



# editorial

## Light at the End of the Tunnel

By Lance Atkins, CASE Chairman

Where do I get help in running my Engineering Business? We find ourselves asking this question more and more as the years go by. Given our business climate of increasing liability, rising costs from every direction and with items like insurance becoming difficult to obtain regardless of price, it is time to step up to the plate and take a swing at the problem. If you are in for the long run, as most of us are, the first thing you need to do is to join us at CASE.

At CASE you can find 300 firms that are putting their heads together to solve some of the most complex business problems we face. Problems such as controlling E&O costs together with managing our risks are at the top of our lists. The recently formed Risk Management Program of CASE ([www.acec.org/rmp](http://www.acec.org/rmp)) is at the forefront of tackling and solving this perplexing problem. The RMP is being developed in cooperation with ASCE/SEI and NCSEA.

The Risk Management Program of CASE had it's first convocation this past November in Reston, VA. with 150 structural engineers, representing over 100 firms, meeting and discussing a wide variety of loss prevention techniques and training, as well as raising the level of practice. I want to thank Val Ericson, Chairman, and the members of the RMP Committee for their hard work and perseverance in getting this program off and running. We owe a great deal of gratitude to these committee members and partnering organizations that gave so much of their time and effort to improve our profession. Thank you.

The Founding Members of the RMP Committee are:

Val Ericson (Chairman), Ed Pence, John Joyce, Ken Gibble, Ray Messer, Doug Elliott, Gary Ten Eyck, John Tawresey, Mike Matsumoto, Stuart Jacobson, Edward Bajer (CASE Exec. Director)

The old days of writing a simple contract are gone. Realizing this, another group of devoted CASE members, known as the Contracts Committee, are constantly updating and revising our Standard Form Agreements. These members are putting their experience and knowledge to work in editing agreements... to not only read the words of

an agreement, but to visualize what our clients would be thinking and how a particular paragraph or phrase could be interpreted, all with a realization of how we practice.

In addition to Agreements, CASE's National Guidelines Committee publishes practice guidelines that are being used by engineers and architects alike. Although the guidelines are not codes or standards, they are helpful as a starting point to assist you in developing a specific quality management plan. One such guideline, *Coordination and Completeness of Structural Construction Documents*, is the basis for a series of educational practice seminars provided by the CASE Program Committee across the country and sponsored by AISC.

CASE has other committees that support the organization such as Membership, Business Practices, and Public Relations. The PR Committee provides support and participates in the preparation of STRUCTURE magazine, and maintains the CASE website that is open to the engineering community.

*"members bring to our meetings  
a depth of knowledge..."*

I thought it would helpful for you to know that there are a lot of people at CASE thinking of what to do about your business and the concerns that you are facing, because they too have or will face those same issues. CASE members bring to our meetings a depth of knowledge of the business of engineering that is second to none. The more engineers that participate in our meetings, the more numerous the lessons will be that we can learn the easy way. Come to our meetings and help us both. Attendance at our meetings is educational, and the topics of discussion are certainly timely and informative. Our meetings help to keep us pointed toward our goal of improving the structural engineering profession.

So, there is light at the end of the tunnel. You do have help at CASE, and knowing that we are as close as your computer [www.acec.org/case](http://www.acec.org/case) or telephone 202-682-4342 will assist you in staying in the game. ■

### EDITORIAL BOARD

#### Chairman

James DeStefano, P.E.  
DeStefano Associates  
Fairfield, CT  
203-254-7131  
jimd@destefanoassociates.com

#### Executive Editor

Jeanne M. Vogelzang  
NCSEA  
Chicago, IL  
312-372-8035  
ncsea@structuremag.org

#### Members

Craig E. Barnes, P.E., S.E.  
CBI Consulting, Inc.  
Boston, MA

David Biggs, P.E.  
Ryan-Biggs Associates, P.C.  
Troy, NY

Charles J. Carter, S.E., P.E.  
American Institute of Steel Construction  
Chicago, IL

Daniel Falconer  
American Concrete Institute  
Farmington Hills, MI

John A. Mercer, Jr., P.E.  
Mercer Engineering, PC  
Minot, ND

Evans Mountzouris, P.E.  
The DiSalvo Ericson Group  
Ridgefield, CT

Steven Schaefer, P.E.  
Steven Schaefer Associates  
Cincinnati, OH

Stephen P. Schneider, Ph.D., P.E.  
Kramer Gehlen & Associates, Inc.  
Vancouver, WA

Greg Schindler, P.E., S.E.  
KPF Consulting Engineers  
Seattle, WA

Dennis Tewksbury, P.E.  
Dennis Tewksbury Consultant  
Concord, NH

Editorials are provided by the leadership and staff of the STRUCTURE Editorial Board, NCSEA, CASE and SEI on a rotational basis.