

Lessons learned from one of New Zealand's most challenging civil engineering projects: rebuilding the earthquake damaged pipes, roads, bridges and retaining walls in the city of Christchurch 2011 - 2016.

DG006 Technical Forums Guideline

Story: Technical Groups and Technical Newsletters

Theme: Design

A design guideline which defined the role of the technical forums within SCIRT.

This document has been provided as an example of a tool that might be useful for other organisations undertaking complex disaster recovery or infrastructure rebuild programmes.

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Number : 006
Design Group: GEN
Revision : 1
Original: 14/06/2012

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Wastewater | <input type="checkbox"/> Stormwater | <input type="checkbox"/> Geotechnical |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Structures | <input type="checkbox"/> Rooding | <input type="checkbox"/> Water Reticulation |

Subject: Technical Forums

Original: Design Management

Approved: Stephen Wright

Updated by : Paula Lock

Keywords
Technical forums, innovation

1. Purpose of guideline

To define the role of the Technical Forums.

2. Background

The Technical Forums have been established to utilise the shared knowledge of the wider SCIRT design team to (but not limited to):

- Generate and investigate innovations
- Prepare standard details
- Resolve technical issues
- Share lessons learned with the wider Design Team

A Chair has been assigned to each Technical Forum, and one of their key responsibilities is to drive progress within agreed timeframes.

3. Recommendation

- a. The main function of the Technical Forum is to discuss and resolve matters that are SCIRT-wide; project-specific matters should be resolved by the Technical Advisor, and referred to the Forum if the matter impacts outside of a project and cannot be readily concluded.
- b. Technical Forums are to be considered as output-based; a solution must be found, and communicated effectively to the wider team.
- c. Attendees must make a contribution – anyone considered just there to “watch” should be replaced. ‘Guest’ attendees can be included at a meeting if discussing or presenting on a specific topic, but should be asked to leave once the topic is concluded.

- d. Technical Forum Chair is to prepare and circulate an agenda which clearly defines what is to be discussed and addressed; this allows preparation to be carried out in advance of the meeting.
- e. Items are included on the agenda through two mechanisms:
 - Items submitted through the Innovation Register are automatically notified to the Forum Chair through Project Centre. The innovation register is kept updated with progress on resolving the item;
 - Items can be included on the agenda through submission by email to the Chair.
- f. If an agenda item is not discussed at a meeting, then this is to be noted on the minutes to allow it to be included at the next meeting and not forgotten.
- g. Decisions are to be made to an agreed deadline. Matters are not to be left for discussion meeting after meeting. It is better to have a conclusion that is revised later, than hold up a project / process waiting for a solution.
- h. No topic or innovation is to be discussed for longer than a set time limit (depends on topic, assigned on agenda). If necessary, smaller Task Groups are to be identified to solve the issue outside of the forum, within an agreed timeframe.
- i. Once the Task Group has been identified, these personnel are responsible for providing a resolution on behalf of all members of the Technical Forum.
- j. One forum member is given the responsibility to ensure the outcome is communicated to the wider Design Team. The most suitable method of communication shall be agreed as the matter is concluded, i.e. Scope & Standards Paper, presentation at Designer's Meeting, information in Project Centre Library, change to Report/Specification Template, etc.
- k. Minutes of any meeting are to be posted on Project Centre for all Designers to access.