Construction Scheduling Specification Initiative
Preliminary Description – March 16, 2005

Description

This document describes the effort of a scheduling committee(s) being formed to produce recommended scheduling specifications and/or specification recommended practices.

Purpose

Provide a set of specimen document, matrix or other device to support efforts by those responsible for developing scheduling specifications for construction. The emphasis on the program is to:

- Develop specification flexibility to meet the needs of different size projects,
- Develop specification flexibility to meet the needs of different type projects, including:
  - Design-Bid-Build
  - Design/Build (including specifically the Dulles Extension)
  - CM at Risk
  - (Others)
- Craft language to discourage or prevent schedule abuses and/or poor scheduling practices,
- Adapt to current and future information technology tools, including the latest Primavera products,
- Facilitate and/or improve contract administration processes, and
- Provide practical tools and/or administrative requirements for expeditious resolution of time-related impacts.

Objective

The immediate objective is to have a revised *First Draft Specification Program 2005* for broader association review by mid-June 2005. The objective for a final revised Specification 2006 will be summer 2006.

Methodology

Internal coordination and recommendations

The first pass efforts (at least on my part) involve review and research of a dozen select agency specification with input from schedulers and project and program managers. The primary tool is to use computer spreadsheets to compare existing and recommended provisions. Jim Zack has forwarded me material he developed for a Wickwire book involving a Los Angeles Wastewater agency spec. that apparently foretells much of what we're trying to develop here – sample provision sets for different size/type contracts.

External coordination and recommendations

In parallel efforts, I believe this effort should be coordinated via informal contact with PMICoS and hopefully a joint committee meeting at some point. Both organizations have scheduling specifications best practices committees of which the author of this initiative is a member. I personally have obtained valuable materials from both organizations. Coordination with related RP topics is also encouraged. For example,

reference might be made to Level 1, 2 and 3 schedules, developed in the RP for Schedule Classifications, for the reports, such as to be enclosed with a schedule Narrative (Level 1 and 2). Level 4 for look ahead, etc.

Approach

The approach used in the specification update is to split the specification into four functional components:

1. Description,
2. Administration,
3. Technical, and
4. Time Extensions and Claims.

The operating principle behind this approach is to isolate common and necessary functions that are independent of project size and scheduling tools used. For example, the requirements for a baseline submission, schedule updates and support of claims and weather delays can be independent of the method used to schedule the work.

Each component will have various recommended and alternate provisions. Once a complete set of provisions has been assembled for a component, the members of the scheduling committee will attempt to select the provisions of choice for broader approval.

Unresolved at this point is how the specifications will be adapted for varying types and sizes of projects. The choices are to have separate specs for different categories of type/size contract and/or alternate provisions within a single specification document. One model, the NAVFAC 01321N specification is in the form of a draft with optional provision that the users selects/deselects with the use of a word processor of special software designed for drafting specifications.

Future Updates

Once finalized, an annual review of the various components should be conducted for needed improvements or changes.

Conclusion

Studies show project performance benefits from the use of CPM scheduling. Schedules serve as a communication tool as well as a planning tool. Contractors need to be educated to the use and benefits of scheduling as they have the most to gain. Ultimately, project management and contract administration need to buy into the specification requirements as well. Owners best serves their own interest as well as the contractors' by actively implementing and enforcing schedule requirements. It may be more work up front for both sides, but the schedules themselves impose accountability on all parties, which in turn encourages action to meet schedules and schedule requirements.