

## Welcome to the October 2020 PMWJ<sup>1</sup>

**David L. Pells**

Welcome to the October 2020 edition of the PM World Journal, the 98<sup>th</sup> monthly edition. I'm very happy to continue producing the PM World Journal (PMWJ), but I have to admit that I may be going stir crazy. Or maybe it's cabin fever. The highlight of my day is often getting outside, walking the dog around the neighborhood. Some days I just need to go for a drive, somewhere, anywhere.

Life is getting crazier in this year of the covid pandemic, and here in the USA it seems there is a new crisis every week. Two weeks ago it was the arrival of a Fall surge in coronavirus cases; they're increasing everywhere again. Last week it's the president's tax returns and an out-of-control presidential debate. Now the president has Covid-19 with a pending national security crisis. Talk about a VUCA world! This is it. Projects are stopping, restarting, restopping, along with businesses, schools and everyday life.

So what do we do? APM has just held a great webinar on professional life under lockdown. PMI and IPMA are running virtual events. Online courses, training, meetings and other professional and educational activities are still increasing. Here at the PMWJ we continue to consider serious topics, write editorials and introductions, post resources in the PM World Library and solicit work for journal publication. Fortunately, many others seem to also be thinking and writing a lot. So we have more good works in the journal this month.

Interesting interviews with one current and one former PMI leader are included. The interview of PMI Fellow Ian Fraser by Spring in Beijing offers insights based on Iain's global travels and consulting work, as well as his knowledge of PMI and PM in general. The interview of PMI Fellow Ricardo Triana by Angelica Larios in Mexico City provides useful information from a Latin American perspective, as Ricardo is currently Latin America Managing Director for PMI.

Seven authors have contributed featured papers, serious works on a variety of topics. I want to thank Alan Stretton, Bob Prieto, Lalamini Budeli and Henny Portman for their new papers. They all have been multiple contributors to the PMWJ; Alan and Bob have authored many papers over the years, both are very experienced and knowledgeable PM experts, and their works are serious contributions to the PM body of knowledge. This month, Alan tackles the topic of PM in context again, while Bob offers new insights for understanding large, complex engineering and construction programs.

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Lalamani Budeli in South Africa is back with another paper on another new topic (for us), quality engineering problems in material handling plants. Henny Portman in The Netherlands has provided an update to his great 2019 review of agile applications and methodologies, a field that seems to be growing in both sophistication and diversity on a regular basis. Danilo Arba is back with his second paper for us, also on a new and interesting topic, “data mining tools and techniques in construction.” We also welcome new authors Mandla Lusenga and Cecile Schultz in South Africa for their paper on an important topic, enablers and barriers of team performance.

I am always very happy to have multiple series articles and this month is no exception. Series authors are either widely-known and respected project management experts, or authors of new books in the field. This month we have seven excellent contributions. Prof Darren Dalcher has facilitated a great article by Elmar Kutsch, co-author of the recently published Routledge book on Mindful Project Management, with Darren also providing one of his illuminating introductory articles. Both authors discuss resilience for project managers through more mindfulness. Please read these interesting articles.

Prof John Cable at the University of Maryland is back with another article in his series on converting to online teaching, which they have successfully done at UMD. His article this month is titled “Facilitating Virtual Classes” and should be of interest to any teachers or schools going through this conversion process. PMI Fellow Iain Fraser has provided another short article based on his book on Portfolio Management; Massimo Pirozzi in Rome has authored another article on stakeholder relationship management based on his Routledge book on the same topic. Fernando Santiago in Canada has authored a third article on factors affecting the funding of a project, partially based on his book titled “The Outcome-Driven Organization.”

I also want to welcome and thank Dr. Yang Chu in China for his article on the risks of doing business in China, provided by Dr. David Hillson as this month’s Risk Doctor series article. Dr. Chu is a risk professional and a cultural change agent, with roots in both China and the UK. His organization offers bridging support to Western companies and project managers new to working in China, an invaluable service for many. His article discusses several critically important aspects.

We continue to have authors offering good advice each month, which I appreciate. There’s too much new ground these days, the earth seems to be moving under our feet. We need new and fresh perspectives on almost everything we are doing. Authors of the Advisories this month offer information on both new and familiar topics. Jeff Oltmann, one of America’s true experts on agile and technology development projects, has authored a straightforward article on “how to hold a project retrospective”; Ken Smith has tapped his historic experiences to share information about “Just in Time Line of Balance” project planning. And PMI Fellow and PMWJ global advisor Alfonso Bucero is helping us

keep our heads together in these trying times with an article titled ‘project management skills to survive in Pandemic times’. Frankly, I needed that!

Perhaps my favorite reads in the journal each month though are the Reports by PMWJ correspondents, as they discuss projects and conditions in their respective countries. With the Covid-19 virus still spreading, and with economies either curtailed or severely damaged in so many countries, I am always anxious to see how projects and PM professionals are doing around the world. It seems that the PM field is pretty resilient. Big projects are still moving forward, albeit more slowly. PM societies are acting, some perhaps more effectively than others. Please read the reports from Brazil, Finland, Spain and the UK this month for some interesting updates.

Second Editions have turned out to be important contributions to the journal. We support several PM conferences each year, selecting some of their papers for republication in the PMWJ. I try to choose solid research papers on important and timely topics, or subjects that I think some of our readers will find useful. This month we include two more papers from the 9<sup>th</sup> Scientific Conference on Project Management in the Baltic States at the University of Latvia in April 2020, and one from the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual University of Maryland PM Symposium in May 2020. They cover such topics as public-private partnerships, crisis management, infrastructure projects and BIM implementation in construction.

The fourth previously published paper this month is a 2009 paper by Bob Prieto on the issue of evolving risks in the engineering and construction industry. In fact, if you are involved with big construction projects, all four of these papers should be interesting.

We close this month’s edition with two book reviews. In particular, I want to recommend the review of “The Perspective of Women Project Management Professionals”, a book published earlier this year by PMWJ correspondent Ipek Ozguler in Istanbul. I had the honor of authoring the Foreword; it’s a very interesting book that illuminates some of the challenges faced by women in the project management field. I highly recommend it to everyone, especially men. Perhaps the main take away for me is that in the trenches of project management, men and women have surprisingly similar needs, capabilities and experiences. Jason Loman provides a nice review.

Thank you for reading the PMWJ. Thanks to all of our authors this month. Stay safe, have a good month.

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## About the Author



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**David L. Pells** is Managing Editor and publisher of the *PM World Journal* ([www.pmworldjournal.com](http://www.pmworldjournal.com)) and Managing Director of the PM World Library ([www.pmworldlibrary.net](http://www.pmworldlibrary.net)). David is an internationally recognized leader in the field of professional project management with more than 40 years of experience on a variety of programs and projects, including engineering, construction, energy, defense, transit, technology and nuclear security, and project sizes ranging from thousands to billions of dollars. He occasionally acts as program management advisor for U.S. national laboratories, and currently serves as an independent advisor for a major U.S. national security program.

David Pells has been an active professional leader in the United States since the 1980s, serving on the board of directors of the Project Management Institute (PMI®) twice. He was founder and chair of the Global Project Management Forum (1995-2000), an annual meeting of leaders of PM associations from around the world. David was awarded PMI's Person of the Year award in 1998 and Fellow Award, PMI's highest honor, in 1999. He is also an Honorary Fellow of the Association for Project Management (APM) in the UK; Project Management Associates (PMA) in India; the Istituto Italiano di Project Management (ISIPM); and the Russian Project Management Association (SOVNET). He was named an honorary member of the Project Management Association of Nepal in 2010.

Former managing editor of *PM World Today*, he is the creator, editor and publisher of the *PM World Journal* (ISSN: 2330-4880). David has a BA in Business Administration from the University of Washington and an MBA from Idaho State University in the USA. He has published widely and spoken at events worldwide. David lives near Dallas, Texas and can be contacted at [editor@pmworldjournal.com](mailto:editor@pmworldjournal.com).

To view other works by David Pells, visit his author showcase in the PM World Library at <https://pmworldlibrary.net/authors/david-l-pells/>