

BUILDING AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE

PROCUREMENT GUIDELINES FOR MAJOR CAPITAL BUILDING PROJECTS

Introduction

These guidelines have been prepared to assist congregations in making sound long term decisions in the project management of major capital building projects. These guidelines cover the procurement of external expertise to provide congregations with the necessary information to make wise decisions about the aim of the project, the options for achieving that aim, the scope of the project, the design of project from concept stage to final design stage, the preparation of tendering documentation and the tender process and then the management of the construction of the project.

Too often, congregations who, in an effort to cut costs, have engaged draughtspersons or similar to prepare plans and specifications for their project. Whilst this may be reasonable for lower cost “run of the mill” projects, it runs the risk of not considering all the necessary matters or options available for larger projects, resulting in poor decisions that fail to deliver best value for money for the project.

Applicability of these Guidelines

These guidelines are not mandatory but are considered good practice for all major capital building projects especially those whose estimated cost is greater than \$300,000. This is an arbitrary figure and therefore the decision to use these guidelines should not be based on cost alone and should consider the degree of complexity in delivering the project, which may include:

- What is the estimated time and cost of the project? The higher the cost and time required to complete the project, the more complex the project is e.g. simple projects are one whose duration is less than 3 months.
- Are there people in the congregation who have previous experience with projects of a similar nature, and if so, is their experience relevant to the project in today’s construction environment?
- Are there specific constraints on the project that need to be considered e.g. proximity to other buildings on the property or adjacent to the property, roads, public areas?
- That there may be environmental factors that add complexity to the project e.g. poor foundations, contaminated soils, presence of asbestos?
- That there may be regulatory matters that make the project more complex e.g. zoning, heritage overlays and listings, flooding and inundation overlays, compliance with access and mobility standards?
- Is there more than one stakeholder involved in the project e.g. joint project between developer and the church?

Should congregations be considering completing a capital works project, particularly where the anticipated building costs are over \$300,000, then we strongly recommend engaging a registered Victorian architect with previous experience in church and / or institutional architecture. This may be the church architect or another suitably qualified architect.

Where there is a degree of complexity in the project, regardless of the cost, then it is strongly recommended that the Board of Management engage the services of a registered architect to manage the design, tendering and management of the contractor appointed to construct the works.

Engaging an Architect

There are two options available for a congregation wishing to engage an architect to design and manage their project as follows:

1. Engage the church architect
2. Engage another appropriately experienced and registered architect

It is important when engaging an architect to specify clearly what your expectations are and what parts of the project you want delivered.

An architect is able to provide the following services:

- Concept design – understanding your needs and helping you prepare a brief that is in line with your budget
- Design development – translating your vision into designs that are cost effective and add value to your project. This will include the engagement of other professionals necessary to complete this task, e.g. structural engineers, quantity surveyors, geotechnical engineers
- Town planning applications – assist in the preparation and submission of applications to local councils for approval
- Contract documentation - preparation of plans, specifications, reports and the integration of sub consultant information for obtaining building approvals, for tendering and for construction. Note: the quality of documentation will likely be the single largest determinant of the quality of finish of the project as well as significantly influencing the extent of cost variations incurred during construction.
- Contractor selection – helping in the selection of appropriate tenders, setting intended contractual conditions, assessing the tenders and the selection of a suitable builder to carry out the works
- Contract administration – administer the building contract on the congregation's behalf including assessing the builder's quality of work, payment of claims and compliance to the plans and specifications for the project

Other Specialists

Cost Management - Quantity Surveyors

As cost management is a crucial part of successful project procurement, on all major capital works projects we recommend engaging a certified Quantity Surveyor under the AIQS.

If an architect is engaged to design and manage the project, then the briefing and appointment of a qualified quantity surveyor is usually managed by the architect.

Tendering

In general it is recommended that congregations arrange documentation that can be tendered out to 3 or 4 builders to ensure that competitive prices are obtained and that this is done with thorough comprehensive documentation to improve the quality of construction and ensure that when assessing tenders you are comparing “apples with apples.” There can be good reasons for not following this model, however it is strongly recommended that congregations competitively tender works in most instances.