



The Nigerian Society of Engineers

PORT HARCOURT BRANCH



e-newsletter

2011 / VOLUME 126

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DECEMBER, 31ST 2011



Happy New Year



Interview with Engr. George C. Okoroma FNSE, JP, on Consulting Engineering

Engr. George C. Okoroma FNSE, JP, is the Group Managing Director, Gambeta Groupe. He is a civil engineer by training, a Fellow of the Nigerian Society of Engineers, a Fellow of Nigerian Institution of Civil Engineers, Justice of Peace of Rivers State, member of Association of Consulting Engineers Nigeria, member Nigerian Institute of Management, member Institute of Diagnostic Engineers, UK and member American Society of Civil Engineers.



Engr. George Okoroma FNSE

E-Newsletter: *What do you have to tell us about consulting engineering practice in the country?*

Engr. Okoroma: The engineering consulting practice in Nigeria has quite a lot of challenges. The challenges actually come first from the professionals. Being professionals in the capacity of knowing the subjects of engineering design. For instance in the field where I belong, civil engineering, you must have basic knowledge of engineering subjects. If it is on roads and if it is on structures you must have the basic knowledge. Apparently the problem we have in consultancy in Nigeria is that the Nigerian engineers are not given their right of place or the right place to practice their profession. Most of the engineering consultancy services are given to foreign firms which is not good for us Nigerian engineers. I understand that because engineers are not close to government, so policy makers do not take engineers seriously when it comes to engineering consultancy. They prefer to use outsiders. But again before you can actually actualize as a consulting engineer, first and foremost you have to belong to the professional bodies, you have to belong to COREN as an engineer and if you have to float a consulting firm your company must also be registered with COREN and Association of Consulting Engineers Nigeria (ACEN). So it is important that you have to register with these organizations and what we call continuous professional development is also important. The Engineering Conference and AGM, is a forum for networking, an opportunity for brain storming and it is an opportunity to learn from one another and to improve on our practice as engineers and also as consulting engineers. We should put our knowledge together, we should encourage partnership consultancy firms so that we can be able to push for major jobs. Today I think most of the engineering consulting firms are actually small in size and cannot

really go out for mega projects in this country. So I think we need to encourage our engineers to form a kind of synergy, form partnership so that we will be able to go out for big jobs and the politicians will not have any reason whatsoever not to engage us in engineering projects.

E-Newsletter: *What advice do you have for the young engineers that will grow up and go into consultancy?*

Engr. Okoroma: I think what is happening today is that young engineers after graduating from the university, they just go straight and say they want to go into consultancy because engineering coincidentally is a knowledge industry. So sometimes they just believe that with the little knowledge they have they can go straight into consultancy. This should not be the case. Young engineers should be encouraged to practice under senior engineers and have a period of tutelage just like in the case of medical profession where they have to do housemanship. Young engineers should practice under senior engineers where they will learn the process of engineering practice and consultancy and after a good number of years, when they must have acquired the necessary experience and the necessary tools they can go out on their own and it is important that they must be able to work. In ACEN, the young engineers under Young Professionals Forum are encouraged to come together, learn under professional engineers and do a term. When they would have had enough experience then they can go out to practice but if they do not have that kind of prerequisite knowledge and they venture into practicing, they will face some challenges. So I am encouraging young engineers to look out for people they see as their role model and then work under them so they can grow with the profession.

E-Newsletter: *Thank you very much sir.*



Engr. Otunte Otuneh & Engr. George Okoroma FNSE

The Nigerian Society of Engineers

2011 International Conference & Annual General Meeting

COMMUNIQUE

the first part of this communiqué was published in the 125th edition

3. The Conference therefore recommends that:

i. A Federal Roads Authority should be established and empowered with a dedicated Federal Roads Fund. Similar structure should be established in every state of the Federation. A focused use of revenue accruing from road transport-related transactions such as vehicle roadworthiness certification, driver and vehicle licensing, tolling, fuel tax, etc should form adequate sources of funding to be supported by Government subventions.

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- ii. Road development should be carried out through the full process within a framework of adequate conceptualization, feasibility studies, planning, engineering design, procurement, construction, commissioning, operations and maintenance.
- iii. Road accidents can be reduced with proper education of drivers and control of the issuance of driver licences through properly structured and verifiable certification systems.
- iv. Modern maintenance management approach should be deployed in the maintenance of our roads. Efforts should be made to reduce the gap between ideal and real time maintenance procedures, such as setting up the road condition monitoring group, establishment of appropriate tools and techniques for road maintenance programmes and sustainable project management processes.
- v. Nigerian roads should be designed to be bicycle and pedestrian user friendly.
- vi. Efforts should be made to open up the rural network of roads utilizing appropriate Engineering design and procedures.
- vii. An intensified effort at developing and sustaining ship building and ship repair facilities should be adopted.
- viii. Government should proceed with vigour to complete the on-going dredging of inland waterways.
- ix. Where applicable, water transportation should be developed to support the road system which is currently overloaded.
- x. Dredging, Maintenance and security issues should be vigorously pursued.
- xi. Government should encourage the integration of various transport systems to facilitate movement of people and goods.
- xii. The Nigerian content aspects of the multi-modal transport system should be developed simultaneously to facilitate job creation for Nigerians and sustainable systems.
- xiii. Carbotage Vessel Financing Funds (CVFF) should be extended to dry docking and ship building repairs to revitalize the facilities. This will greatly reduce capital flight and increase local content.
- xiv. Government should immediately facilitate modern gauges and high speed railway systems.
- xv. Existing facilities at Ajaokuta steel plant should be used for the production of Railway tracks and other accessories instead of current practice of direct importation. This will create more jobs for Nigerians, save on foreign exchange and ensure that the development will not be heavily import dependent.
- xvi. It is necessary that development of modern inter and intra city rail systems be accorded priority for mass transit.
- xvii. There is a need for a comprehensive reform of the rail sector including the review of the current Railway Act in order to open to Private Sector participation.
- xviii. A comprehensive re-development of airport facilities across the country especially the Murtala Mohammed International Airport Lagos, Aminu Kano Airport and Abuja International Airport.
- xx. The Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority needs to compel re-capitalization of the domestic airlines and enact appropriate standards of operations.
- xxi. There is a need for a shorter link road between MMA2 and MMA International.
- xxii. An effective regulatory framework should be developed to improve efficiency in this sector.
- xxiii. Establishment of well equipped transportation institution and trained personnel for Nigerian transportation systems is desirable.
- xxiv. Nigerian content should be fully encouraged in all aspects of transportation systems.
- xxv. All the Information Technology (IT) related systems such as fixed wing, rotary wing, unmanned RUA etc. need to be integrated into Nigerian satellite project around the modern ICT technology.
- xxvi. The Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) and other agencies should intensify public enlightenment campaigns to reduce carnage.
- xxvii. The responsibilities of Road Safety Management Agencies should be properly spelt out to avoid conflicts in operations.
- xxviii. Appropriate road signage and safety signs should be put in place.
- xxix. In line with global best practices, efforts should be made to reduce the gap between ideal and real time maintenance procedures, such as setting up the road condition monitoring group, establishment of appropriate tools and techniques for road maintenance programmes and sustainable project management processes.
- xxx. The Government should partner with the Nigerian Society of Engineers (NSE) on the development of road maintenance structures.
- xxxi. The Niger Delta Power Holding Company (NDPHC), Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC) and other relevant agencies are hereby encouraged to partner with corporate NSE to evolve sustainable power sector reforms.

4. Election of Officers

The following officers were elected to run the affairs of the Society in the 2012.

Engr. Mustafa. B. Shehu FNSE	President
Engr. Olorunfemi Ademola Isaac FNSE	Deputy President
Engr. Otis Anyaeji FNSE	Vice President
Engr. Ali Alimasuya Rabi FNSE	Vice President
Engr. Valerie Ifueko Agberagba FNSE	Vice President
Engr. Aishatu A. Umar MNSE	Executive Committee Member
Engr. Margaret Aina Oguntala, FNSE	Executive Committee Member
Engr. Ezekwesili Onah, MNSE	Executive Committee Member
Engr. Charles Akintayo Akintola FNSE	Executive Committee Member
Engr. Ibrahim Wahab Olayiwola FNSE	Executive Committee Member
Engr. Prof. Simon V. Irtwange FNSE	Executive Committee Member
Engr. O. A. Ajibola FNSE	Immediate Past President
Engr. A. K. Amshi FNSE	Executive Secretary

Engr. Ahmed K. Amshi, FNSE

Executive Secretary

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NOTICE! NOTICE!! NOTICE!!!

All members of NSE PH should pay their **Annual Branch Dues of N4,500 for Corporate Members and N6,500 for Fellows to UBA ACC. NO: 0234-031-0000962 (Port Harcourt Main Branch)**. Also pay **National Annual Subscription of N7,500.00 for Corporate Members & N9,500 for Fellows** directly to **AFRIBANK ACC No. 1420202215613** & forward all tellers to the secretariat for reconciliation. All payments should be made at the Bank