

ConsultA

ACEI Newsletter - 24 September 2020

Information and Advice for ACEI Members

ACEI Work Arrangements

The ACEI office is temporarily closed. Email info@acei.ie with queries or contact sarah.ingle@acei.ie.

Covid-19 Updates

- [ACEI](#)
- [EFCA](#)
- [FIDIC](#)

Online Resources

- [HSE](#)
- [Revenue](#)
- [Institute of Public Health](#)
- [Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection](#)
- [Health & Safety Authority](#)
- [World Health Organisation](#)
- [Centre for Disease Control](#)
- [Health Protection Surveillance Centre](#)
- [Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade](#)

ACEI Awards Presentations 2020 and 2021

Given the continuing restrictions and uncertainties, the ACEI Executive has made the regretful decision to cancel the Awards Dinner postponed from earlier in the year. The project and other Awards presentations planned for that day will, however, go ahead this month, and will be announced in early October. A call for the 2021 Engineering Excellence Awards will be provided in early December.

ACEI 2021 Conference and Awards Dinner

Although the 2020 Conference and Awards Dinner have been cancelled, preparations for next year's events are already in place. Save the dates in your diaries and we look forward to welcoming you in person to:

ACEI Conference 03 March 2021 Chartered Accountants House, D2
ACEI Awards Dinner 26 March 2021 Intercontinental Hotel, D4

ACEI DSC / PSDP Refresher Course

A new, virtual DSC / PSDP Refresher course will be announced soon for late October. Thanks are due to the ACEI Health & Safety Committee for all the work undertaken to date on the course.

ACEI Budget Submission

In anticipation of Budget 2021, ACEI President Conor McCarthy led the development of a pre-budget submission to Government. To address the challenges of the pandemic and to meet the needs of expected population growth, the ACEI submission on Budget 2021, building on the association's July 2020 Stimulus recommendation centred on a few key points:

- The importance of reactivating the economy through **investment in public infrastructure**, particularly in critical areas such as housing, healthcare, education, transport, utilities including water and wastewater, as well as renewable energy infrastructure.
- "Shovel Ready" public infrastructure and **investment projects should be rolled out urgently.**
- **Addressing regional imbalance** across our country remains a serious challenge. Investing in digital and transport infrastructure and in third level education in the regions and along the Atlantic Economic Corridor is essential to support the longer-term development of the regions and promote balanced regional growth.
- The **transition to a low-carbon economy and enabling the development of renewables** is critical to addressing climate change action and adaptation.
- Improving the **health and well-being of all employees in Ireland** has never been as important due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

FIDIC 2020 Board Elections & Annual Report

ACEI is very pleased to learn of the election of two new members to the Board of the International Federation of Consulting Engineers (FIDIC). Congratulations to Catherine Karakatsanis - Association of Consulting Engineering Companies Canada (ACEC-Canada), and James Mwangi - Association of Consulting Engineers Kenya (ACEK) who were recently elected to the FIDIC Board. Congratulations are also due to Anthony Barry (Past-President Consult Australia) for being appointed President Elect at the recent FIDIC 2020 General Assembly (GAM).

2nd Generation Eurocodes & Fire Safety Guidance

The Supplementary Guidance to TGD B (Fire Safety) Volume 2- Dwelling Houses 2017 - Guidance on Fire Resistance of Walls, Intermediate Floors, and Trussed Roofs in dwellings is now available. The purpose of this [supplementary guidance document](#) is to support compliance with the fire resistance provisions as specified in Technical Guidance Document B Volume 2 - Dwelling houses (TGD B - Fire Safety Volume - 2 Dwelling houses 2017).

Engineering Key Performance Metrics

New research from Deltek has determined how architecture and engineering firms worldwide measure performance. The findings and the key metrics used are available for review in a [recent report](#). There are many differences between firms and regions regarding the variety of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) tracked around the world. It is noted in the report that while it is useful to see the kinds of metrics other firms focus on, the most effective KPIs will always be the ones tied closely to the strategic objectives of your practice.

ESB New Connections Online Applications

To make it easier for customers to do business with them, ESB Networks launched [New Connections Online](#) earlier in the year. Currently domestic and small Commercial Customers, less than 100kVA, can also track the progress of their application through to connection and receive regular email status updates. The ESB plans to extend this facility to its larger customers next year.

Recent Good News

- [Declan Alcock](#), Director in Varming Consulting Engineers, was appointed Chair of the Irish Green Building Council ([IGBC](#)) at its recent AGM. The IGBC's aim is to accelerate the sustainable transformation of the built environment, related industry and supply chain using policy and related mechanisms.
- [Dervilla Mitchell](#), Irish Engineer, UCD and TCD graduate and Chair of Arup's UK, India, Middle East and Africa region, was recently awarded the President's Medal at the prestigious Royal Academy of Engineering ([RAEng](#)) awards.
- Seven community projects from around the country are soon to start generating power. This follows a historic decision to support their work under a new, state sponsored, renewable energy support scheme ([RESS](#)).
- In July 2020, the seasonally adjusted production in the construction sector [increased by 0.2%](#) in the eurozone area.

Strategic Advice for Business

A recent article from the [Harvard Business Review](#) outlines the importance of keeping to a consistent strategy during recessionary times. For those firms that use differentiation as a main strategy, they are advised to continue with that method and not move to one that emphasises a low cost focus.

The authors note that: *Unless you are the industry's low-cost leader, there will always be someone who can provide your goods or services at a lower price ... Focus on your strengths. The advantages that made your product or service worth more than what the cost leader's offer still apply. You just need to make that case to your customers.*

Importance of Quality Sleep

Many health and other experts continue to emphasise the importance of sleep to our well-being and immune systems. There have been a number of [Ted Talks](#) presented relating to sleep matters which may be helpful to listen to. These cover a variety of relevant topics including sleep science, reasons why we sleep and its impact and benefits.