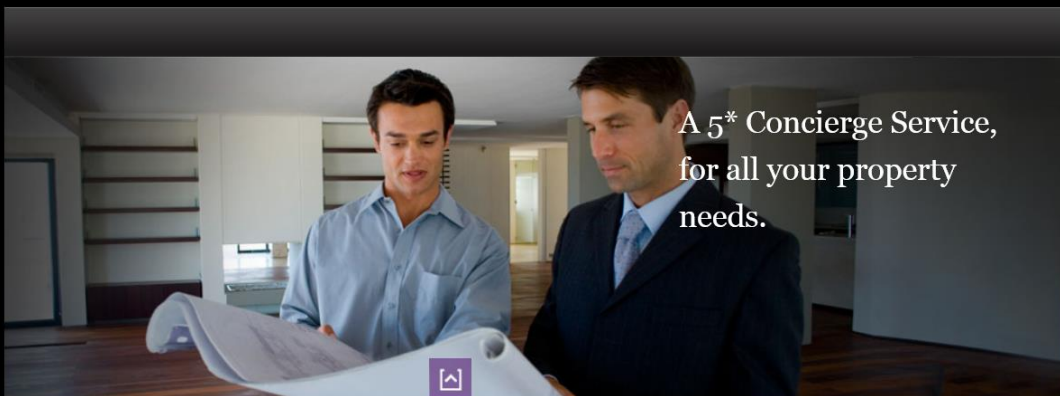




Property Specialists

Sales | Lettings | Design | Build

Project Information Analysis & Classification



A 5* Concierge Service,
for all your property
needs.

As At
28 October 2012

Author
D Winsper

Analysis & Classification of Project Information

Standard Forms of Elemental Cost Analysis for Civil Engineering¹

*"With the increasing globalization of construction, focus on infrastructure renewal and need for standardization to expand the use of new technology, this initiative will accelerate transparency and consistency, and help to improve investment decisions. We should all get behind this and ensure it is adopted."*²

Simon Taylor FRICS, Immediate Past Chair of the Construction Council

Overview

With a more joined up approach to classification and analysis of project information, being critical to success within projects in the Built Environment, through a common approach to categorisations falling from the Commercial, Technical and Managerial project information sub-sets. The Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) and ASTM International, under UNIFORMAT II (E06.81 Building Economics)², presented a proposed universal standard for cost analysis at the COBRA 2012³ symposium, entitled – '*Standard Forms of Elemental Cost Analysis for Civil Engineering*'. This innovative paper attempts to standardise costs of the built elements, rather than the individual material, for example placing a single financial value for a structural wall etc. This paper, if ratified will standardise elemental costs and thus can influence design from a financial perspective, rather than fiscally hampering the project at the design stage.

Thesis

The RICS paper proposes that this new elemental process defines the construction entity by function, rather than component parts and will aid classification for buildings to cost planning, cost management, cost analysis and cost benchmarking. The BCIS (RICS) has proposed a draft sub-set data structure, which will become the industry standard. This paper if agreed will then standardize cost information across clients, consultants and contractors and can be utilized by countries that have no local, let alone international standard. It defines the element as;

'A major physical part of a building that fulfils a specific function or functions, irrespective of its design, specification or construction.'

This approach has been taken up as the framework for structuring performance specifications, through the standardized set of data.

The data is contained within standardized elemental tables, which are contained inside the RICS paper.

Usage

At present this method is not common practice within the industry, but is utilised by the Department Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) of the Ministry of Defence (MOD), within the UK.

Analysis

This paper and proposed standard, if internationally agreed provides approved cost data, to built elements, prior to construction, at the design stage and thus will go some way to mitigate the QS chain and its reliant on cost capturing individual items, via the use of bar codes and tags, which have fundamental flaws (Access / Robustness / Cost) whilst in-situ or being delivered to a construction site / built environment

Conclusion

If this paper is ratified and taken as best practice, it will allow projects to be 'designed to a cost rather than costing a design' as had happened previously. This process will then be to the benefit of Managerial Project Information IS and in addition aid and guide the Design Information IS.

[E Signed]

David M Winsper MSc
MNAEA, MARLA, MInstRE

1118646

Principal
The Winsper Group

david@winspergroup.com
www.winspergroup.com
www.davidwinsper.com

References / Links

1. BCIS – RICS – Standard Forms of Elemental Cost Analysis for Civil Engineering
http://www.bcis.co.uk/downloads/BCIS_Principles_of_Elemental_Classification_FINAL_PROOF.pdf
2. RICS - Elemental Cost Data Structures For Civil Engineering.
<http://www.rics.org/us/knowledge/news-insight/news/elemental-cost-data-structures-for-civil-engineering/>
3. COBRA 2012 – Elemental Cost Analysis.
<http://www.rics.org/us/knowledge/research/conference-papers/cobra-2012-standard-forms-of-elemental-cost-analysis-for-civil-engineering/>