

# BOOK REVIEW



## The Application of Contracts in Engineering and Construction Projects

by Dr Donald Charrett

Reviewed by Jodie Atkin

Google Dr Donald Charrett, and you will find that he is a barrister, arbitrator and mediator, practising in technology, engineering and construction disputes in Melbourne, Australia. Read a little further, and having read his most current offering, it comes as no surprise that as well as having practiced law for some 20 years, he was first an engineer for over 30 years. It is no doubt a result of this extensive experience in both law and engineering that Dr Charrett has been able to write in a manner that is easily accessible to law students, lawyers, engineering students and engineers alike.

Published in 2019, *The Application of Contracts in Engineering and Construction Projects* contains a number of chapters freshly written, as well as a number of papers written for previous publications such the International Construction Law Review and the Australian Construction Law Newsletter. Dr Charrett writes in a style easily understood by a novice to the field, and yet remains relevant and informative to seasoned and experienced construction engineers and lawyers. His prose is clear and engaging so that complex issues can be effortlessly understood by the reader, from appropriate risk allocation to the fine details of contractual terms and on to various methods of dispute resolution under various standard form and bespoke contracts.

The book is scattered with examples of construction projects from around the world, which Dr Charrett uses to illustrate both best practice and pitfalls when contracting for construction projects. He identifies issues such as those that arise when starting construction before the design has been completed, using the example of those encountered during construction of the Sydney Opera House.

New Zealand readers may be familiar with the Canterbury Earthquakes Royal Commission Report. Two chapters are dedicated to that report, which consider the issues and lessons learnt, and are important to construction lawyers throughout the world. These will also be of interest to anyone interested in the built environment, and concerned about structural failure.

This is a book that anyone in the field of construction, contracting, and construction law would benefit from reading. Its structure lends itself to reading from front to back, and it is certainly engaging enough to do so. This is no dry contract text. It is also a book that a reader can dip into, reading a chapter here and there in any order to gain an understanding of, or to clarify, an issue of particular interest.