It’s hard to believe that spring is almost upon us, it seems like we just got over the holidays. At the January Board of Directors meeting at the World of Concrete, the board unanimously accepted the new ASCC Strategic Plan. First, I want to thank the task force members for their hard work and dedication in helping to achieve this plan. The Task Force was facilitated by Chris Plue, who had the incredible job of keeping this diverse, semi-strong-willed group focused. The members of the group included Peter Emmons, Chris Klemaske, Doug Rhiel, Peter Ruttura, Mike Schneider, David Somero, David Turner, Bev Garnant and myself. A pretty well rounded group of industry heavy hitters if I do say so. We met for two days in St. Louis and had follow-up conference calls to finalize the plan.

I have been involved in the development of previous ASCC strategic plans, but this one was different. There was a tremendous amount of self-confidence and pride as to how the ASCC has become a recognized voice in the concrete construction industry and a force to reckon with. But there is one hitch…we need your help.

We realized that we need to be more proactive in getting our side of the story out so that we can continue to influence the industry about things like incompatible specs, unachievable tolerances, poor construction methods, and anything else that hinders our members from performing first class concrete work. Our members are best in class at what we do; why shouldn’t we have more seats at the table?

This is where you come in. There are a few very simple ways to help.

- Get involved with an ASCC committee. This is where the nuts and bolts work gets done. As part of the strategic plan, it was decided that a new Technical Committee will be formed and Bruce Suprenant, world renowned concrete industry icon (he made me say that) has agreed to be the chairperson. If you have worked or are working in the field, are active in ACI, and are willing to attend the meetings, you have an unprecedented opportunity to improve our industry by putting your knowledge to work on this committee.

- Get involved in an ACI committee that is in your area of knowledge and expertise. They are starving for contractor participation and you can provide practical input that otherwise may not have been considered. We are the ones that have to deal with rules, tolerances...
and specs on a daily basis …here is our chance to be heard. The present leadership at ACI is extremely willing to allow us to put our opinions and experience on the table.

I know that sometimes it feels like we are preaching to the choir, but the stars are aligned for you and ASCC to vastly improve how we are required to perform our work. Please don’t hesitate to call me if you feel you can contribute.

Hopefully with spring approaching we will all soon be a lot busier, so remember, please be careful out there.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S MESSAGE

At the January meeting, your ASCC board of directors approved a new strategic plan. (See below) The plan is designed to provide direction for approximately three years. The focus is on education, technical proficiency and broadly communicating both what ASCC offers and the concrete construction expertise of our members.

The Strategic Planning Task Force spent an interesting two days reviewing past accomplishments, recognizing strengths and identifying weaknesses, and proposing a challenging and exciting future.

The Task Force is still functioning as we begin the assignment of implementing the plan. Strategies have been assigned to various councils and committees and we will soon have a conference call with committee chairs to review the plan and begin the implementation process.

We welcome your thoughts and your participation. If any part of the new plan is of particular interest to you please let me know – we’d love to have your help!

Special thanks to Clay Fischer who chairs the Task Force, and to Chris Plue for facilitating the planning process. And thanks to the other members of the group who put much time and careful consideration into this product: Peter Emmons, Chris Klemaske, Doug Rhiel, Peter Ruttura, Mike Schneider, David Somero and David Turner.

ASCC STRATEGIC PLAN

Mission

‘Enhancing the Capabilities of Those Who Build with Concrete’

The core values of ASCC are:

- **Personal Connection** – active and involved membership, awareness of members’ needs, quick response to members’ requests
- **Professional Growth** - facilitate: member interaction and learning, diverse networking opportunities, access to industry-wide knowledge, openness among members
- **Raising the Quality of Concrete Construction** – technical knowledge production and distribution; educating the industry on constructability; developing business savvy members, helping members deliver a high quality product
- **Safety** – promote zero tolerance for unsafe practices; model and share best practices
- **Voice of the Concrete Contractor** – the expert on constructability; represent concrete contractors throughout the construction industry; drive members to voice their expertise

Vision

- ASCC members will be the most informed contractors on both technical and business matters.
- ASCC and its contractor members will gain and leverage respect for their knowledge and experience on constructability issues.
- The ASCC name – its products, events and publications – will be recognized and valued throughout the design and construction industry.

Goals and Strategies

**Goal #1: Educate and Train Builders and Industry Partners**

1. Identify and implement opportunities for certification programs that meet a strong industry need
   i. Find the next ‘unsolvable’ issues and develop certification
   ii. Co-brand certification programs with ACI
   iii. Review Position Statements for certification potential

2. Identify need and create new and expanded publications
   i. Identify ‘holes to fill’ in industry publications

3. Provide members with links to relevant training programs via the website
   i. Identify members’ training needs
   ii. Direct members to top notch online training
4. Repackage and broaden distribution of existing programs and publications
   i. Consider repackaging opportunities, i.e. translation, position statements into book format
   ii. Evaluate markets and promotion of existing publications and programs and expand where appropriate

Goal #2: Increase Technical Effectiveness

1. Strategically expand the volunteer base
   i. Target underrepresented sectors for active membership (e.g. top civil contractors)
   ii. Tap deeper into member and non-member organizations
   iii. Re-introduce ASCC to member and non-member companies, find the right volunteers within contractor organizations, promote $75 alternate classification
   iv. Focus on getting the maximum numbers of members to attend an ASCC function

2. Influence ACI technical and educational documents
   i. Implement ASCC/ACI Task Force recommendations, expand co-branded programs and publications, create opportunities to co-write specifications
   ii. Help members understand how ACI works, drive increased contractor representation on ACI committees to drive change in codes and specifications
   iii. Hold an ASCC gathering at ACI conventions

3. Actively plan to fill the technical director position and to add technical personnel
   i. Define technical roles and responsibilities, expected outcomes, compile list of candidates for technical director position
   ii. Identify additional technical positions

4. Identify and conduct relevant research to help resolve critical contractor issues via the ASCC Foundation
   i. Fund research on prominent hotline topics
   ii. Fund market research to determine critical industry issues

5. Create the organizational structure to manage expanded technical activities, establish technical committee(s)
   i. Select chair and members with passion to drive this goal

6. Become the “go to” organization on constructability matters for developers, architects and engineers
   i. Widen public relations efforts within A/E communities; expand media list
   ii. Tap current ASCC A/E members to strategize audience needs
   iii. Determine optimum delivery method(s)
   iv. Consider a hotline for A/Es

Goal #3: Better Define and Promote the ASCC Brand

1. Perpetuate and promote the culture of connection and cooperation that is the foundation of the organization
   i. Archive tribal knowledge and knowledge transfer
   ii. Pilot the use of social media (Twitter, LinkedIn, etc.)
   iii. Expand experiential outings; golf, fishing, etc.
   iv. Expand charitable work, e.g. Habitat for Humanity, ACE, Public Art

2. Promote our expertise on constructability issues
   i. See Goal 2, Strategies 2 & 5
   ii. Help members promote their ASCC membership

3. Clarify ASCC audiences - members and customers - and address the brand accordingly; turn customers into members
   i. Document customer interactions
   ii. Identify products of interest to customers and promote accordingly
   iii. Develop a campaign to convert customers into members

4. Target communications to specific audiences
   i. Identify and prioritize our audiences; assign products/programs of interest
   ii. Purposefully plan and implement communications to accomplish Goals 1 & 2
   iii. Identify and leverage 25 prominent industry friends of ASCC

5. Examine ASCC products and affiliations for opportunities in branding or rebranding
   i. See Goal 1, Strategy 4

Participants:

Chris Plue, facilitator
Peter Emmons
Clay Fischer
Bev Garnant

Chris Klemaske
Doug Rhiel
Peter Ruttura
Mike Schneider

David Somero
David Turner

3
“How Did That Happen ?”: Proper Accident Investigation

The title is a question you may have asked, or, that may have been asked of you. Just as you expect an answer when you ask it, you need to have an answer when it’s asked of you. The only way for anyone to truly know “what happened” with regard to an accident or incident is for an investigation to be conducted.

Hopefully you are not good at accident/incident investigations because you’ve had to conduct them frequently. Hopefully you are proficient at them because you’ve had solid training.

Quality information can be used to determine the root cause of an accident or incident. That conclusion can then be used to develop a strategy to prevent recurrence. Helping prevent recurrence (and the associated pain, suffering, property loss or cost) is the primary reason to conduct a thorough investigation.

Your company should have a comprehensive plan for responding to emergencies. Basic steps to follow include: 1.) Seek appropriate medical care for the injured - **FIRST PRIORITY** 2.) Secure the scene. 3.) Protect against further loss. 4.) Investigate the facts, conditions and events prior to, during and immediately after the incident. 5.) Record all collected information.

It is a good idea to have a pre-assembled investigation kit. This kit should include a camera, measuring tape, barricade tape, plastic vials with caps, graph paper, flashlight, Accident/Incident Investigation Form, tape recorder, Blood Borne Pathogen protection. To analyze quality data/information, you must be prepared to collect it.

A key source of information are witnesses. Victims, primary witnesses (eyewitness to the event), secondary witnesses (did not actually see the event but were in the vicinity), and tertiary witnesses (not present or near the event but have knowledge/evidence of the event) should be interviewed. It is important that you separate all witnesses until you can interview them. If they interact, they may share information, resulting in a “blended story”.

When conducting an interview, put the person at ease. Explain the purpose of the activities that will be taking place. Remember that this is a fact-finding process; you are investigating the incident, not disciplining the employee. To get the witness to talk, ask open ended questions, such as “How did . . .” or “Please explain . . .”.

Collecting data/information gives answers to who, what, where, when and how. Why is the result of these answers. This is where the root cause is determined.

Root causes fall into four broad categories. (*Examine possible causes listed under these categories.*):

- Equipment
- People
- Management
- Environment

Use “the five whys” method to get to the root cause. Ask “Why is that so?” at least five times, or until it no longer makes sense to go further. *Ex: Why did they fall? Tripped on extension cord. Why was the cord there? Working across the floor. Why not use a closer outlet? It's broken. Why is it broken? It was hit with a forklift. Why not repaired? (As you can see, we get information we were not necessarily expecting.)*

Once the root causes are understood, it’s time to develop corrective actions by following a corrective actions progression. We start with corrections that do not require the worker’s participation (eliminate the hazard). If we cannot do that we substitute a less hazardous material or process. The next steps are to use engineering controls, use administrative controls, add personal protective equipment, and finally, train employees. A crucial final step is to observe the implementation of the corrective actions to monitor effectiveness.

If you complete a thorough investigation you will not only be able to answer, “*How did that happen ?*”; you’ll be able to explain what is being done to prevent it from happening again.

**BEST PRACTICES FOR PERSONAL FALL PROTECTION**

The American Rental Association, the Association of Equipment Manufacturers, the Associated Equipment Distributors, the International Powered Access Federation and the Scaffold Industry Association have joined forces to develop a new educational document, the *Statement of Best Practices of Personal Fall Protection Systems for Aerial Work Platform Equipment*. The participating organizations recognized a need to address the proper use and regulatory compliance of AWP personal fall protection and created a common resource to educate users on best practices of the safe use of PFP equipment. The use of PFP is a component of AWP training and has legal requirements in the United States. This document is available at no charge at [http://www/scaffold.org/userfiles/file/BP_PFPSystems_AWPEquipment_Bookmarked_WEB_2_28_11.pdf](http://www/scaffold.org/userfiles/file/BP_PFPSystems_AWPEquipment_Bookmarked_WEB_2_28_11.pdf),
ERROR IN ASCC SAFETY MANUAL

We want to call your attention to an error in the ASCC Safety Manual, Fourth Edition 2010, Chapter B.6, Hearing Conservation. In the text in the first bullet point under 2.0 and in the first bullet point under 5.4, the number 80 should be 85. Please make these changes to your Manual accordingly and we apologise for the inconvenience.

DECORATIVE CONCRETE COUNCIL

From Gray to Green – Concrete is the Sustainable Medium for Tomorrow’s Environment

SRI, low VOCs, thermal mass, life cycle cost, permanent solution, heat island effect, regional materials, recycled materials, durability, enhanced air quality, optimized energy use. These terms and acronyms remind us of all the reasons concrete is one of the most eco-friendly construction materials available today. As a concrete contractor, and especially a decorative concrete contractor, these terms hold the key to our future success and profitability.

Concrete is a versatile, beautiful, cost-effective building material and a key component of most LEED-worthy structures. It is also durable and resistant to fire, rot and corrosion. Life spans for concrete structures are easily double or triple those of other types of buildings. Become the expert on how to build a greener project with concrete; when you receive a set of drawings be prepared to make recommendations on how to integrate your materials to make the project better.

Why is concrete a better choice? The raw materials used in concrete are abundant and can be sourced locally almost anywhere in the world. Concrete can be made from a variety of readily available substances including fly ash, slag and silica fume, all of which are waste byproducts from power plants, steel mills and other manufacturing facilities. Recycled materials and post industrial wastes are also used to make many of the color pigments used in concrete.

Concrete can be produced in the precise quantity needed for a specific project, thus minimizing overages and waste. And concrete material from a demolition can be crushed and recycled into aggregate for use in new concrete, backfill or road base.

Concrete imbues buildings with thermal mass that contributes to energy efficiency. Radiant heating installed in decorative concrete floors is a great example of green-control, providing cost-effective and efficient temperature management. Light colored concrete, white cement or light-color regional cements contribute to a higher SRI (Solar Reflectivity Index) and in doing so diminish heat island effect.

Using a concrete slab as a finished floor by polishing, staining or stamping the surface creates a unique look and eliminates the need for floor coverings. Exposed concrete walls and floors are low maintenance, effective for retaining heat and maintaining indoor air quality. They are also resistant to allergens and mold.

Pervious concrete can help manage storm water runoff, recharge the water table and reduce heat island effect. With the addition of integral color, saw-cut designs or eco-friendly stains, pervious concrete can serve as a palate for creative expression.

Practicality meets beauty in the most efficient combination of characteristics and concrete’s endless artistic possibilities. It is an adaptable, cost efficient medium which offers virtually unlimited color, structural and design options. As artisans in this medium, we can and should showcase the advantages, benefits and possibilities of concrete solutions for sustainable development and demonstrate the versatility of the world’s most widely used building material.

We have at hand a truly magnificent medium and the ability to share its potential with owners, architects, craftsmen and general contractors. By using concrete creatively and effectively, we can help construct greener, more sustainable projects. Think about this the next time you receive a set of drawings and consider making recommendations that will transform the project from gray to green.

ACI 301, “Specifications for Structural Concrete,” for many years contained the following requirement for a smooth-form finish:

“5.3.3.3.b Smooth-form finish—Patch tie holes and defects. Remove fins exceeding 1/8 in. in height.”

The defects to be patched, however, were never defined. That led to many disputes because some design professionals considered bugholes to be defects. In fact, the American Institute of Architect’s MasterSpec® includes bugholes in a list of defects that must be repaired per their specification.
Fortunately, ACI 301-10 no longer uses the word defect, and has also eliminated the terms rough-form and smooth-form finish. There are now three surface finishes defined in Section 5.3.3.3. Surface Finish-1.0 (SF-1.0) is the lowest grade and requires patching surface voids larger than 1½ in. wide or ½ in. deep. SF-3.0 is the highest grade and requires patching surface voids larger than ½ in. wide or ½ in. deep. SF-2.0 has the same limit on size of voids not needing patching—larger than ¼ in. wide or ½ in. deep. This should help prevent disputes about bugholes, although ACI 301-10 is silent on the allowable frequency of surface voids (bugholes per sq ft of surface), so there is still room for dispute. In addition, SF-2.0 requires the contractor to provide a mockup of concrete surface appearance and texture unless otherwise specified, and SF-3.0 requires the contractor to provide a mockup of concrete surface appearance and texture.

There is still a chance that individual contract documents will address bugholes differently, however. Note the underlined portion of Section 5.3.3.3 below:

“5.3.3.3 As-cast finishes—Use form-facing materials meeting the requirements of 2.2.1.1. Produce as-cast formed finishes in accordance with Contract Documents and 5.3.3.3.a through 5.3.3.3.c.” [Sections a through c refer to SF-1.0, SF 2.0 and SF 3.0]

So, if your contract documents require repair of defects, make sure defects are defined before the job starts, preferably at the bid stage.

LEED GA IS THE NEW LEED AP

Over the last decade, the LEED system has made such a major impact within the design and construction industries that the term “LEED AP” (Accredited Professional) appears to be permanently branded into our brains (as well as on our business cards, CVs, and signature blocks). This was a rigorous time consuming and complex examination focused on those who would be leading teams or administering the LEED process for an entire project. For many it appeared to be more of an esoteric exercise rather than a way to learn the basics of the LEED system.

In 2009, the USGBC/GBCI established new requirements for LEED Project certification and individual LEED accreditation and a new level of accreditation was created, the Green Associate, or LEED GA. The purpose of the LEED GA exam is to provide individuals a better understanding of LEED basics. This exam is a great opportunity for individuals from all industries who have interest in the Green Building Movement to gain more knowledge and opportunities. The LEED AP is now reserved for specialized individuals that actually work directly on LEED projects. The newly established LEED Fellow accreditation is a group of very elite individuals who have 10+ years experience as a LEED AP.

The Green Associate is available to all individuals who meet just one of the following three criteria: (1) work for a firm/company involved in sustainability or construction; (2) have attended a LEED Training/ Education class; and/or (3) demonstrate or document involvement in support of LEED projects.

We encourage all individuals - including accountants, office staff, marketing managers, project engineers, superintendents, etc. — to go after the LEED GA. It is a great opportunity to learn the intent and general requirements for LEED without the necessary memorization and calculations required by the LEED AP+ program. As a LEED GA you learn the basics of LEED which will be helpful in addressing any LEED material submittal that lands on your desk. The LEED GA exam is the appropriate test for your level of involvement with LEED projects and will teach you how concrete emissions affect the built environment. A little LEED education can go a long way.

NOTE: Individuals who possess the LEED AP accreditation as of June 2009 were automatically grandfathered into the new program and are known as a “LEED AP Legacies.” Although the USGBC/GBCI organizations would like to see LEED AP Legacies adapt to the new system, LEED AP Legacies can, in effect, do nothing further and maintain their LEED AP title forever.