

MARCH 2007

Area Vice Presidents to Host Statewide Area Meetings

Mark your calendars for an ACEC/Alabama meeting coming to your area of the State. The purpose of the meeting is to communicate and update you on the state and national issues we are addressing: Composition of Board of Licensure; Statewide Unified Building Code; Modifications of Alabama Building Commission Fee Schedule; ACEC & Alabama Engineers PAC Update; Leadership Development Series & Future programming. The meetings are open to all Member and Prospective Member Firms. Hosted by ACEC/AL Area Vice Presidents, the meetings will also feature a one-hour Professional Development Hour (PDH) opportunity presented by our Associate Member, **Cappell, Howard, PC**, a law firm in Montgomery that will present **A/E Professional Liability Measures**. Please encourage and invite your non-member colleagues to join you. ACEC is the only national organization devoted exclusively to the business and advocacy interests of engineering companies. The financial and time commitment your firm provides to the Council benefits the entire engineering profession in Alabama! We need your help to continue to our membership development. We hope to accomplish the regional meetings by our next Executive Committee meeting, scheduled for April 13th. A registration form can be obtained at our website at: www.aceca.org - we'll see you there!

AREA MEETINGS

Huntsville Area Meeting - March 12

AmSouth Building Conference Room (Harry Wilson, VP ACEC)
200 Clinton Ave - 10:00 am - Noon (lunch included)

Montgomery Area Meeting - March 14

LE Speaks & Assoc Conference Room (Steven Speaks, VP ACEC) - 525 Herron Street - 10:00 - Noon (no lunch)

Mobile Area Meeting - March 19

Thompson Engineering (Duane Smith, VP ACEC) - 2970 Cottage Hill Rd. - 11:30 - 1:30 (lunch included)

Dothan Area Meeting - March 28

Polyengineering (Lawrence McCallister, VP ACEC)
11:30 - 1:30 (lunch included)

Tuscaloosa Area Meeting - March 29

TTL Conference Room (Forest Wilson, President) -
11:30 - 1:00 (lunch included)

Piedmont Area Meeting - March 30

Gadsden Country Club (John Bowlin, VP ACEC) -
11:00 - 1:00 (lunch included)

Birmingham Area Meeting - April 9

Gresham Smith & Partners (Chad Bowman & Anthony Kamburis, VPs ACEC) - 11:30 - 1:30 (lunch included)

ACEC Launches Nationwide QBS Study Seeking Member Project Nominations

ACEC has launched a QBS Study being conducted in conjunction with the University of Colorado and the Georgia Institute of Technology. This study is being conducted to investigate the impact of the QBS selection process on overall project design, quality, cost, and delivery. Qualifications-Based Selection (QBS) has been the procurement method of choice for the better part of the last half century. Public owners understood that the private design sector was an essential partner for meeting the design objectives for the public sector. However, a distinction should be understood that QBS is a way of procuring (i.e., purchasing) rather than an overall acquisition scheme (e.g. project delivery). **(Continued on page 2)**

Calling Nominees ACEC/AL Officer Positions Open

Without question, a focus on governance and leadership is the keystone for any organization. The need for a thoughtful, well-guided nominating process for effective leadership is essential for the future of the Council. With this in mind, we encourage our members to consider nominees for the following officer vacancies to be filled this summer:

President Elect (1 year term)
Tuscaloosa Area Vice President (2 year term)
Dothan Area Vice President (2 year term)
Birmingham Area Vice President (2 year term)

In accordance with Article VII (C) of our bylaws, nominations shall be received in written form to Mr. Bill Carwile, Immediate Past President and Chairman of the ACEC/Alabama Nominating Committee. **You may submit your nomination in writing to the ACEC office via fax, email or mail, no later than Friday, March 30, 2007.**

The Immediate Past President will contact the slate of nominees to seek their willingness to serve the Council. The Nominating Committee of Past Presidents will convene by mid-April to nominate the slate of officer candidates. A ballot listing the nominees and a space for a "write-in" candidate will be sent to the general membership for a final vote (one vote per firm). Election results will be announced in the May issue of the *Eye On Engineering Newsletter*. Newly elected officers will serve a two-year term beginning with the officer installation ceremony to be held at the ACEC/AL & ACEC/MS Joint Annual Convention, June 28-July 1, 2007, at Sandestin Golf & Beach Resort in Destin, Florida.

Please consider committing your time and expertise to serve the Council. For more information, the role of the ACEC/Alabama Executive Committee is defined in our bylaws and available on our new website at www.aceca.org/About.htm. Please direct your questions to our Executive Director, Renée Casillas at (334) 264-1500.

10th Annual JECA Legislative Reception & Issues Briefing Slated in Montgomery

JECA will host its **10th Annual Legislative Reception** on Wednesday, April 24, 2007. An issues briefing will precede the Legislative Reception in the East Room of the RSA Plaza Terrace (6th Floor) at 4:00 pm. The reception will follow the West Room of the RSA Plaza Terrace, located at the intersection of Washington & Ripley Streets in Montgomery. Complimentary parking will be available in the parking facility located adjacent to the building on Adams & Ripley Avenues. This is an excellent opportunity to welcome back newly elected and returning state legislators into the 2007 Regular Legislative Session, and allows constituents an opportunity to advocate issues important to the engineering profession. Since most elected officials enjoy hearing from their constituents, we ask that you contact your local legislator and invite them to join you at the reception. A contact list for State Legislators is located on our website at: www.aceca.org/Advocacy.htm. If you're interested in becoming a sponsor, please contact our office as soon as possible. Payment must be received by **Friday, April 20th**. All sponsors will be recognized in the printed materials. We encourage your participation to further advocate for the Engineering Profession in Alabama.

QBS Study (continued)

QBS can be used for all project delivery methods. For example, government agencies are required to create acquisition plans in which they identify the acquisition strategy, that is, what is the system of acquiring the goods or services. Major project delivery systems include Design-Bid-Build, Design-Build, and CM At Risk. Major procurement strategies to implement these delivery systems include Qualifications-Based Selection, Best-Value Source Selection (Technical Response plus Price), Low Bid, and Sole Source. The goal of this study is to analyze how QBS, given owner and project needs, performs as a procurement method and as a reinforcement of public policy.

Currently, changes in Federal and state laws now provide contracting officers with a spectrum of procurement choices through which the overall acquisition scheme can be implemented. Specifically, the need to utilize **QBS-based selection for the procurement of design services** within an overall acquisition and delivery plan is no longer viewed as a strict requirement by some contracting officers. Although this spectrum can be justified from the perspective of needing different tools in different situations, the change in acquisition strategies is challenging the application of QBS.

The challenge to QBS is emerging from several fronts. First, the introduction of prototype or standardized designs in areas such as school and Federal facility design is leading to questions of why qualifications are required to implement prototype designs. Second, the move to greater standardization in the horizontal engineering sector is motivating some public agencies to question the need for a qualification process. Third, the prevalence of information technologies has made the transfer of designs between firms appear to be a simple “click-and-copy” process. Finally, a move to outsourcing engineering services is providing the opportunity for procurement officers to view the market as an opportunity to induce competition and let market forces act on design fees.

The question for public agencies, funding bodies, and the engineering industry is which direction is going to be followed for QBS. Are engineering organizations unique entities that each provides a set of qualifications that make them qualified to provide the quality and life-cycle cost savings required for today’s complex designs. Or, are the changes in technology and standardization changing the engineering market to one of commoditization. Answering this question is the motivation and central focus of this research effort.

Project Scope

To answer the central research question, a set of key objectives have been put in place that emphasize the completion of a data-focused study to establish the project benefits of QBS. The **key objectives** for this study are as follows:

1) Provide a statistical analysis of QBS - Except for two limited studies, QBS procurement has been analyzed from a qualitative perspective. This perspective is not sufficient to defend a procurement practice. Therefore, the first objective of this study is to provide a statistical-based analysis of QBS that provides a quantitative analysis of this method.

2) Provide a QBS case perspective - As described below, QBS affects both policy and procedure within an organization. The success of this policy needs to be examined from both an owner and designer perspective to obtain data on how the process works and where the critical barriers or opportunities exist as well as how specific projects were executed within this context to achieve specific financial goals.

3) Provide a national base document - The arguments for and against QBS receive significant national attention from the design and contracting communities. This research will provide a document that addresses national data and provides a national basis for discussing QBS.

4) To address these principal objectives, a broad sample frame perspective is required to analyze the impact of QBS in both the horizontal and vertical engineering markets. Specifically, the goal of determining the near-term and long-term impact of QBS on the project procurement process requires the research team to study data from **several perspectives** as follows:

Horizontal Versus Vertical Markets.
Owner Versus Designer Perspectives
Project Success Spectrum
Geographic Diversity

The perspectives listed above will provide the sample frame required to answer **key research questions** including the following:

- What is the impact of QBS on short-term and long-term project costs?
- Does a connection exist between the quality of the design output and the use of QBS?
- Does project type have an impact on the success of QBS?
- What role does owner policy and processes have in QBS success?
- What is the relationship between risk and design costs and QBS?
- What is the relationship between project complexity and QBS?

Nomination Process

The QBS study requires a large number of projects to be nominated for inclusion in the statistical component of the research effort. As the Research Overview outlines, the study requires projects that represent both geographic and sector diversity as well as diversity in project outcomes. The form below should be used to nominate a project for use in the study. The intent of the research team is to take a random sample of projects nominated for the study. The success of the QBS study is dependent on receiving a large number of project nominations, so we sincerely request your participation.

Once a project is nominated, you will be contacted to complete a Web-based survey. Smaller group of projects will also be selected to complete a follow-up case study through a telephone interview. Completing the survey should not take more than 30 minutes.

Contact Information

Visit the QBS Study website at www.qbsstudy.com which will provide participants with both the opportunity to nominate potential projects for the study, answer the survey questions related to the study, and read additional material related to the study. We welcome any questions related to this important investigation. Please feel free to contact the Research Team :

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Post It On Your Calendar – What’s Happening

Date	Event	Location	City/State
March 8-9, 2007	LDS Class VI - Session IV	Marriott Grand National	Opelika, AL
April 18, 2007	Transportation Means Business	Embassy Suites Hotel	Montgomery, AL
April 24, 2007	Design Professionals & Contracting Industry Lobby Day	RSA Plaza Terrace	Montgomery, AL
May 6-9, 2007	ACEC Annual Meeting	Washington Grand Hyatt	Washington, DC
June 28-July 1, 2007	ACEC AL & MS Joint Annual Convention & LDS Alum Meeting	Sandestin Beach Resort	Destin, FL
August 5-8, 2007	SASHTO 2007	Embassy Suites Hotel	Huntsville, AL
September 6, 2007	ACEC 2nd Annual Golf Classic	Ross Bridge Resort	Hoover, AL
September 24-30, 2007	ACEC Fall Conference	Grand Wailea Resort	Maui, HI