

2014 SEMINAR PROGRAMME

Wednesday, 12th March - 5:30pm
Room 401
Bartlett School of Planning - UCL

Naomi Flood & Alison Hood***

*Senior Analyst & Audit Manager,
National Audit Office UK*

UK Mega Infrastructure Projects and Value for Money: The NAO experience

Where public sector projects are delivered well the results are impressive, however the work of the NAO has shown that around 75 per cent of projects are completed late, over budget, or do not deliver the benefits expected. Our work has consistently demonstrated that the quality of a project's initiation often dictates the likelihood of its success. Using data from 5000 projects, we set out to try and establish why project teams do not consistently follow good practice in setting up projects. We found striking patterns in the reasons for projects failing, which all related to the importance of understanding the delivery environment and complexity of the project when making a decision whether to proceed. Organisations which really understood the inherent challenges of their project were able to create an environment for success at the earliest stages of its design, while those which did not set themselves up for failure at a later stage. In this presentation, we will present the Delivery Environment Complexity Analytic (DECA), a tool used by clients, sponsors and NAO teams as the basis for understanding the challenges faced in delivering objectives and outcomes in major projects.

* **Naomi Flood** is a core member of the Project Delivery discipline at the National Audit Office, which supports and draws on issues surrounding project, programme and portfolio management in government explored in the NAO's audit work. Naomi joined the NAO in 2009, and has undertaken value for money studies on major projects and programmes including Carrier Strike and major rail projects. She has also written publications on initiating successful projects and over-optimism in government projects. Naomi is currently working with Infrastructure UK on the development on the IUK Route-map advising on benefits realisation and governance. Naomi has practical knowledge of project delivery in public and third sector settings, having managed public sector international development projects in Africa and Eastern Europe. She has a background in business journalism and operational research. Naomi has a BA (Hons) in Politics, Philosophy and Economics from the University of Oxford, and a MA (Econ) Development Studies from the University of Manchester.

****Alison Hood** specialises in assessing government competence in delivering major projects. Her experience in project management began in the 1990's whilst working for local authorities. Following a successful career in local government delivering housing services and regeneration programmes, she joined the Audit Commission to lead performance inspections of public housing providers across the north of England. Alison joined the NAO in 2007, and since 2008 she has spearheaded the NAO's work on project, programme and portfolio delivery. Currently she leads the specialist Project Delivery discipline across the NAO whose objectives are to: influence successful project and programme delivery in government; support the design and delivery of effective NAO studies into project and programme delivery; and capture, share and use knowledge effectively to improve performance. She has had the opportunity to review in depth many major projects across government, and is leading the NAO's latest work on the quantification of risk. Alison has a Masters in Business Administration and is a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Housing.

All are welcome and participation is free. For enquiries and to join the mailing list, please contact
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