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BRITE Project series: Construction innovation delivers for all stakeholders

Monday, 19 February 2007

THE BRITE Project has explored the issue of scepticism among contractors and consultants in the construction industry towards the potential benefits of innovation, documenting the findings in a new guide titled *Innovate Now*.

Over the past three years, the BRITE Project of the Cooperative Research Centre for Construction Innovation has conducted a large-scale industry survey and 12 best-practice case studies, with participation from over 400 businesses, 14 government organisations, eight industry associations and four universities.

BRITE Project leader Dr Karen Manley said there appeared to be growing interest in innovation as a means of ensuring ongoing competitive advantage for businesses in the construction industry.

The BRITE research revealed that scepticism about the value of innovation was misplaced. It showed that 93% of all innovators in the construction industry achieve higher business profits as a result of their efforts, while all of them reap improvement to their reputations and are subsequently likely to be more successful in winning projects over time.

The research also found that clients were keen to work with innovative businesses because of the substantial benefits that could be achieved on projects.

According to researchers, the improved prospects for future work provides the incentive for consultants and contractors to search for new ideas.

Innovation benefits achieved on selected construction sites

The BRITE project studied 12 innovative projects in detail.

Four of the documented projects were in Queensland, four in New South Wales, two in South Australia and one each in Victoria and Western Australia.

They included three sporting stadiums, two bridges, two art galleries, two commercial buildings, a motorway, an access track, and one case of contaminated land.

The BRITE Project team found that the size of the project made no difference to the extent of benefits gained.

On the Cattle Creek Bridge project 50% of the cost estimate of \$1 million was saved, while on the National Gallery of Victoria project 5% of the cost estimate of \$65 million was saved.

The BRITE Project team found that the 12 cases of innovation demonstrated savings related to:

- Gas supply;
- Water usage;
- Material supply;
- Material weight;

Innovation benefits achieved on selected construction sites

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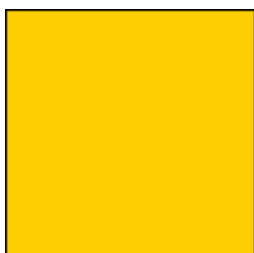
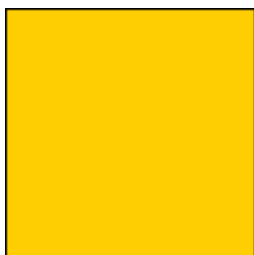
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- Fabrication time;
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- Project duration; and
- Overall project cost.

The *Innovate Now* guide and contributing case studies can be found at www.brite.crcci.info

The guide provides detailed steps for businesses wanting to improve their innovation performance, along with checklists to help businesses develop an innovation program.

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