SUMMARY

In the U.S., construction management (CM) is popularly used in the construction industry. CM provides the advantages of shorter project period, flexibility of changes and tighter control by the clients. From the history of the development of CM in the U.S., the local construction industry’s development is quite similar. Time, flexibility and control are the concerns of the local clients. The objective of this study is to find out the applicability and how to implement CM in Singapore. After reviewing some literature regarding CM, the conditions for the choice of CM approach as recommended by the RICS are viewed as quite applicable.

There are two major types of CM with the main difference being whether the client or the construction manager is to execute the contract with the works contractors. No matter which type of CM is to be used, the construction manager acts as the client’s agent to communicate and coordinate with the construction team throughout the entire project process to achieve the client’s needs. Suggestions of CM services to be provided in the local market are discussed by taking into account the roles of professionals involved in construction projects.

Two local projects implementing CM are studied to find out the problems encountered during the process. Misunderstanding of the CM process by the construction team caused a series of problems in Project A. The human factor further complicates the problems. The construction manager wanted to implement the usual CM process to Project A but he faced resistance from the local consultants. The compromised solutions have changed
the project structure from CM to one close to traditional lump sum contract. The CM’s skill in scheduling and planning could not be exercised after the award of the prime contract because the prime contractor was responsible to schedule his works to ensure timely completion. Project B adopted the CM process with modifications to accommodate the local practice. There were no major problems to the modified CM process with the full understanding and cooperation of the construction team. The project was switched to design and build contract just before the tendering of the first works contract due to commercial reasons. However, for Project B, no problems are anticipated should the CM process be used throughout the entire project.

After analyzing the problems of the two projects, CM is confirmed to be applicable to the local projects provided that necessary modifications and proper implementation are followed. Suggestions to improve the implementation of CM process are stated in the conclusion to end the study. Further research in setting a proper model of CM process for local projects is recommended. In order to achieve globalization in the future, other types of project management process should also be studied.