



April 2019

CIB W099 – Safety and Health in Construction New Joint Commission Coordinator

In April 2019 the CIB Programme Committee appointed Dr. Fred Sherratt as new Joint Coordinator of the Working Commission W099 – Safety and Health in Construction. She will be the Joint Coordinator together with Prof. Billy Hare. Michael Behm will be leaving the Commission as Coordinator after almost 8 years.

Contact details



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Short CV

Dr. Fred Sherratt began her career in construction quite by chance through a temporary placement, and was inspired to work her way up from site secretary to construction section manager in just over four years. She was sponsored by her company to undertake a part time PhD in construction site safety, and eventually moved into academia full time.

She has continued to research construction health, safety and wellbeing and presented her work on an international stage, and undertaken collaborations with many other institutions both nationally and globally.

She is an active member of the CIOB, and helped to establish the Novus Centre in the North West and is now a member of the Chelmsford Hub. She is course leader for Construction Management BSc (Hons) at Anglia Ruskin University, and through the combination of her professional and academic practice she is proud to say that she now helps to develop the industry professionals of the future.

Personal Statement

I have been a member of CIB W099 since 2008 when I joined as a PhD student. Since then I have regularly participated in W099 activities including conference attendance, session chairing, commission meetings, and contributing to the development of the research roadmap.

Throughout this time I have found W099 to be an excellent network for the research of construction safety and health, and it is an active, supportive and inclusive group that can boast an expert membership all over the world. I would want to see that long continue, and would therefore be honoured to take on the role of Joint Co-ordinator.

I have an industry background, and spent over 10 years working on construction sites in the UK, latterly as a construction manager/site superintendent. This was at a time when over two people died a week on UK construction sites, and although this statistic has improved, it is still not good enough. Over the years I was unfortunately able to witness first-hand the consequences when construction health and safety does not go right and I felt (and still feel) this just isn't acceptable. Inspired by those I worked alongside, and who I wanted to keep safe, I began my part time PhD in construction safety. This proved to be an interesting journey, which resulted in a shift from 'traditional' research methodologies towards social science philosophies, and my work is predominantly grounded in social constructionism and the role discourses play in our world, the findings of which have been published in my 2016 book *Unpacking Construction Site Safety*.

Taking on the role of Joint Coordinator for W099 will enable me to continue in this passionate quest to champion the worker within construction work (as they are the ones who suffer poor health and wellbeing) and strive for continued and significant improvements in health and safety within the global construction industry. I delivered a keynote address at the W099/TG59 conference in Cape Town 2017 asking 'Mirror, Mirror on the Wall – What are Academics Really doing for People in Construction?' where I challenged colleagues to reflect on their research work and who it was ultimately serving.



Does our research actually help the workers? Or does it support a culture in which blaming the worker for their actions, poor training or lack of supervision are seen as acceptable 'root causes' for poor health and safety, when in fact time and money and indeed wider industry practices such as subcontracting and lowest-cost tendering are also highly significant factors, and outside of the control of the workers themselves?



We need to refocus on what the workers have to say, rather than the managers, company directors (who are of course much easier to reach by email and will complete our questionnaires) and be brave enough to point out what really matters and how it matters to the global construction industry. There is clearly potential to link with other CIB Commissions to better explore this at both industry and project levels, and this is something I would look to develop in the future.

W099 has a significant role to play in the ongoing improvement of construction worker health and safety across the world, and particularly in countries where workers still suffer from poor working conditions and health and safety management. W099 has the network to support such improvements, and a membership able to produce rigorous and robust research able to provide significant findings, insights and bring change to both policy and practice.

I am keen to join Professor Billy Hare as joint coordinator, and will bring my energy, enthusiasm and support to W099 to ensure its continued influence and impact in the future.

Information

More information on CIB Commission W099 – Safety and Health in Construction can be found [here](#).

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