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## **President's message: Growing pains for CM at Risk**

March 17, 2010 - Construction Design & Engineering

Last fall, the Office of the Inspector General (IG) issued a report on the experience of public agencies with the new c. 149A "CM at Risk" procurement process, at the five-year mark. There were relatively few projects covered in the report - just 20 - because, like most things "new," the process had been slow to catch on. The report was very favorable, however, and apparently, word got around, because the list of construction projects approved recently by the Massachusetts School Building Authority show that quite a few more are opting to go "CM at Risk." The process has many benefits for awarding authorities, particularly in the pre-construction phase, yet still preserves the competitive bidding that assures the lowest prices for subtrade work.

ASM is pleased to see the growing acceptance and adoption of CM at Risk, because we played a leading role - along with the AGC and the BSA - in drafting the legislation that allows it. Yet we have to admit to growing concerns, too, because we are seeing many cases where Awarding Authorities and Construction Managers are departing from the rules - perhaps not fully understanding the process - and trade contractors are at risk of losing their statutory rights and protections. In some cases, we have learned about "irregularities" early enough to secure corrections. In other cases, it has been too late. Understandably, there is a learning curve with all new procedures. As an association, we are doing all we can to ensure subcontractors understand it (see our seminar for members on May 13) and we urge Awarding Authorities to do the same with their own team members. For CM at Risk to live up to expectations, it must "work" for all participants - which means doing things "by the book" and working as a team. If the process breaks down at the beginning, it does not bode well for results at the end.

We look forward to working with all team members to ensure that CM at Risk lives up to its promise. Sara Stafford is the president of the Associated Subcontractors of Mass., Boston and is the president and owner of Stafford Construction Services, Saugus.

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