



The Nigerian Society of Engineers

PORT HARCOURT BRANCH

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An Interview with Engr. B. T. D. George FNSE on NSEPH Limited

E-Newsletter: We will be discussing about NSEPH. We want to know the services of NSEPH Limited and perhaps its engineering activities and the benefits to members. However, we would want you to tell our reading audience a brief history of yourself and your contribution to engineering.

Engr. B. T. George: Thank you very much for the privilege and opportunity to speak to the team responsible for the highly acclaimed E-newsletter branch. It has been a very high quality production and I hope you will sustain the standard. NSEPH Limited was established in the year 2002. The Port Harcourt branch felt that they have grown to a standard where they don't always have to be going cap in hand to companies to sponsor our AGM, our Dinner instead these companies should give us jobs to fend for ourselves. We also thought that we must have an outfit where young engineers can come and gain experience. So a decision was taken to float the limited liability company with the board of director nominated by the branch. That is how NSEPH was established. It is a company owned by all financial NSE members in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. As soon as the company was registered with Corporate Affairs Commission, it swung into action. The first challenge was given to it by the Rivers State Government to study the cause of collapse at the Ntawoba creek bridge along Amassoma Street and to come up with a design for the construction of the bridge. The company was given two weeks to achieve this and within the two weeks we were able to give a report and a design for that bridge. That was the first job that the company executed and the first Managing Director of the Company was Engr. F. C. Ogolo (FNSE) who did a wonderful foundational job, he made sure that we got registered with all the oil companies, with NDDC and all that. Though we have not been able to secure major jobs in oil and gas companies but we were fortunate to obtain two design jobs with NDDC and two supervisory jobs which have kept us busy since 2004. For myself, I retired from NAFCON, (National Fertilizer Company of Nigeria), before it was liquidated in 2005 or so. I retired as a Deputy Planning Manager. Since that time I have been running my own outfit but in 2004 the board advertised for the vacant position of the Managing Director of NSEPH LIMITED and I applied, attended the interview and I was offered the job. I must say it has been very challenging because we have very few staff to work with. We have to use our members as consultants to execute our jobs and they also have their own private practices which sometimes become very difficult to co-ordinate. That is basically all about NSEPH.

E-Newsletter: Thank you very much. How do you rate NSEPH Limited looking at its statistics in terms of performance and reliability since 2002 till date?

Engr. B. T. George: Another work we did was for a company that required soil investigations for a high rise building that was to be built in Port Harcourt. This we also carried out and we have been into government. The former commissioner of works, Engr. Mrs. Ovaí at a time approached us to carry out the drainage study for Port Harcourt metropolis. Unfortunately we were told that the job was given to a foreign company but till now it has not been executed. We have been really sourcing jobs but the four jobs we have are really time-consuming because we have to be in the field most time. One project is at Mbiama, the other is at Elele Alumini. One is roughly 19km road and the other one is about 21km road and it involves us writing reports regularly for NDDC, holding meetings and going to the field to see and supervise what the engineers and the contractors are doing. Our performance has been of high standard and so far we have not had any problem or failure.



Engr. B.T.D. George FNSE

E-Newsletter: Ok. Now that you are into design and supervision, how do you foresee NSEPH in the next ten years? Don't you think that it is imperative that you go into construction and design? You should consider the industrial nature of Port Harcourt where construction activities are high and utilize the opportunities.

Engr. B. T. George: Yes definitely that is the next level we are going into because we are developing ourselves. We want to acquire some of the needed equipments and software, the heavy equipment we may not get for now, we may rely on some of our members who have some of these equipments. We can lease them and execute our jobs. We are already in the process of registering with the Ministry of Works and other parts of the government to make sure we key into the developmental activities of the State government because this state government is taking on major jobs. We have also bid for jobs in other states, Cross River State and other places. These are developmental processes. You grow as you bid for these jobs.

E-Newsletter: Thank you very much. You made mention of equipments leasing from members this is at this initial state, what strategy do you have in place in terms of man power development?

Engr. B. T. George: Yes, the strategy is that as we grow, we do not want to carry too much over head of staff because of our finances but as the jobs increase, we intend to get more qualified personnel and also we are in the process of getting our engineers who want to do the Youth Service Corps coming to spent time with us. There will be a synergy where they can learn from us and we in return impacting skills and they are also contributing to the growth of the company. And we intend to encourage members who are in key positions in industries to assist us source for jobs. In fact we have what we call finder's fee where we encourage people who get us jobs that we can execute. This is to encourage them to do that. We can only use our members because they are the people who are in the field, they know when the jobs come, and if the jobs are advertised definitely we will bid for them.

E-Newsletter: Now what are your major areas of your participation in this design job, since we have various disciplines in engineering?

Engr. B. T. George: For now, whether by design or by accident we have been mainly in the civil engineering area. Because the first set of jobs we've gotten are all civil engineering jobs. So we are more or less concentrated in that. But we are also looking at other fields of engineering because we feel that there is no company more qualified to handle engineering projects than NSEPH since we have all the fields of engineering personnel that we can tap from their resources, they are in the pool and they are all by proxy members of the company, we can use their skill and experience at any point in time, so we are not limited to civil engineering though for now that is the bulk of our job.

E-Newsletter: For more efficient and effective outcome we'll suggest that you have sales engineers, marketing or business management personnel that will go into other areas so that it will not be only civil engineering activities that you are involved. Who are your Competitors, how do you look at them in the terms of capability and reliability?

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Engr. B. T. George: We see everybody in the engineering consulting and contracting field as competitors because it is a wide field and it is a field where a lot of non professionals are coming into. So we want to reclaim engineering consultancy and contracting for professionals and in doing that we want to be proactive like you suggested, the next phase of our activity will require us going into the field, that is marketing and sales, getting our engineers rather than waiting for our engineers to bring the jobs. We want to go out and source for the jobs, look for the jobs and bring them and definitely it is the next stage of our activities.

E-Newsletter: Before we round up, we want you to tell our reading audience the challenges you've faced so far and perhaps advise our young engineers out there from your experience over the years as an engineer.



Engr. B. T. George: My advice to our young engineers is that their first two years after graduation is very vital. They should not just look at the high paying job but they should look at job where they can get experience and a lot of time it is the foundation they build on from first to four years that will put them into a proper position to make their career. Many of them are looking for oil company jobs. There are lot of areas where they can make a mark. NSEPH for example is a company where you have a full scope from design to supervision in fact every aspect of the project. You can go to some organisations where you will only see one aspect of the job. But if they come to NSEPH, yes we cannot pay as much as these big organisations but we assure them that they will get a lot of experience and also, they should look at time of looking for job. Instead of waiting until you get that fantastic job that you are looking for, you can even offer to work free for an organisation to gain the hands on experience it is something that you can not quantify in value. A lot of times we have places that are laying fallow because people are looking for the rosy jobs and our advice to the government, there a lot of establishment that are laying fallow, look at the PABOD Brewery, a lot of the government companies they are there. For example our engineering graduates when they finish some of them don't even know what a pump is or what a motor looks like. They should be sent to some of these places to see how these processes work for their own experience. We need to remove the fear or work and industry from our graduates. Once we do that, our engineers are very sharp, what they lack is the opportunities, the openings for them to demonstrate their skills. I think the government and the private sector working together will encourage our engineers and I also advise that our leaders should focus less on foreign expert, where it becomes necessary that those foreign experts must perform a job, they must work with local engineers and technicians attached to them. We must see transfer of technology as a necessity because no country will give you technology, you must go out and get it and if they government work with the Nigerian Society of Engineers, NSEPH and other related establishments, I think we can improve on our development.

E-Newsletter: Thank you very much for the audience you have given to us. As you said many people look up unto NSEPH for career development, not only the financial benefit to the profession or society. We want to foresee in the future career development. We hope when next we call on you on another topic not only on NSEPH, you will give us the audience. Once again thank you.

ERC COMMITTEE POISE FOR ACTION

The Engineering Resources Center (ERC) committee headed by Engr. Hon. Lasbry Amadi, FNSE, is set to move to site to resume full construction work starting with the 140mx100m perimeter fencing of the entire 30 plots of land with the recent release of substantial fund to the committee by the EXCO. In an extraordinary meeting of the committee members; namely Engr. Lasbry Amadi, FNSE (Chairman), Engr. B.J. Benibo, FNSE, (IPC), Engr. Chf. Larry Nyeche, Engr. Richard Ogoni (Tech.Sech.) and the Branch Gen. Secretary Engr. Denis Dania, held at the LASO Engineering House in Port Harcourt, on the 13th of March 2009, the committee was seen brainstorming and strategizing to draw up the project execution schedule. According to a statement by the committee chairman, the committee is poised to resume full scale execution of the projects by first, ensuring that all full legitimacy necessary for peaceful and successful execution of the project are pursued vigorously and met. He enjoined all committee members to be hands on deck to ensure the successful delivery of this project on schedule.



Seen from left to right: Engr. Lasby Amadi,

Engr. Chf. Larry Nyeche, Engr. Benibor, & Engr. Ogoni.

ADANO ENGINEERING LTD DONATES TO NSE P/H

The Managing Director/ Chief Executive Officer of ADANO ENGINEERING LTD, A.O. Benson recently donated a 40" LCD Plasma TV to the Nigerian Society of Engineers Port Harcourt Branch. The item which was delivered on Thursday March 14, 2009 (the same day the promise was made) was highly commended by the Branch Executive Committee. The Branch Chairman, Engr. Bateim Ogariawo, who received the item on behalf of the branch expressed gratitude to A. O. Benson and the management and staff of ADANO ENGINEERING LTD for the laudable kind gesture and pray to God to reward them.

NOTICE! NOTICE!! NOTICE!!!

All members of NSE PH should pay their **annual branch dues** of N4000 and **compulsory levy** of N5000 towards the Engineer Resource Center to UBA ACC. NO: 0802080000194 (Port Harcourt main Branch). Also pay **National Annual Subscription** of N5,500.00 directly to AFRIBANK ACC No. 1420202215613 & forward all tellers to the secretariat for reconciliation. All payments should be made at the Bank