

PerspECCtive

Theme:
ECC Session

ECC 2025 – A rare discussion with senior executives Sustaining relationships in the heat of battle on complex projects – *“Going Back Into the Fire”*

Sub-Committee Leads

Ledon Green
Tony Caletka, PWC (ECC EAC)

Future Leaders:

Casey Carringer, PWC
Matt Bisping, Fluor

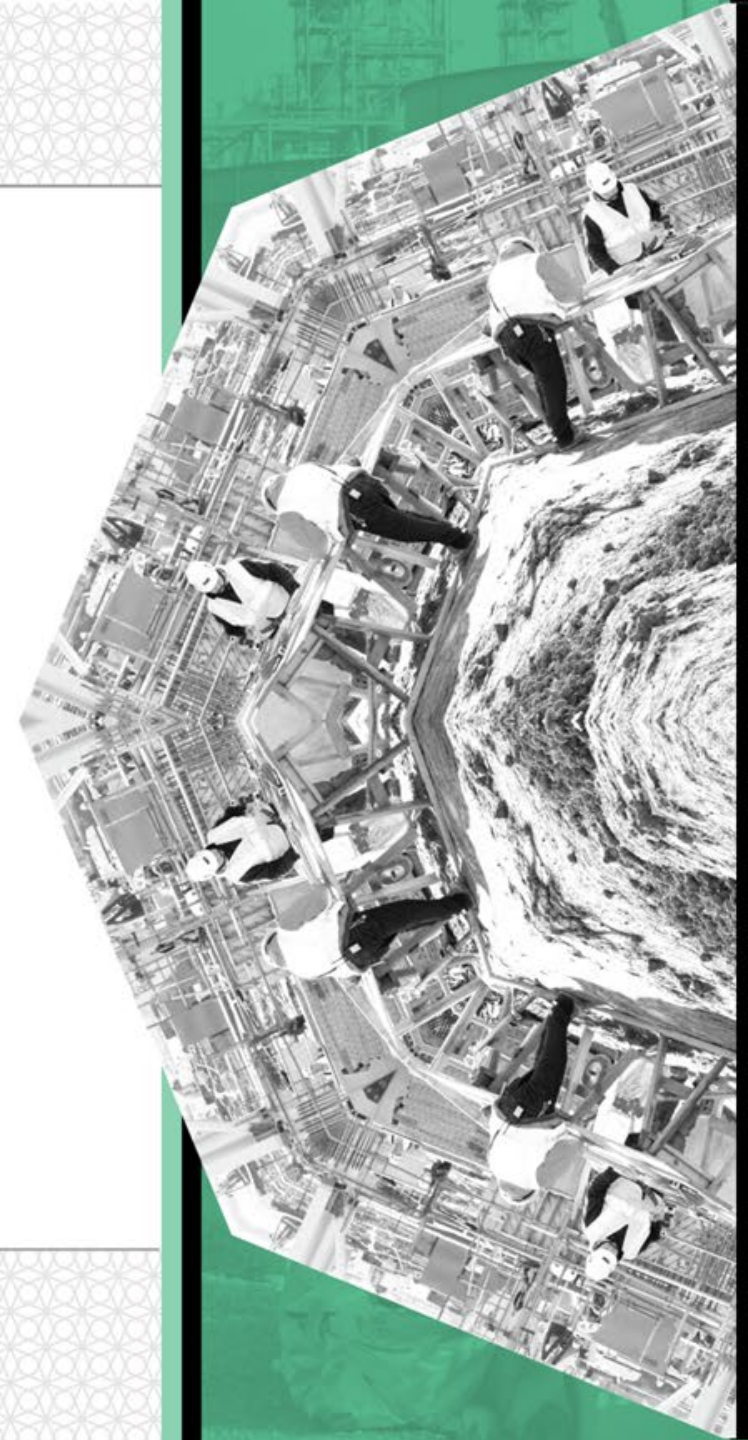
2025 Sep 4

Panel

Dan Coombs, PE, LyondellBasell (Ret)
Neil Robertson, Rio Tinto
Mark Fields, Fluor
Mike Wirkowski, Phillips 66 (Ret)

Moderator

Tony Caletka, PE, CCM



Panel Discussion

Sustaining relationships in the 'heat of battle' on large, complex projects

Global EPC and Owner Executives



Mark Fields
FLUOR



Neil Robertson
Rio Tinto



Dan Coombs, PE
LyondellBasell (Ret)



Mike Wirkowski
Phillips 66 (Ret)



Moderator



Tony Caletka, PE, CCM
ECC Executive Advisory Committee

Introduction & Framing ‘Back into the Fire’

We will explore how senior executives lead teams through challenging projects, without losing trust or key relationships. We’ll hear lessons learned, and how proactive leadership, transparency, and collaboration can turn setbacks into success.



Avoid Troubled Projects

- Act early, **don’t “wait and see”**
- Set-up projects for **success**.



Cost of Disputes

- Avoid costly litigation
- **Design for resolution**, not conflict
- Address issues **in the moment**



Culture and Leadership

- Lead with buy-in and unity (e.g. ‘one team’)
- Transparency + Discipline = **Results**

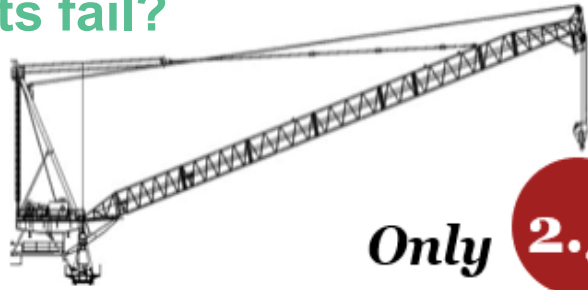


Trust and Collaboration

- Owners and Contractors must
- **Build Trust** throughout
- **Resolve Issues** in Real-time
- **Communicate** openly to align and deliver

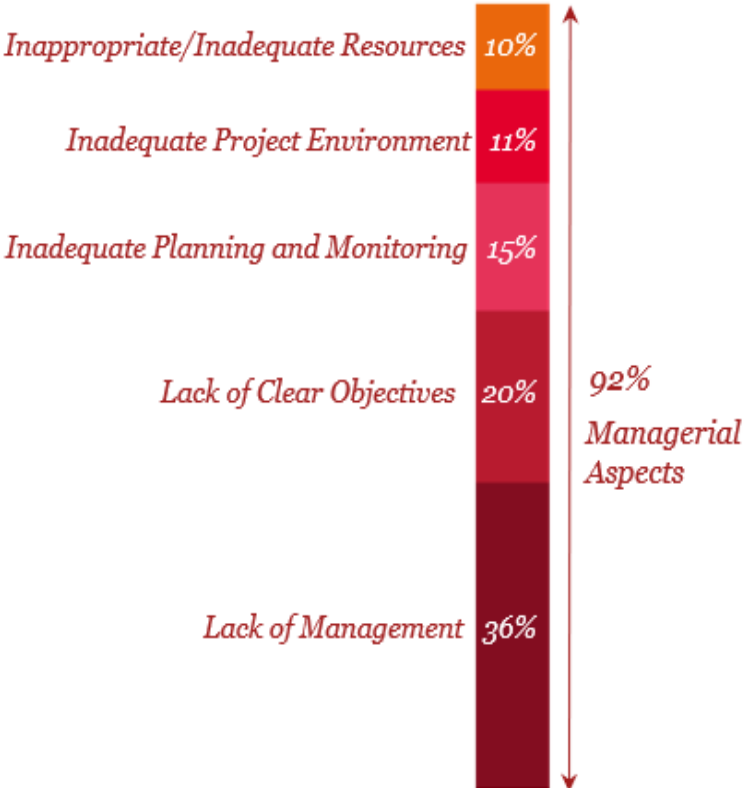
Let’s dive into how we can set our projects up for success from the very beginning. Thank you for joining us today.

Why do projects fail?



Only **2.5%** of projects are delivered on-time, on-budget, and with expected benefits

Technical Problems 4%
Suppliers' Failures 4%
8% Technical Aspects



Main Drivers and Early Indicators

Governance & Leadership

- Lack of Alignment between team and leadership
- Ineffective project governance & controls
- Lack of integrated project team / consistent leadership
- Lack of end-user involvement during project definition
- Reliance on contractor/vendor experience vs owner expertise

Planning & Controls

- Weak / ambiguous contract terms & misaligned incentives
- Unanticipated site conditions or logistic constraints
- Imposed cash constraints / delayed payments
- **Poor coordination among Contractors (shared site)**
- **Skilled labor production and availability**
- **Poor risk identification and response strategy**
- **Inadequate communication / slow decision making**
- **Insufficient planning / poor estimating**
- Inadequate design definition , errors & omissions

Technology & Digital

- Lack of integrated schedule & reporting tools
- Lack of adoption of standard processes. tools and reporting

Source: PwC analysis on global mega-projects, CEO surveys and industry research

Opening Remarks

Ice-breaker



Dan Coombs



Mark Fields



Neil Robertson



Mike Wirkowski

Introductions & Defining project moments...

- A high point
- A low point, or
- At peak-intensity

Question 1

Project Setup and Commercial Strategy



Dan Coombs



Mark Fields



Neil Robertson



Mike Wirkowski

- How should owners & contractors account for potential **productivity loss, delays or cost overruns** when estimating project budgets or bids?

Topic 2

Execution & Team Dynamics



Neil Robertson



Mark Fields

- What practices – from work-face planning, scaffold management, site logistics to permit strategy – have helped you **plan for challenging known-unknowns?**

Topic 3 – Owner / Operator Perspective

Culture, Lessons-Learned & Talent



Mike Wirkowski



Dan Coombs

- How do we value and leverage leaders with large, complex, project experience as a career path...
... and keep that knowledge in the field?

Early Indicators – Cultural Matrix Alignment

Relational Contractor, Transactional Owner



- Contractor extends goodwill
- Owner defaults to contract
- Frustration and strategic withdrawal

Both Relationship-Based



- Collaborative issue resolution
- Risk-sharing, avoid extreme position
- Less Documents, more alignment
- High trust, better outcomes

Both-Transactional



- Adversarial posture
- Well documented project issues
- Disputes escalate quickly
- Enhanced litigation risk

Relational Owner, Transactional Contractor



- Owner seeks compromise
- Contractor maximizes claims
- Trust erosion, risk of manipulation

Topic 4a

Contract Terms, Conditions and Compliance



Neil Robertson



Mark Fields

- What contract terms most often attempt to shift risk to the Contractors, **creating an unbalanced relationship?**

Topic 4b

Contract Terms, Conditions and Compliance



Mike Wirkowski



Dan Coombs

- Did you ever deliberately leave out, or omit, a clause in a contract that you felt was unbalanced against the Contractor, **requiring an element of trust between the parties?**

Topic 5

Early, primary risk indicators & threats to project success



Mark Fields



Neil Robertson

- **What attributes create the most challenging environment to successful project execution.**

Wrap-Up

Reflections



Mike Wirkowski



Dan Coombs



Mark Fields



Neil Robertson

On your most challenging project...

- What's one thing **you wish you had done differently?**

or

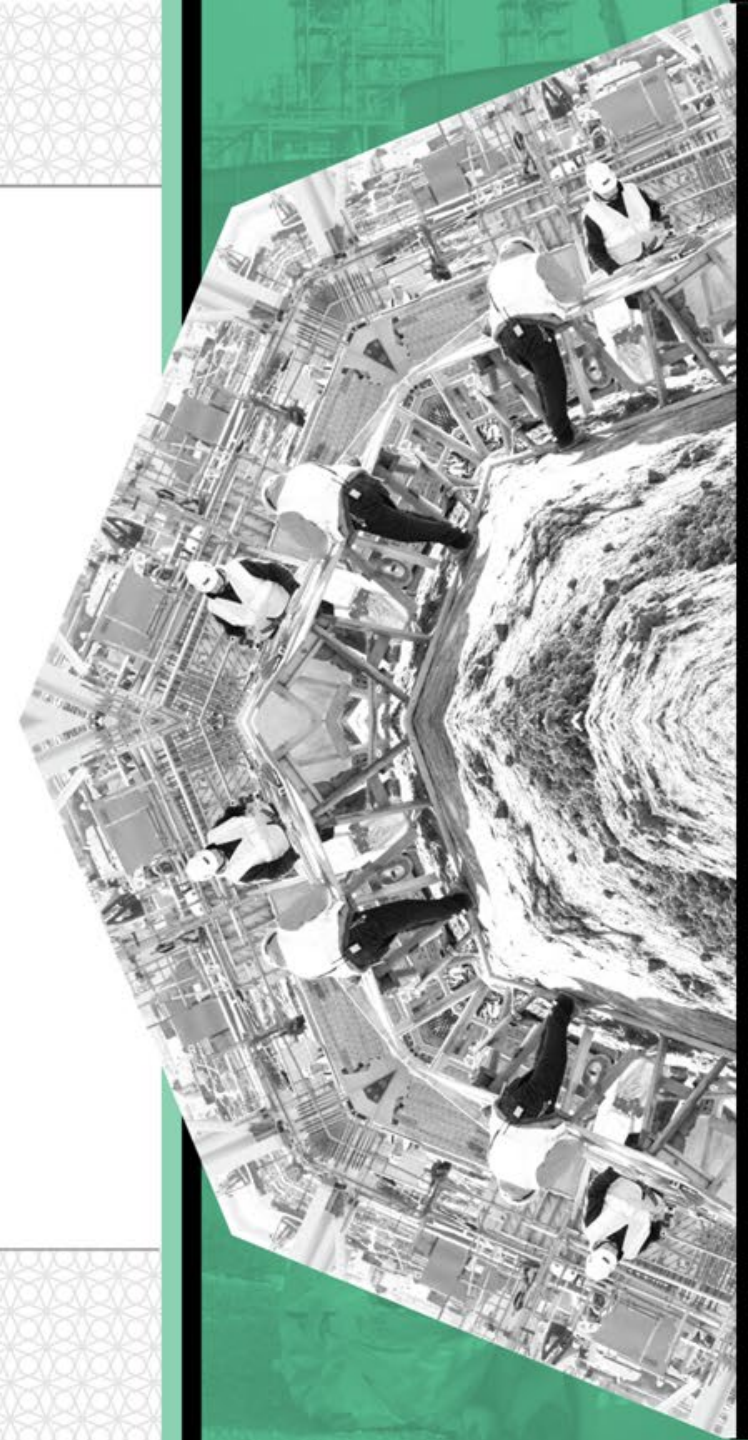
- What's one thing **you're proud of, that you absolutely got right?**

Thank You!

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PerspECCtive
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Theme:

Appendix – Panel Bios



Dan Coombs



Dan Coombs
(LyondellBasell (Ret))

Dan Coombs PE has 47 years of industry experience. He currently serves as Chairman of the Board for PureCycle Technologies (PCT-Nasdaq). He formerly served as an Executive Vice President for LyondellBasell (LYB-NYSE), leading global manufacturing, projects, and businesses. LYB business led during his tenure included Global Olefins and Polyolefins, Global Intermediates and Derivatives, Refining, and Tech. During portions of his tenure there he also had additional responsibility for Global Procurement and Supply Chain. He also served as a Senior Vice President at Chevron Phillips Chemical leading the Global Specialties, Aromatics and Styrenics business, followed by leading Global Manufacturing. Dan also served as Deputy General Manager of Qatar Chemical during the completion of the Q-Chem II project. Dan is a Trustee of the American Institute of Chemical Engineering Foundation, and Chairperson of the Foundation's Corporate Council. Dan and his wife Ellen Coombs were AIChE Philanthropists of the Year in 2021, recognized for supporting STEM education. Coombs is a Distinguished Alumnus of The Ohio State University and received the College of Engineering Dean's Meritorious Service to Students Award in 2023. He currently serves on The Ohio State University Foundation Board and the Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering Advisory Board. Dan has chemical engineering degrees from The Ohio State University (BS) and the University of Tulsa (MS), and earned an MBA from Texas A&M.

Neil Robertson

Neil Robertson is an accomplished industry leader whose visionary approach to corporate and project management has led to outstanding results in growth, profitability and shareholder value. Neil has successfully led multibillion-dollar capital projects for Fortune 500 companies, transforming complex, underperforming businesses into highly competitive profitable entities.

He has been actively involved in M&A's and has worked closely with Boards and C-Suite management over the course of his career. In 2002, Neil successfully led a management buyout of a UK EPC company. Today, Neil is Chief Projects Officer for Rio Tinto Lithium, where he leads a portfolio of lithium mining projects in Canada and South America.

Previously, Neil was President of Services for Worley, responsible for a region comprising of the US Power business, US Gulf Coast, Latin America, and Saudi Arabia. He served on the Worley Global leadership team during a period of significant growth.

Neil has personally led several large-scale projects, the most recent being execution of an EPC contract for the Hebron project topside for the East Coast of Canada. Neil brought extensive knowledge of project execution and exceptional leadership skills to overcome significant challenges. As a result, the project was delivered on budget and on schedule at the end of 2017 and achieved world-class safety performance. The project was awarded the OTC "Project of the Year" award in 2019. He also has extensive experience working both overseas and locally on the Gulf Coast. For over 40 years, Neil has been involved in successfully managing project disputes and developing strategies to avoid them.



Neil Robertson
(Rio Tinto)

Mark Fields



Mark Fields
(FLUOR)

Mark Fields has over 40 years of industry experience. He currently serves as Group President, Project Execution for Fluor Corporation, overseeing engineering, technology, project execution services, project controls, quality, supply chain, construction/fabrication, risk, health, safety & environment, and security. Previously, he served as Group President, Energy & Chemicals, responsible for global business development and operations in upstream and downstream oil & gas as well as petrochemical industries. Since joining Fluor in 1981, Mark has held leadership roles in project and construction management, project controls, estimating, material management, commissioning, and start-up management. He led the Tengizchevroil mega-project in Kazakhstan and several major SABIC petrochemical projects in Saudi Arabia, in addition to managing upstream, refining, mining, chemical and petrochemical projects across Africa, Asia, Canada and the United States. In 2021, he was appointed to his current role during Fluor's organizational restructuring. Mark holds a B.S. in Construction Management from Purdue University and has completed executive leadership programs at Thunderbird, Wharton and INSEAD.

Mike Wirkowski



Mike Wirkowski
(Phillip 66 (Ret))

Michael Wirkowski brings nearly 40 years of global executive leadership in the Refining and petrochem sectors. Known for driving major improvements in operational safety, reliability, and profitability, Mike blends a hands-on approach with a deep understanding of organizational culture to deliver lasting results. Before joining Pilko, he served as Vice President at Phillips 66, where he led Refining Business Improvement and Capital Projects, delivering over \$400 million in transformation savings. Earlier in his career at Exxon, he held key roles in U.S. and international supply, economics, and planning. At Tosco, he oversaw the launch of a new Polypropylene business and played a pivotal role in its expansion from one to seven refineries ahead of its acquisition by Phillips.

Mike also managed refineries in Billings, MT and Humber, UK, where he was the senior UK executive and chaired the EU Works Council. Under his leadership, both refineries were transformed into top-tier assets. He holds a mechanical engineering degree, summa cum laude, from Rutgers University.

Mike lives in Houston and enjoys road cycling, hiking, and travel with family and friends.

Tony Caletka, PE, CCM, CFCC



Tony Caletka
(P66 (Ret))

Tony is a Partner at PwC, leading the firm’s E&C consulting practice, serving clients across E&C, Power, Oil, Gas & Chemicals. With 36 yrs’ experience, he began his career at Stone & Webster Eng’g Corp. and is now a trusted advisor to global owners, contractors, and investors delivering large, complex capital programs.

A Registered Professional Engineer (PE), Certified Construction Manager (CCM), and Certified Forensic Claims Consultant (CFCC), Tony is recognized for expertise in project governance, risk, CPM scheduling, delay analysis, and dispute resolution. He has advised on multi-\$B megaprojects in nuclear, power, LNG, transit, water, and heavy infrastructure, and is frequently appointed as a testifying expert in arbitration and litigation, providing independent analysis on schedule delays, disruption, and contract claims. Tony co-authored the SCL Protocol on Delay & Disruption and the textbook *Delay Analysis in Construction Contracts* (Wiley). An adjunct professor at NYU in Construction Law and CPM Scheduling, he is active in the NYC Bar Construction Law Committee, ECC, and CMAA. Known for clear, practical insight, he brings a real-world lens to what “good” looks like—and why projects fail—drawing on deep experience in root-cause analysis, contract misalignment, and governance breakdowns.

Beyond work, Tony is proud both his children followed in his footsteps, now serving as project controls specialists at Burns & McDonnell, continuing the family tradition of tackling large, complex capital projects.

ECC 2025 – Thank you

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