INTRODUCTION

It is true that somewhere, beyond every construction contract and contract surety bond, there is an actual, physical construction project. This book attempts to provide its readers with an overview of that construction project, offering a step-by-step primer to understand how the construction project flows from the initial design until the final project “close-out.”

This book does not attempt to describe the building process for structures or to explain architectural or engineering processes or terms. Rather, it provides a general overview of the construction project’s phases and people involved. It focuses more on the contractual aspects of the construction project – the paperwork, the process and the unique terms encountered in the project-related documents.

Overall, the goal is that this book will provide its reader a clearer understanding of the people and paperwork involved in a bonded construction project, which may serve as a handy resource for anyone approaching a construction project for the first time.

This primer is broken into five chapters:

Chapter One, Phases, provides an overview of the construction phases – from the project’s conception (the design and bid, with contractor selection/contract award of pre-construction) through its physical construction stage, and on to the project’s conclusion (close-out, final payment of post-construction).

Chapter Two, People, describes the people one might encounter throughout the construction phases, such as the Construction Manager, Superintendent, Inspector, etc., explains their involvement and roles in the project, and identifies their relationship with the other parties on the project.

Chapter Three, Terms, describes and explains key words and phrases related to contract delivery systems, contract documents, and contract administration, including payment-related terms. It also includes some of the important legal terms found in the contract documents and provides definitions for key players/persons in bonded contract projects.

Chapter Four, Paperwork, examines the paperwork associated with a construction project and identifies the significance of various documents and paperwork. This chapter is especially helpful should one be in a position of analyzing a failed construction project or a construction dispute.
Finally, chapter Five, Processes, provides greater detail about certain key processes that occur during the various construction phases. Processes include items such as the bidding/contractor selection/award processes; the contract administration processes to track the project’s progress and document claims/changes in scope or contract price; and the contract close-out processes.

Every construction project is unique, so please be mindful that this book deals with generalities and describes typical construction projects or documents. Where possible, the exhibits in the appendix provide examples of the documents and paperwork encountered during the various phases of the construction project.

We thank all of the contributors for their efforts to bring these materials together to create this primer. We hope you find it helpful.

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