

Contact author: Cezary M Bednarski cezary@studio-bednarski.com

WHO CARRIES THE CAN AND WHO GETS OFF THE HOOK (what does society expect + who controls delivery)

Author: Cezary M Bednarski

Affiliation: Studio Bednarski Ltd, London, UK

Keywords: competitions, bridges, design, process, client, delivery, process control, unauthorised design changes, liability, professional reputation, remedies, copyright

The proposed paper will be a follow-up on my paper presented in Berlin in 2017 and my contribution to the Henderson Colloquium held by the UK chapter of IABSE in July 2019 under the heading 'How can structural engineering be an unending stream of goodness'. By way of this paper I would like to open a discussion on the relationship between the procurement process, starting from initial design, through detailed design, and construction to completion, and the quality of outcomes in terms of value for money, life time cost, and cultural, social, environmental and ephemeral values.

We all know when our built designs become compromised, and where their problems are hidden. Yet, for reasons of professional liability as well as professional reputation, we mostly all cover it up. Images of our built work are what sells us to the next client, as does a glowing reference from a past client. Exposing past clients would worry potential new clients, and so, in general, is bad for business.

The proposed paper deals with the process and the outcome of a project involving a design competition winning footbridge in Gdansk. It is an example of how parties outside of the design team become convinced that they can do the job of designing structures better than people actually trained to do this. And how they get to think that they are fit to decide how to save money on initial capital expenditure, yet in effect creating poor quality structures that are burdened with high life time cost and are of low social and cultural value.

This highly compromised bridge has now been built, with its design author kept away from the process and regularly lied to by the client and its agents at all stages of the project. I am now preparing a public action aimed at protecting my reputation and to make sure that issues which are going to arise with the bridge in operation and its maintenance do not become my liability.



Fig.1 Design



Fig.2 As build