



A cracking good read

With all the discussions recently about bundling, aggregating, value for money and whole of life maintenance, it was timely that Jordan Kelly sent her 350-page book, *Cracking the VFM Code*, to *Contractor* magazine for review. It's a complex issue for the initiated; for the novice I quickly realised it was also a minefield, and promptly sent it on to MALCOLM ABERNETHY, executive officer at New Zealand Contractors' Federation. Here's his report.

CRACKING THE VFM CODE: How to Identify & Deliver Genuine Value for Money in Collaborative Contracting

AUTHOR: Jordan Kelly (Bid Strategist, Coach & Author)

PUBLISHER: Big Fig Publishing Limited under the imprint of Intelligentsia Press

I was asked by Kevin to have a look at this book and review it for *Contractor* Magazine. I initially thought that this was another task to add to the considerable time being spent on NZTA Maintenance & Operations Task Force work, the Construction Safety Council and many other activities and projects. I also thought 'do I have enough in depth knowledge on the Value for Money subject?' Apparently yes. So as a somewhat reluctant reviewer I read further and further into the book to find I was becoming more and more enthralled with the subject and its presentation.

Jordan Kelly has a way of writing on what could be a technically complex subject in a style that carries the reader along. Kelly presents the interviewees well with great introductions and conclusions. Injecting where appropriate her views on the subject.

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Initially I felt the book was very Australian focused however that is not the case and the work Kelly has put into interviewing practitioners in the field of collaborative forms of contract on both sides of the Tasman make this a truly Australasian book. Quotes are provided by many of NZ's infrastructure industry leaders

Value for Money (VfM) is a many layered concept that means different things to different people and so the book looks at the many forms of contract and collaboration during both the procurement, construction and maintenance phases of an asset that are considered to provide VfM.

As an example Kelly quotes liberally from Keith Brownjohn, specialist consultant in advanced Government procurement processes. Brownjohn makes enlightening comments on many aspects of procurement from Early Contractor Involvement (ECI), Early Tenderer Involvement (ETI), Preferred Tenderer, Managing

Contractor, NEC suite of contracts, Alliances to Performance Incentivised Cost Reimbursable Contracts.

On the NEC suite of contracts, Brownjohn says - "There is a move for the use of the NEC contract form in Australia (and New Zealand). But Australia (and New Zealand) doesn't have a lot of the issues that face the UK infrastructure construction sector so, to me there doesn't seem any real need for it." I totally agree and have added the reference to NZ in brackets!

There are many others that have been quoted in their entirety from the interviews conducted and this approach provides a very complete picture.

With the disasters that have occurred in this area of the globe Kelly looks in detail at the Disaster Rebuilds and Alliancing: Optimising VfM in extreme & unbudgeted for Circumstances in chapter 12. Kelly represents the structure of the alliance, its objectives and controls to ensure VfM is achieved during the rebuild.

A word from the author sums this book up for me!

'...so full of truth, value and inspiration that the reader wants to carry it in his briefcase, keep it on his nightstand, give it a permanent home on his desk.

I have researched and written this book with the deepest desire that, to those in the growing "collaborative" movement, it be such a book.' -Jordan Kelly

I believe Jordan Kelly has achieved this goal as I certainly will be keeping this book nearby for inspiration and knowledge. The book contains a fantastic selection of side note quotes from within the text or well-known people. I found this distracting at first however this layout provided wide margins where I scribbled my comments when it is very rare for me scribble in a book.

This is a book I strongly recommend people to read if they are interested in knowing more about collaboration within the infrastructure construction and maintenance industry. 📌

Kelly's second book on this topic is *Cracking the VfM Code in Collaborative Contract Bidding: Value for Money... Understanding It & Articulating Your Ability To Deliver It*, which has been written with specific application to public infrastructure collaborative contracting bids. 165pp, AU \$195.00 incl p&p. The books (with package discounts) can be purchased from her website www.bidstrategist.com.