

Tasks and responsibilities

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4. TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 General

Individual persons or organizations entrusted with the tasks of planning, design, construction, control and use of a structure have specific responsibilities connected with the safety and serviceability of the structure. It is important that the meaning and scope of their responsibility is clarified to all concerned.

The responsibilities can be delegated so that different persons are responsible for different tasks. However for each foreseeable activity during the building process and for each interface between activities there should be somebody that bears the responsibility.

In almost all countries building codes deal with structural matters. However in many countries the organizational matters are entirely or partly dealt with in the general law and not in the building code.

The following description of responsibilities and duties relates to the functions to be fulfilled and not to any specific category of persons. Thus a number of tasks and activities are listed and for each of them someone has to be responsible. They are grouped in different categories of functions but this is to some extent arbitrary and could also be combined in another way. The description is divided into two parts. The first part concerns the planning, design and construction of a structure. The second part concerns the use of the structure.

Thus one function could be divided between several persons and several different functions could be fulfilled by one person.

4.2 The responsibilities related to planning, design and construction

4.2.1 The organization of activities

In this document it is assumed that the nature of the structure and the organization of the activities are such that one can distinguish between the functions of



- the client
- the overall project management
- the designer
- the management for production of materials and products
- the management on the construction site.

4.2.2 The client and the overall project management

The overall project management is appointed by the client who could be an individual person or an organization.

The overall project management bears the complete and overall responsibility for the whole project. Parts of the responsibility can be delegated to persons or organizations with special functions.

The overall project management has the responsibility for selecting persons and organizations who have other functions within the project and of checking that they have the necessary qualifications. Such other persons or organizations may, for example be

- designers
- specialists
- contractors
- material suppliers
- independent consultants.

The overall project management has the responsibility to formulate the primary requirements and constraints and bears implicitly the liability for risks related to this.

The overall project management has the obligation to organize and coordinate the activities of the specialists and contractors participating in the project so that

- the responsibilities of all parties are clearly specified with particular attention being paid to interfaces and communication
- restraints on the smooth running - with respect to building programme, organizational and technical matters - of the project are kept to a minimum



- the quality assurance concept is consistently and responsibly applied in the planning, design and erection stages.

The overall project management should arrange for the preparation, maintenance and updating of the important project documents (see 2.8) until the building is finished.

The overall project management is responsible for preparing the instructions for the user.

4.2.3 The function of the designer

The function includes detailed planning, design and other similar activities such as work as a technical specialist.

The function includes the responsibility to ensure that the construction fulfils its function throughout its life and that the owner receives an optimum economic performance in all phases of erection, use and maintenance of the construction. While endeavouring to reach this optimum, the designer or the specialists should heed the safety demands of the public and site personnel and observe other relevant constraints which may exist.

The function includes an obligation to formulate and present to the overall project management the basis for decisions so that the risks taken can be compared with the benefits accruing.

Although the final decisions may be taken by the overall project management based on the advice of the designer and other specialists, the responsibility for the correctness of such advice still rests with the designer and the specialists.

The building codes should give the designer and the specialists a right to decline responsibility for the decisions of the overall project management if their advice is disregarded and more particularly on matters connected with foreseeable risks regarding safety or severe damage to property. If, in such a case, safety is affected the designer and the specialists may also have a responsibility to take some preventative measures.



4.2.4 Management of the production of materials and products

If no other special agreement has been made, the management of production of materials and products has the responsibility that the materials or products delivered complies with the specifications given in building codes or in connection with the order.

The management of production of materials and products is responsible for the internal quality control (compare 5.2.3).

4.2.5 Management on the construction site

The management of the activities on the construction site can be undertaken

- by personnel directly appointed by the overall project management as a delegated task
- by personnel appointed by a contractor
- by a combination of these two. In this case, the division of responsibility must be clearly defined.

The management on the construction site includes the responsibility to organize and coordinate the activities of the personnel working on the construction site in connection with the erection of the structure.

The management on the construction site has the responsibility for the quality control of materials and components produced at the construction site and for the control in connection with the erection of the structure.

As regards material and components produced at other factories and workshops, the management on the construction site may be given the responsibility to check that the internal control is satisfactory and that relevant control documents have been delivered. In some cases this can be reduced to a responsibility for identification of the material or the components.



4.3 The responsibilities related to the use of the structure

4.3.1 Owner and user

Regarding the use of a structure there are in most cases only two parties involved

- the owner
- the user.

An owner is a person or an organization that owns the building in a legal sense.

A user is a person or an organization that uses the building either because the building is generally available (for example a bridge) or according to an agreement with the owner.

4.3.2 The responsibility of the owner

The owner has the responsibility concerning the need for appropriate maintenance of the structure and has an obligation to have the safety of the structure re-examined if there is an intention of change of use or alterations to the structure.

The owner has the responsibility to make inspections to ascertain the need for maintenance and repair (compare 5.2.6).

In some cases the responsibility of the owner may be delagated, for example, to a user according to a special agreement.

4.3.3 The responsibility of the user

The building code and the utilisation plan should give the basis for a specification of the responsibilities of the user.

The user is responsible for the observance of all rules and conditions of use made known to him in instructions for the user or in other documents, for example, road traffic acts for bridges.