

Do we need a Code of Conduct (Ethics) in New Zealand?

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AITPM TRANSPORT MODELLING CODE OF CONDUCT – PROFESSIONALISM

Introduction

This Code of Conduct (the “Code”) has been developed by the Transport Modelling Network of AITPM. It is intended to be read and adopted by transport modelling practitioners and consumers of modelling services who contribute to making decisions on improvements to the transport systems in Australia. The Code comprises two parts – Part 1: Principles of Professionalism, and Part 2: Technical Information. Part 2 is a ‘live’ document that is updated from time to time. Both documents can be found here: [TMN Code of Conduct](#)

Context

Providing and maintaining the efficient and safe operation of our transport system depends on timely and justified investments in improved infrastructure and services. Decision-makers are constantly challenged to balance numerous political, technical, social, environmental and financial considerations to determine the priority, timing and extent of individual investments. Transport modelling is a cost-effective way of assessing improvement options and future demand scenarios and is just one tool used to provide part of the (technical) information required by decision makers. Now, there is strong reliance on transport models and there is greater scrutiny of the validity of outputs from these models.

AITPM stands to provide leadership in the traffic and transport industry and through its Transport Modelling Network, has worked with transport modellers and representatives of state government agencies around Australia to develop the Code of Conduct.

This Code aims to improve and seek consistency in transport modelling practices in the transport planning industry and promote positive and ethical behaviours. The Code is aimed at both the modelling practitioners and the consumers of their services. The Code aims to achieve this with six principles.

The purpose of the principles

The six Principles of Professionalism set out the minimum professional practice and ethical standards when providing transport modelling services or using outputs from transport models. The primary objectives of the Code are the achievement of good transport infrastructure outcomes, thereby fostering and enhancing the professional reputation of transport modellers and the transport planning industry.

The principles of the Code

1. Integrity and professional conduct
2. Best interests
3. Conflicts of interest
4. Informed consent
5. Service standards
6. Professional expertise

Principles of Australian Code of Conduct

- Integrity and professional conduct
- Best interests
- Conflicts of interest
- Informed consent
- Service standards
- Professional expertise

Integrity and professional conduct

- *“Maintain high standards of personal and professional conduct to meet industry expectations, reflect favourably upon the transport planning/modelling profession and serve as an example to others*
- *Act with respect and avoid actions that will bring you, your organization and the transport planning/modelling profession into disrepute”*

Best Interests

- *“As a trusted professional, you owe a duty of care to the community and other professionals working in the transport industry and must always act to provide objective and impartial advice which may influence project outcomes*
- *Recommendations should not be based on transport modelling outcomes alone but rather in conjunction with outcomes from other relevant investigations. Always be mindful of the limitations of the models*
- *Be constructive when reviewing the work of another practitioner. Audits and reviews should be performed in a professional manner and reported confidentially to those who are required to know. Disagreements and differences of opinion should be resolved in a professional manner”*

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CODE OF ETHICAL CONDUCT

Engineering New Zealand takes ethics and professionalism very seriously. We hold our engineers accountable for their work on behalf of

flow

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Code of Ethical Conduct

- Take reasonable steps to safeguard health and safety
- Have regard to effects on environment
- Report adverse consequences
- Act competently
- Behave appropriately
- Inform others of consequences of not following advice
- Maintain confidentiality
- Report breach of Code



Peer Review

Reviewing the work
of another Engineer

June 2003

flow

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ACENZ

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IPENZ Practice Note 2

- *“The peer reviewer must abide by the code of ethics of the appropriate learned society. They must avoid usurping the role of the designer or succumbing to professional jealousy.*
- *The peer reviewer must report only against the criteria and restrictions that were put in place for the designer/author of the work*
- *The peer reviewer must avoid using hindsight to make a point against the designer, and comment on the design relative to the state of knowledge at the time of the design.”*

IPENZ Practice Note 2

- *“The peer reviewer reports to the client, and a courtesy copy goes to the designer with the client’s consent”*



Environment Court of New Zealand

Practice Note 2014

This guide to practice in the Environment Court will come into effect on 1 December 2014 and replaces all earlier Practice Notes. It is not a set of inflexible rules, but is a guide to the practice of the Court and will be followed unless there is good reason to do otherwise. Legislative references are to the Resource Management Act 1991.

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Environment Court Practice Note: Section 7.2

- *“An expert witness has an overriding duty to impartially assist the Court on matters within the expert’s area of expertise.*
- *An expert witness is not, and must not behave as, an advocate for the party who engages the witness....*
- *Every expert witness is expected to treat the evidence of experts called by other parties with the respect due to the opinions of a professional colleague, even if there is fundamental disagreement between the views each expresses. Any criticism should be moderate in tone and directed to the evidence, and not to the person.”*

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Do we need a code?

- Do we already have enough codes/guidelines
- Are our ethics that bad?
- What standing would any code have?
- Do we really think we all act 100% in accordance with the values of the code?
- Are we all confident in the impartiality of others?
- Do we not believe we have some “optimism bias”?

Sources of Inaccuracy (Flyvbjerg, 2005)

	% of Rail Projects	% of Road Projects
Trip Generation	11%	27%
Land Use Development	1%	26%
Trip Distribution	29%	23%
Forecasting Model	10%	22%
Deliberately slanted forecast	25%	0%
Opening delay/service reliability	4%	0%
Design change	1%	0%
Not identified	-	1%
Other	19%	0%

Discussion

- Do we need a code of conduct in New Zealand?
- If so, should we adopt the Australian code, or should NZMUGS develop its own code?

Questions?

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