SUMMARY

Post Occupancy Evaluation (POE) is the process of using feedback from the users of a facility. Architects in particular can benefit by evaluating how well their buildings were meeting the users needs. Deficiencies that are thus identified can be collated in a database so that they can be avoided in future projects. Methods such as surveys, questionnaires and observation techniques are used to get this feedback.

With the billions of dollars that are being spent on buildings today, organizations see the need to monitor their buildings and see how well they perform. Architects in their role as lead consultants have the responsibility of ensuring that their designs meet the needs of their users.

The study therefore reviews the use of POE as a tool for design management. It also determines the status of POE in architectural firms in Singapore and investigates the methods for undertaking POE's.

A comprehensive literature review of POE was carried out. The relevance of POE was identified as well as the different types of POE's that are conducted, their methodologies as well as the resources required. A questionnaire was developed that would help gather relevant data to test the research objectives.

A postal survey was carried out and respondents requested to complete the research questionnaire. The response of 34 completed questionnaires ensured that the results would be representative of the population of architects in Singapore.
The results of the survey indicated that architects in Singapore consider POE as a useful tool in the design process. However only a small percentage of respondents had undertaken these. The main reason for not doing so was the perception that high costs were involved in undertaking such a study. The other inhibiting factors were the time that was required as well as the perception that special training was required.

Most architects surveyed recognised various advantages of POE in the briefing process as well as in realising an improved product. Respondents were also requested to rank the factors that were most likely to be evaluated. They indicated that owing to the constraints of time the most likely method for undertaking such evaluations, was the walkthrough method. This method however does not allow the identification of problems that are not apparent in a visual observation.

The survey also indicated that architects felt that the costs for undertaking such evaluations should not be borne by them, but rather by the client or through Government grants. An aspect of the survey that needs to be highlighted was the number of comments that were received in the questionnaire. Through these, architects shared their views on a number of issues they were concerned with.