

Australian invention provides rapid cure

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AN Australian team is developing what it says is world-first technology to identify and prevent under-performing construction projects from becoming disasters.

The new software tool, Project Diagnostics, was based on critical success factors, including costs, time, safety, quality, environment, stakeholder value and relationships, said project director John Tsoukas.

"There are five basic questions you could ask of any worried client or project manager: Is your project going off the rails? Do you want to know why? Do you want to know what to do about it? Do you want to save the business case? Do you want to avoid bad publicity?

"The value of this approach is that it gives the client, project manager or other parties the ability to quickly reach a sound understanding of the current status of a project - through a series of comparisons with recognised industry norms - and then be in a position to take remedial action if required."

Project Diagnostics assesses whether the critical success factors are on track using a series of key performance indicators. These are easily measured, independent, sensitive, and have broad application across the various project phases, procurement methods, project sizes and levels of complexity. The indicators have been tested using Australian and international case studies in the construction sector.

The technology was developed by a Cooperative Research Centre for Construction Innovation (CRC CI) team led by global engineering firm Arup, and includes Queensland University of Technology, CSIRO, John Holland Constructions and the Queensland Public Works and Main Roads departments.

Project Diagnostics is currently in the final stage of development. This year, further testing and refinement using live construction projects from Australia and overseas will be conducted.

It is expected to be released to the Australian and international markets in the first half of 2006.

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