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Benefits of the NEC ECC form of contract: A New Zealand case study

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Abstract

This paper examines by means of a case study the effectiveness of the project and process method detailed in the NEC Engineering and Construction Contract (ECC), as developed and published by the Institute of Civil Engineers (ICE), and makes recommendations regarding its future use.

The performance of the ECC with that of a conventional form of contract delivered by two separate contractors to the same employer on the same site in similar timeframes in New Zealand provided a unique opportunity for comparison. The objective was to determine if the benefits claimed by the proponents of the NEC ECC were realised, to understand the factors which need to be considered to ensure successful use of this form of contract and to understand if any changes are needed to make the contract more effective in the NZ environment. Qualitative data were gathered by way of a series of semi-structured interviews with the project management teams of the employer and

of semi-structured interviews with the project management teams of the employer and with both contractors, supplemented by secondary quantitative data extracted from project records.

It is concluded that use of ECC does deliver business benefits. Minor changes are recommended for alignment with NZ statutes. It is considered that the findings will be of interest to project managers for larger and complex engineering and construction projects in any country.



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Keywords

Procurement; Forms of contract; NEC Engineering and Construction Contract

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