

Proceedings of the CIB W070 International Conference in Facilities Management



Healthy and Creative Facilities

Heriot Watt University, Edinburgh, 2008



CIB Number 315



International Council for Research and Innovation in Building and Construction

Preface

CIB W70 International Conference in Facilities Management

Heriot Watt University, Edinburgh 16th - 18th June 2008

Achieving Healthy and Creative Facilities

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CIB Working Commission W70

Facilities Management and Maintenance



As Joint Co-ordinator of Working Commission CIB W070, it gives me great pleasure to welcome you, on behalf of Heriot-Watt University, the host of this international conference in Facilities Management in the beautiful city of Edinburgh. This venue is particularly significant to me: some that know me are aware that my involvement with CIBW70 started in the early 1980s. I was fortunate to have organised the 1983 and 1988 CIBW70 symposia which were also hosted by Heriot-Watt. After a lapse of twenty years, Edward Finch has made it happen for Heriot-Watt yet again. It has been just over a decade since I left Heriot-Watt University; this visit certainly brings back a lot of fond memories of my 22 years stay in Edinburgh.

My involvement in CIBW70 has also led me to start a new chapter in my academic career, in research and teaching in Facilities Management and Asset Maintenance and led to post-graduate development in three universities in three continents – Edinburgh, Brisbane and Hong Kong. The last 20 years has seen a sea change in the growth of facilities management as a recognised discipline and the increasingly strategic role of building facilities in achieving corporate objectives. In this respect, the conference theme - *Achieving Healthy and Creative Facilities* – is particularly appropriate in its focus on issues relating to healthy and creative environments for occupiers, who are exposed a variety in work settings, supported by an array of embedded and enabling technologies in the buildings they work in.

Facilities management is facing many more challenges today. Facilities managers is no longer just concerned with the provision of functional environments. External demands in the form of; a call to protect our fragile planet earth; measures to prevent the spread of communicable diseases; and potential threats from terrorism, all have an impact on the design, construction and use of building facilities. Indeed, the scope and responsibilities for facilities managers has widened considerably to warrant serious revision of the required competencies required to perform their role effectively.

Providing support to business achievements in terms of appropriate facilities and support services is core to facilities management, whether in-house or externally sourced. The main differentiator of good facilities management is not just wider technical competences but also procurement skills and the ability to manage resources (people, property and technology), grounded on a thorough understanding of supporting business needs within a level of affordability.

Over the last two decades of my involvement with CIBW70 I have seen shifts in focus from technical considerations to management issues in relation to the physical assets (i.e. buildings) in the 1970-80s, to integration of functional processes in the 1990s. In the 21st century, the emphasis seems to be polarised towards a realisation that business outcomes have a better chance of being fulfilled when limited resources are appropriately combined to deliver set targets. In facilities management and maintenance, our efforts are often seen by the uninitiated as being reactive and defy effective management. Yet, in my opinion, it is the very diversity of facilities management that lends itself to innovative initiatives.

The broadening acceptance of facilities management as a profession is already evident in at least five continents. The skills set in facilities management potentially covers areas in strategic facilities planning; space planning and workplace strategies; asset management and maintenance; and facilities support service procurement and management. The creative potential in FM does not lie in looking at each of these areas in isolation. FM innovations must arise from new enabling processes, enhanced capabilities and new relationships between the various stakeholders. Clearly, there will be a period of adjustments in culture and training before real benefits can be realised. But there is no denying that we are in a period of development that offers opportunities for FM to be embedded as part of an overall business planning process. For multi-national businesses, the facilities dimensions are not longer national in context; very often, corporate facilities issues are dealt with on a regional or even global scale.

Working Commission W70 has, and will continue to be, a unique forum for voicing or even debating changes in education and training, research and practice, new relationships between stakeholders. FM is in the midst of transformations in the procurement of building and infrastructure and their associated services of ongoing management and maintenance. The continuing challenge of W70 is to remain relevant against this sea change brought about by convergence in digital and communication technologies and social transformation in lifestyles and work in the future.

The scope of this conference's themes embrace research outcomes ranging from enabling creative and innovative environments to issues relating to achieving healthy environment, culture and heritage, sustainable housing, service delivery and asset management and maintenance. I am confident that you will find something of relevance to your personal interests during the next three days and the opportunities to network worthwhile.

Finally, I would like to mention a special thank you to my Joint-Coordinator, Dr Edward Finch and his team for their splendid efforts in making the 14th CIBW70 Symposium a reality in Edinburgh, yet again.

March 2008
Hong Kong

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It was gratifying to be involved in the preparations of the CIB W70 conference proceedings for 2008. Seeing the breadth and depth of facilities management research evident in the enclosed papers confirms that CIB W70 is very much 'alive and kicking'. This is refreshing to see, given the trends in university assessment exercises around the world. The landscape of research has changed unrecognisably since the early days of CIB W70 of which Danny Then speaks in the first preface. It seems that conference papers are increasingly discredited as being inferior to academic journal papers. However, the evidence seems to suggest otherwise. These proceedings include work by many of the top academics in the facilities management field, many of whom routinely publish in academic journals as well. They evidently recognise that CIB is a unique network organisation that provides the flexibility and freedom of exchange that is so often lacking in other spheres of academic life. Working Group CIB W70 embraces this thinking.

Authors in these proceedings include many regular contributors to CIB W70 over the last one, two or even three decades. However, there is also a significant contribution from 'related' fields that are so important in informing the facilities management debate. Environment-behaviour, heritage and sustainability typify the areas of research that are consistently neglected in the facilities management arena. Nevertheless, it is these areas that provide the source of new ways of thinking about the facilities we inherit and experience.

Of course we should not forget the new researchers, who have made a major contribution to these proceedings. For many of them, CIB W70 will be an unfamiliar fraternity. But for some it may be the beginning of a longstanding membership to

which they return again and again. It is in just this same way that my early engagement with CIB W70 began in 1988 with the presentation of my first academic paper, coincidentally also at Heriot Watt University. I recall that even then, Danny Shiem Shen Then was busily supporting the conference. Little did I know that, almost imperceptibly, my involvement with CIB W70 took hold. Now, I can look back at friendships spanning twenty years and have had the opportunity to see the evolution of my colleagues' work, punctuated by the biannual conferences.

The activities of CIB W70 are much more than the conference proceedings of a biennial conference. These simply mark milestones or punctuations in an ongoing process. Dialogue between members is ongoing, with the exchange of ideas, development of network links and the formulation of research projects.

In an increasingly aggressive academic environment I have every confidence that CIB W70, like the other working parties of CIB, will continue to provide an oasis of thought and reflection. Of equal importance, I hope that it will continue to attract the attention of the FM industry worldwide, which itself needs to take stock of where it has come from and where it is going to.

March 2008, Edinburgh

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