



Advancing Professional Construction  
and Program Management Worldwide

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## VALUE ADDED BY A CCM AND ATTORNEY

**Stavros Karageorgiou, CCM, Esq. | November, 2016**



Like many other Certified Construction Managers (CCM) my construction career started in the trenches with “boots on the ground,” building real world experience useful in my subsequent management positions. During my time as an operations manager for various construction and electrical contracting companies, I noticed certain patterns emerge with respect to contractor disputes and what effective dispute resolution systems should be employed to resolve those disputes. My interest in resolving construction disputes was one of the factors leading to my decision to pursue a career in construction law.

My law practice benefits tremendously from my construction management experience and my CCM designation is recognized in the industry as a standard for competence, proficiency and professionalism in construction management. The value added by a CCM/Esq. is the training which allows me to quickly understand the nature of a dispute or a proposed agreement, parse through the relevant and legally significant facts, and propose practical solutions.

For example, understanding the impact of terminating a problematic contractor or subcontractor, beyond just the legal implications, permits a much more probative analysis and realistic approach to resolution. A CCM/Esq.’s firsthand knowledge of the construction processes and impacts allows us to recognize whether the source of the problems with a subcontractor is a result of a breakdown in communication, a lack of resources, or lack of experience and competence. In some instances creative solutions such as purchasing equipment with long-lead times and supplementing labor forces for a subcontractor with cash-flow issues may alleviate the need for termination. Other times termination is inevitable. In short, real world experience leads to practical solutions to problems.

Moreover, a CCM/Esq. adds value to contract drafting and negotiation because of our familiarity with the roles and bargaining positions of project stakeholders. Correspondingly, “living documents” such as MWBE/DBE compliance programs or safety programs require contractually workable implementation that will systematize the documentation processes. Clients greatly benefit from the insight of an attorney who has spent years qualifying and dealing with subcontractors and truly understands when a contractor is performing a “commercially useful function.”

The more subtle value added by a CCM/Esq. is couched in the relationships and network of colleagues the CCM/Esq. has cultivated over the years. Selecting a CCM/Esq. as counsel broadens a client's reach and taps into the CCM/Esq.'s resources of relationships with other construction professionals such as sureties, lending institutions, competitors and others who may for example offer possible joint venture opportunities. In sum, the practical experience of a CCM/Esq. combination adds tremendous value in the legal services we provide.

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Published on CMAA (<http://cmaanet.org>)