



# THE FIDIC CONTRACT FORMS and the new MDB CONTRACT\*

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## 1. What is FIDIC?

FIDIC is probably best known to the outside world as the organisation which produces standard forms of contract for engineering construction projects. For example, the form used for many years for civil engineering construction works, commonly called the 'Red Book', is simply known to many as the 'FIDIC Contract'. In fact, the document is often called 'FIDIC' with many people having no further idea of who or what FIDIC is.

Therefore, I would like to explain briefly what FIDIC is, and its history. FIDIC is the International Federation of Consulting Engineers, and was founded in 1913 by France, Belgium and Switzerland. For the period over the two world wars it remained essentially a continental European organisation.

The United Kingdom only became a member in 1949 followed by the United States in 1958. The newly industrialised countries started to become members in the 1970s, and it was only then that FIDIC could truly claim to be an international rather than a European organisation. At present there are 73 member associations from all parts of the globe, and it represents most of the independent practising consulting engineer in the world.

FIDIC is a federation of national member associations; individual firms of consulting engineers are not themselves members of FIDIC. Many of these national associations represent other constructional professionals, such as architects, in addition to consulting engineers. FIDIC also has affiliate members interested in the work it undertakes, such as lawyers and insurers.

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