UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
Department of Engineering

## CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERING MASTERS DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

**A post games review of health and safety knowledge transfer from the London 2012 Olympics.**

Construction is a high risk industry and when accidents occur the outcome is often tragic and costly. Over the past two decades the UK's construction industry has seen significant reductions in fatalities and injuries however, this trend has plateaued in the last 5 years. A literature review identified that using legislation and enforcement to drive improvements in health and safety, a widening gulf between large firms and SMEs and the ephemeral nature of the industry have contributed to this plateau. It has been suggested that learning from exemplar construction projects could be the catalyst to further improvement. The formidable health and safety performance of London 2012 makes it a prime example of such a project and as a result a number of reports sharing the lessons learnt have been published. However a post games study of the transfer of this knowledge back into industry has never been completed, a gap in knowledge that this research project will attempt to fill.

The aim of the research is to investigate the extent of health and safety knowledge transfer from London 2012 into UK construction with specific objectives to focus on awareness, applicability, uptake and barriers. A sequential mixed method approach was selected, combining qualitative interviews and quantitative questionnaires. Contractors from the London 2012 construction supply chain were identified as the research population.

Initial analysis of the data collected has revealed that the level of awareness of the learning legacy publications is lower than expected. Yet the industry widely considers that, from the list of London 2012 lessons learnt themes, health and safety has both the greatest potential to influence the industry and is the most applicable to future projects. The uptake to date has varied considerably depending on the initiative and the size of the organisation with the average lifespan of any change lasting approximately 1.5 years. The most prominent barriers include resources, programme, project value and poor communication.

It is hoped that findings from this research can be used by future projects to improve the efficacy of their knowledge transfer. If this research could contribute to saving just one life there will be a tangible benefit for the whole industry.

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