

## **Architect is newly elected chairman CDBI says there are benefits from closer liaison with U.S. (April 9, 2002)**

By Patricia Williams  
Staff Writer  
Daily Commercial News

TORONTO - The Canadian Design-Build Institute (CDBI) is intent on forging closer ties with sister organizations in the United States.

Newly elected chairman Randy Dhar said there are benefits to be derived from closer liaison with both the Design-Build Institute of America and the American Institute of Architects (AIA), which has an active design-build group.

"We want closer working relationships with both of these organizations," said Dhar, a past president of the Ontario Association of Architects.

"We can obtain material on trends, techniques, best practices and so on."

A senior project manager in the north Toronto office of Public Works and Government Services Canada, Dhar is the first representative from the owners' contingent to chair the institute. He is also the first sole chairman.

The CDBI, which operates under the umbrella of the Canadian Construction Association (CCA), was founded in 1998 to provide a voice for the design-build sector. The institute now has about 180 members. Dhar said other priorities for his term at the helm of the CDBI include expanded educational activities and completion of the 300 series of the design-build practice manual, which deals with responding to requests for qualifications or proposals.

"We also want to be pro-active with owners in communicating best practices," he said.

The institute is in the final throes of developing a matrix to help owners know when to choose the design-build project delivery mechanism. "We never advocate that design-build is the only way to go," Dhar said.

"It is one of several alternatives. It may not be suitable for each and every project."

The CDBI has produced, with the assistance of the Department of National Defence, a matrix dealing with honoraria.

"There are major costs involved in responding to requests for proposals. We want to establish the fact that this is a truly professional service and that it cannot be expected to be provided without some compensation."

The institute has also been active for some time in a joint industry/federal government design-build task force. That group has released a statement outlining principles for the proper selection of a design-builder.

That committee will continue to be a prime thrust of activity, Dhar said. On another front, the institute has been working to get a better handle on design-build activity in the country.

Statistics Canada has agreed to compile such statistics. The CDBI hopes that data will be available within a year or so.

The institute believes the availability of such data will allow industry associations to better educate owners, the design community and contractors on the practical application of this delivery mechanism.

Believed to be only the second architect to sit on the CCA board, Dhar believes the move to a sole chairman at CDBI is indicative of a new level of maturity in the industry.

In the past, this responsibility has been split between co-chairmen - an architect and a contractor.

"It was thought that we have gotten to the stage where we would move away from co-chairs to a sole chairman with a vice-chairman," said Dhar, one of the institute's founding members.

Serving as vice-chairman is Barrie Fordham, a senior vice-president of Buttcon Ltd.