

## The Importance of As-Built

*By Anil Seth*

*I watched the Indy 500, and I was thinking that if they left earlier they wouldn't have to go so fast.*

— Steven Wright

In the EPC/EPCM business, one of the last milestones is As-Built submission. The general conditions of contracts stipulate the applicable clauses of As-Built documentations as:

### *3.4.1.4 Customs Duty Applicable on As-built Documents*

*Customs Duty on as-built documents/drawings and other project documentation required to be submitted in accordance with Clauses 5.1.9.3 of Part-II of the Bidding Documents, if any, shall be paid by the Contractor directly to the Custom authorities. Company shall reimburse to the Contractor the custom duty paid by him on As built documents ,at actuals, against documentary proof and subject to the maximum of the amount indicated in the schedule of prices (Appendix A-X).*

### *5.1.9.3 As-Built Plans*

*Upon completion of identifiable units or components of the construction and Erection phase of the project, the Contractor will complete all of the related plans to the "as-built" stage including all Vendor drawings). Contractor shall provide Company the as built documents in hard & soft copies distribution shall be as per sec. 9.5 as detailed below:*

- a) Full size of all drawings.*
- b) Bound sets of approved specifications.*
- c) Hard binders of the manufacturer's data book including certified prints and data for mechanical, electrical or any specialty equipment, which is part of the Contractor's Scope of Supply. Data Books shall be complete with index as to tag numbers associated with manufacture's data shown. Equipment data shall include as a minimum requirement the principle and description of operation, Installation / Erection and maintenance instructions, drawings and dimensions, parts lists and unpriced purchase orders. Data Books shall be bound in volumes limited to a maximum of 3 inches in thickness.*
- d) d).....*
- e) e).....*

The requirement for As-builts exists in almost all EPC/EPCM projects. Then why do we loosely bind ourselves to this last Project Milestone.

After reading the paper “As-builts – Problems & Proposed Solutions” by Stephen R. Pettee, it was realized that the problems associated with As-builts are not local but global.

In general the As-built task is considered as the lowest priority engineering task or in brutal words, a job not fit for engineers. The success of the project is related to timely acceptance of format I to IV, or in other words timely completion of Mechanical Completion, Pre-commissioning, Commissioning, Sustained Load Test and Guarantee Runs, and never with As-builts.....WHY?

In our opinion the WBS weightages agreed upon for any activity gives the indication of how stakeholders will react to its completion. The tail end of any project has less significance, why?.....probably because only if the major deadline appears to be in jeopardy do we raise a schedule risk in the status report. As-builts appear when >90% cost is recovered; for the stakeholders, achieving such milestones is of less significance. In other words this activity although important loses its’ charm for completion.

In the world of project resource sharing, we have experienced that on declaration of >95% completion of project, the PM is stripped off the engineering& execution resources. Probably to cut down the specialists cost or the need of resources demand has come from other running projects.

But what happens to the As-Builts?

Such activities are given to the person holding lowest portfolio in the team or are out-sourced at lowest (L1) cost. The result is “hush-hush” submission of the As-Built, resulting into incomplete information and half-hearted effort to the document which will be needed as:

1. One-stop repository of all directed changes. These can help in checks and balances against work not billed or deletions not credited.
2. A contractor’s certified record attesting to what was built
3. Demolition drawings when built items are no longer needed.
4. Land-use record history.

The question whether we today live with this situation or carve project incentives for such activities is dependent on how important is our contractor-client relationship...seems an illogical odd statement different from what we read in text books. Here are some suggestions:

- Transfer the task of handing over the As-built documentation to the Proposal & Marketing unit. This unit always has budget for customer relationship. While handing over As-built documents these representatives may discuss the future needs and can also take clients’ satisfaction feedback(which in fact is an ISO in-thing)

- Close the As-Built task with a thanks-giving dinner.
- Create a bonus clause for team members associated with As-built task.
- Select documents to be issued as As-built while framing the document control register.
- Most important part, include finishers in project task force

These are all needs of contracts and if not handled in timely ways may become sore points.

*“The contract is not the one which thinks for you, but the one which makes you think.”*

## About the Author



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