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Negotiating Facility Evaluation in New Zealand

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Works and Development Services Corporation (NZ) Ltd. (WORKS) has recently adopted an integrated approach to facility evaluation which combines the skills and knowledge in its property management, facility maintenance, architectural, building services and structural engineering consultancy practices. This is the first fully integrated facility evaluation service of its kind in New Zealand. WORKS is a state owned enterprise which provides a wide range of environmental design, management and maintenance services to government and private clients throughout New Zealand and overseas. Its diverse fields of activity range in scale from major civil engineering works to furniture and product design.

Two recent developments in WORKS resources have made the integrated facility evaluation services possible. The first was development of a participatory approach to building evaluation. The second was the installation of a range of Facility Management computer software packages. These are accessible throughout a national network operated by the WORKS Computer Aided Design Centre in Wellington. They are enabling a data base to be established from property evaluations, energy audits, building evaluations, and facility maintenance programs. Data from WORKS full range of activities can now be assembled in one integrated form as a resource for evaluation, programming and design services.

Participatory methods for Post Occupancy Evaluation (POE) of buildings were developed for WORKS by a research team at Victoria University in Wellington over the past eight years. They enable those people who have an interest in a facility to negotiate and agree upon criteria for its performance. They can then participate in evaluating their facility against those agreed criteria, and in deciding upon subsequent changes or improvements.

Standards promulgated by control authorities are essential for ensuring basic levels of public health and safety. But rather than developing overall standards for facility evaluation, WORKS *has concentrated on establishing methods which enable performance criteria to be negotiated for each particular facility to be evaluated.* From our experience of working across a wide range of disciplines, we have found that standardization leads to expensive redundancies in design, and it unnecessarily limits parameters for evaluation. Through negotiation methods, the experience of all who have an interest in a facility can be brought to bear on its evaluation.

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