

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

FINAL THOUGHTS



CHUCK KNIGHT

This is my final message to you as President of ICRI. A year ago, if you recall, I mentioned the word “collaborative.” At the time, ICRI had a Strategic Plan, whereby we had a blueprint for translating the Institute’s plan into a strategic reality—in partnership with CAM and its staff, our Executive Committee, Board of Directors, and all of you ICRI members.

First, I want to emphasize that the operative word here has been “we.” Everything that happened this year has been, in my opinion, the result of collaboration—by staff as well as our entire membership. Collaboration among the various committees and those individuals who faithfully served on them proved to be more than just a suggested outline for our activities during the past year. After reviewing ICRI’s Strategic Plan in mandating specific goals and objectives with measurable benchmarks, it allowed us to review how we were progressing.

It didn’t just happen. It was the product of many hours of work over the course of this year, not only by members of the Executive Committee in working with our Policy Manual and By-Laws, but also by ICRI’s staff and the Board of Directors. All of these efforts had been working to build upon the operational plan and bring our strategies into reality. All items on the Board of Directors and Executive Committee agendas are tied to specific strategic objectives. We know this because our agendas are annotated and each agenda item carries a reference to its related strategic objective.

Another area of focus for us has been in our dealings with the Construction Industry Management (CIM) Program and with international representation. ICRI’s interactions with CIM began in earnest 3 years ago under the guidance of Monica Rourke, Tanja Komar, Randy Beard et al., and staff and have increased every year since. Adding even more depth to our international membership is also definitely on the horizon, as we witnessed an increased number of entries for the ICRI Project Awards from our international members.

Another area of change, which may prove challenging for our membership, is ICRI taking a position on behalf of its membership and the concrete repair industry that we serve. In the past, we have formulated position statements as they may have related directly to current events, or perhaps took an advocacy position on behalf of our membership. A recent example of that would be the fly ash issue, whereby ICRI and staff formulated a statement on behalf of ICRI and its membership to send to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), which allowed our organization to begin building a strong, improved

process. Could it be that our leadership should consider forming a Public Interest Committee? I certainly don’t want to sound political, but isn’t it time that we stand up as a professional organization and be counted on behalf of the American public? After all, our ICRI Mission Statement and Strategic Plan, as contained in our Membership Directory, could allow for such a committee. Please be kind enough to review both of these documents. They are important to our continued success.

Another important element of our increased collaboration efforts has been at the chapter level. Through staff participation and the tireless efforts of Beth Newbold, the Chapters Committee is more than just meeting twice a year. New regional meetings—the Chapter Roundtables—have now left a footprint in efforts to improve communication among local Chapters and ICRI.

The collaborative challenge that faces our profession isn’t just having 30-plus chapters within ICRI. As you know, the leadership positions change every year and the staff continues to preserve continuity and the institutional memory of ICRI. Your Executive Committee meeting once each year during the summer certainly assists in refining and defining issues for the upcoming year.

On the surface, there appears to have been a lot of change happening and, depending on your view, it could be alarming or energizing. Think a little more about that. We are defined by our essence. The essence of who we are as a professional organization is that we continue to provide security and safety into the future. Our ICRI essence rises above policy manual and by-law changes, dues levels, and monthly chapter meetings. No amount of change in the day-to-day details of ICRI will change one iota of who we are and what we do. I mentioned it to you a year ago in my opening remarks—let’s be proud and not inherently nervous just because of the economy.

So now 2010 has drawn to a close—as has my message. It’s the end of my tenure as your President. I sincerely hope that it won’t be the end of what we started. Having had the support of ICRI’s Past Presidents, staff, and our membership, I have nothing short of professional respect for all of you.

But, we have to do more than just occasionally collaborate. Right now, that concept of collaboration—many parts working best when working together—is somewhat strange. We have found that it is a good feeling and we suddenly realize that we can work together. As volunteer members and staff, I want to challenge us to keep this spirit alive and to make it a permanent part of our professional organization’s DNA.

If it doesn’t happen today or tomorrow, allow us to stay focused on it and keep building on it from year to year. Then we will be able to achieve our mission.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "C. J. Knight". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.