enshrined in the CIC's Services Schedules of defining activities, not roles. This gives greater flexibility as it does not matter, where, for instance, the steelwork engineer is located – the importance is what activities are undertaken.

The second part of the guidance is how to use it – this section gives general advice on completeness of information, a summary of deliverables at each stage etc. No doubt none of it will come as a surprise to anyone with any knowledge or experience of contracting but it is sometimes helpful to have such information systematised.

The third element is the checklists which are explained overleaf.

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Checklists

The heart of the guidance is the checklists, which consist of the Project Directory (basic details of project participants) and checklists for Design Stage 1 and Design Stage 2 (to give some context, in a traditional 'engineer designed' project, Design Stage 1 would roughly equate to pre-contract design and Design Stage 2 with post-contract design).

The checklists list out areas that have activities associated with them: design, fabrication, protective treatment, inspection and testing and erection. There is also a general section and one for project-specific requirement.

Each section is then subdivided into a list of more detailed items for which information is required. For each individual item, there is a box to be filled in showing who is responsible for that particular item and what date it is needed by. Completion of the checklists is the responsibility of the person co-ordinating the design and might well be a process carried out throughout the early part of the project.

Design Stage 2 contains all the items in Design Stage 1 with some additional items. For ease, the guidance shows these in italics.

Once the checklists are fully filled in, there should be a complete record of who needs to do what on the steelwork project and by when.

Benefits

The benefits of using this guidance are expected to be:

- Better outcome for clients
- Fewer late variations
- Swifter problem solving
- Avoidance of interface gaps
- Earlier involvement in the design/construction process
- Easier CDM compliance.

Free download

Copies of the publication 'Allocation of Design Responsibilities in Constructional Steelwork', can be downloaded free of charge from the Articles and Documents area of the BCSA web site www.steelconstruction.org. The checklists may be reproduced provided the source is acknowledged.

Key Points

1. The aim of this publication is to identify the requirements for the production and exchange of accurate, timely and detailed information for projects involving steelwork.
2. The method is based on other industry's recognised procedures and guidance documents – the new CIC Services Schedules, the RIBA Work Stages and the National Structural Steelwork Specification
3. It can be used with any method of information exchange: hard copy or web-based, such as the Avanti Standard Method and Procedure.
4. The guidance defines activities roles rather than roles and this gives greater flexibility as it does not matter, where, for instance, the steelwork engineer is located – the importance is what activities are undertaken.
5. The heart of the guidance is the checklists, which consist of the Project Directory (basic details of project participants) and checklists for Design Stage 1 and Design Stage 2 (to give some context, in a traditional 'engineer designed' project, Design Stage 1 would roughly equate to pre-contract design and Design Stage 2 with post-contract design).

Further sources of Information

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