

PQSC NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2020 EDITION





PQSC Newsletter

June 2020

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► Chairperson Message



Dear All,

It gives me an immense pleasure to address to you this message as the Chairperson of the Professional Quantity Surveyors' Council (PQSC) today. I took office in September 2018 and the term of my mandate as Chairperson is nearing completion. It has been a very challenging and enriching experience.

Brief history of PQSC

As the Regulating Body of the Quantity Surveying Profession, PQSC had its first elected council in April 2014. This present PQSC is the third one elected in September 2018. To date we are nearing 100 Professional Quantity Surveyors registered with the PQSC who are employed in different sectors namely Public, Insurance, Banking, Airport, Construction, Dispute Resolution and others.

There was a time when Quantity Surveyors used to be referred to as "the rare bird of the Construction Industry" but with time we are now referred to as "the preferred bird of the Construction Industry" as we are the ones ensuring that value for money is obtained on construction projects. Some even call us the economists in the construction industry.

The objectives of the PQSC

- Register Professional Quantity Surveyors and publish an annual list thereof.
This has been made possible thanks to the Board of Registration of the PQSC chaired by Mr V Goburdhun and his pool of Assessors who have been doing a commendable job by ensuring that a high standard is maintained
- Ensure that a firm of Quantity Surveyors (local or foreign) is in compliance with the PQSC Act promulgated in September 2013.
- Exercise and maintain discipline in the Profession.
- Facilitate professional knowledge and skills of Quantity Surveyors and Continuous Professional Development.
- Address the anomalies facing the Profession with the concerned Authorities and also look into necessary amendments to PQSC Act where deemed to be necessary.



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Extra miles by PQSC

- A launching ceremony for our new website which is more user friendly and very informative was held at Caudan in December 2019. This website provides school leavers, graduate applicants for Enrolment and Registration as well as general public with relevant information about the Profession.
- In view of making the public at large aware about **"Who can call oneself a Quantity Surveyor"**, a Press Conference was organized in February 2020 whereby several sections of media were invited and very good coverage was received. This press conference gave excellent outcome as general public and firms became more aware of "Who can be called a Quantity Surveyor and the range of duties he/she does".

Words of thanks

I seize this opportunity to thank members of my team comprising the Registrar Mr N K Padaruth, The Vice Chairperson Mr V Pratap, Members: Mr V Seetaram, Mrs J Meenowa, Mr A Bauhal, Mr V Sadeo, Mr S Ramsoondar, Mr D Dabee, Mr Ramtohul, Mr A Putchay for their dedication, support and precious time given in favour of the Quantity Surveying Profession.

I wish to extend my thanks to my predecessor Mr S Ragoo and his team for putting PQSC into existence from scratch, also thanks to Mr V Goburdhun and his team of Members of Registration Board comprising Mr Z.A Chundoo, Mr K Chuttur and the pool of Assessors for the commendable job carried out.

Conclusion

As the saying goes "there is always room for improvement", I welcome any concern or suggestions to be discussed further.

Covid 19 pandemic has given a very bad blow to the Construction Industry and as Quantity Surveyors, we need to prepare for many new challenges in terms of cost and contract claims management involving Force Majeure, time and cost relief etc. We will have also to adapt to a new normal.

Keep safe and all the best.

Satyen Deepchand (Chairperson)



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➤ Regulating the Quantity Surveying Profession



The profession of Engineers became regulated prior to the Independence of Mauritius (the Registered Professional Engineers Council Act being enacted in 1965) and the profession of Architect became regulated in 1988. As for the Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB) Act, it was passed in 2008.

The setting up of a regulatory body for the QS profession has been quite a difficult task and necessitated numerous brainstorming sessions and consultations with the then Ministry of Public Infrastructure LT, NDU & Shipping, the State Law Office and all relevant stakeholders over the years. The Professional Quantity Surveyors' Council (PQSC) Act was finally voted in Parliament on 7th May 2013 and proclaimed on 16th September of the same year.

The objective of the PQSC Act was to provide for the establishment of a Professional Quantity Surveyors' Council. A legislative framework had been rendered necessary by a number of factors, including a large increase in the number of Quantity Surveyors and the growth in the construction industry.

As at to-day (15th June 2020), there are 94 Registered Professional Quantity Surveyors authorized to practise in Mauritius, in accordance with the PQSC Act. The Profession of Quantity Surveying is now well regulated and the PQSC is playing an active role in ensuring that the parameters set in the Act are being respected.

Mr N.K Padaruth (Registrar)

➤ The National schedule of rates (NSOR) revamping



As PQSs and other construction professionals should be aware, there is an official construction costs publication called the National Schedule of Rates (NSOR).

It was published by CIDB in 2012 for the purpose of giving indicative rates for building, civil engineering and M & E works. Its primary objective was to be used in project cost estimating.

Whilst its usefulness cannot be denied, its popularity in the industry remains unclear. The perception has been that certain rates were on the high side and based on a particular market sector. More so, it has not been updated since its publication and this has rendered the current version quite obsolete.

The endeavour of the CIDB to revamp and improve on the first version should be a welcoming news to PQSs and others as a means of standardisation of cost data and for transparency in costs. Of course QSs should be aware that no two jobs are the same and their experience and expert judgement would still be required. A bonus news is that it will make a bold attempt to also cater for professional fees and it is hoped that this will ultimately lead to a fees scale as is already existent in many countries. The revamping exercise will also be inherent with a clear and objective mechanism for regular updates as for the CPI Index (limited to residential construction) of Statistics Mauritius. Updating is a very important aspect so as not to render the SOR obsolete after a few years.

The construction industry as a whole should cooperate in this endeavour of the CIDB as this will be a win win publication. The new NSOR should be seen as a stepping stone for other published cost data such as comprehensive cost indices which can be used for instance to compute escalation costs in construction contracts.

Mr V.Seetaram (PQS)



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► Career Opportunities for Quantity Surveyors in the Public Sector



The public sector is a key area for career opportunities for Quantity Surveyors. Quantity Surveyors are already employed in different branches of the public sector. However, further opportunities for Quantity Surveyors still exist in public bodies dealing with infrastructural works such as Parastatal Bodies, Local Authorities (Municipal Councils and District Councils) etc. where Quantity Surveying tasks are involved.

Why is there a need for Quantity Surveyors in these public bodies?

In order to shed light on this matter, it is fundamental to have an understanding of the duties of Quantity Surveyors presently working in the public sector. These Quantity Surveyors are responsible for the financial and contractual management of capital projects and their key Quantity Surveying tasks amongst others consist of estimating, cost advice, cost control and planning, cash flow forecasting, preparation of bid documents, bid evaluations, interim valuations, final account and settlement of claims.

Their education and training have empowered them with the above core skills and competencies making them a key and indispensable member of the construction project team. The Quantity Surveyors also possess various other knowledge and skills, especially in dispute resolutions and legal matters such as arbitration and litigation. They are also well versed in uncovering opportunities to save money that fly away under the radar of most people (for example, choice of materials and design).

Completion of a project as per scheduled time, quality requirements and within the determined budget are all essential, especially in the public sector which deals with a wide range, type, size, complexity of projects and significant expenditure of public funds. In this respect, Quantity Surveyors have shown their capabilities to secure success in projects by their effective financial and contractual management proficiencies and thus, have contributed greatly in the provision of public infrastructure facilities to date. Hence, the services of Quantity Surveyors cannot be overlooked or undermined.

In light of the above, there is a need for Quantity Surveyors to be recruited in public bodies dealing with infrastructural works such as Parastatal Bodies, Local Authorities (Municipal Councils and District Councils) etc. where Quantity Surveying activities are undertaken. As per the provisions of PQSC Act 2013, only a Registered Professional Quantity Surveyor is eligible to carry out Quantity Surveying duties. Accordingly, necessary measures can be taken, for example, advertisement with the proper salary package and other incentives in view to attract and retain Quantity Surveyors in these organisations. Such measures will enforce the practice of Quantity Surveying as per the PQSC Act. Likewise, this will pave the way for career opportunities, increase in demand and visibility of Quantity Surveyors in the public sector and eventually, inspire school leavers to choose Quantity Surveying courses at tertiary education level.

In this current situation of financial crisis, the involvement of Quantity Surveyors in the financial and contractual management of capital projects in the public sector is crucial for securing value for money and fostering economic growth which will benefit the society at large and the country.

Vikash Pratap (Vice Chairperson)

(This article has been written in line with the provisions of PQSC Act 2013)



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► An overview of the PQSC Act relating to the practice of Quantity Surveying



Quantity surveying became a regulated profession in Mauritius with the enactment of the PROFESSIONAL QUANTITY SURVEYORS' COUNCIL ACT (the Act) in 2013. The practice of quantity surveying and the use of titles descriptive of the profession are exclusive to professional quantity surveyors.

Section 19(1) of the Act provides that:

"No person shall practise quantity surveying in Mauritius unless he is a **professional quantity surveyor**."

In order to become registered as a **professional quantity surveyor**, the criteria and conditions set out at section 20 of the Act must be met.

Section 43(1) of the Act makes it a criminal offence for any person not registered or suspended or deregistered as a professional quantity surveyor to –

- ❖ practise quantity surveying;
- ❖ take or use the name, description or title "Professional Quantity Surveyor", "Chartered Quantity Surveyor", "Authorised Quantity Surveyor", "Authorised Foreign Quantity Surveyor", "Consulting Quantity Surveyor", "Qualified Quantity Surveyor" or "Quantity Surveyor", or any abbreviation thereof in whatever language, either alone or in connection with any other title, name, word or letter;
- ❖ hold himself out or conduct himself as a professional quantity surveyor;
- ❖ by any wilful act or omission, cause or induce any person to believe that he is a professional quantity surveyor; or
- ❖ demand, sue for or recover in any Court any charge by way of claim, counter-claim or otherwise in relation to any quantity surveying services he claims to have provided as a professional quantity surveyor; or
- ❖ fraudulently procure or attempt to procure his registration as a professional quantity surveyor.

Any person convicted of an offence under section 43(1) shall be liable to a fine not exceeding 100,000 rupees and to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 2 years.

Kristyven Andy Putchay
State Counsel
Attorney-General's Office

Disclaimer: This Article is not legal advice tendered by the author or by the Attorney-General's Office and should not be considered as such nor relied upon by any person.



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► EVENTS

► The Launching of the New PQSC Website

The new Website of the PQSC was launched during the end of year cocktail held at Port Louis Waterfront on the 9th of December 2019. The guest of honnor Mr S.K Nuckcheddy, new Member of the Parliament and Professional Quantity Surveyor, spoke about the importance of keeping the pace with the evolving technology and as such the importance of having a more interactive PQSC Website, during his discourse. Our chairperson, Mr S.Deepchand has also emphasised the intention of the PQSC to stay tuned to the ever changing environment. He also spoke on the broad perspective of Quantity Surveying field nowadays.





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► Press Conference

A press conference was held at St Georges Hotel, on Wednesday 26th of February 2020, by the PQSC members in the presence of journalists from Express Newspaper, MBC LTD, Defi Media, Business Magazines, Le Mauricien' Newspaper and Radio Plus. The main purpose of the press conference was to communicate to the general public the PQSC Act and its important clause related to contravention in the use of the name "Quantity Surveyor" by any person not registered as Professional Member of the PQSC.

The Chairperson, Mr S.Deepchand, further elaborated on the importance of having a Professional Quantity Surveyor, on any project, in the alleviation of cost overrun. He also encouraged anyone having relevant qualifications to register with the PQSC adequately.

The Registrar, Mr N.K Padaruth, gave a résumé on when and how the PQSC was founded. He clearly elaborated on the consequences of contravening clause 43(I) of the PQSC Act.

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Présenté par Ishwa Gunnoo

