



MCIQB – INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNISED PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATION

NAME	Stephen Lines, FCIOB
TITLE	Senior Commercial Manager
COMPANY	Qatar Rail
LOCATION	Doha
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Background

“I have two great loves in my life, construction and rugby,” declares FCIOB Stephen Lines, teasingly omitting his wife. A former Buckinghamshire rugby player in his youth, the Institute’s first regional president for the Middle East has focussed his passion for rugby into coaching youth squads and is currently working with the Doha Under-16 & 19 squads. His second passion, construction, is currently being fulfilled as a senior manager in Qatar. But while being a member of the CIOB hasn’t had any bearing on his success on the rugby field, Stephen credits his membership of the CIOB for giving a big helping hand to further his career and to land his current job.

He is senior commercial manager for Qatar Rail, specifically working on the construction of the new Doha Metro. This forms part of Qatar’s massive infrastructure investment estimated to be in the region of \$100bn over a decade, as Qatar gears up for the FIFA World Cup in 2022 and transforms itself into a country less dependent on oil & gas to sustain its economy.

Like many people of his generation, Stephen didn’t go to university but Qatar Rail stipulated that a senior manager must have a degree, which is becoming almost a universal requirement across the Gulf region. However, because Stephen was a member of the CIOB and could provide independent proof that this was of a comparable level to a degree, he was offered a full time post.

So what else can he tell us about the benefits of membership and his career in construction?

Stephen has 35 years in the industry working for contractors, consultants and clients across the globe from Saudi Arabia to India. Stephen says:

“The CIOB definitely gave me the credentials to push forward in my career.”



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Why did you become a member?

Like a lot of people in my era I came up through the trades. I started out as an apprentice carpenter at John Laing in 1975, landing my first site management role in the late 80s. It got to the stage, though, where I was very experienced but had nothing to back it up as a recognised qualification. So I decided to put myself through the experiential route to membership, previously called DMX. [This has now become the CIOB Experienced Practitioner Assessed Programme (EPA)].

Where the CIOB is unique is that it will allow membership from all fields of the industry, unlike other professional bodies which are more prescriptive about who they want as members. I chose the CIOB because it's an all-encompassing chartership for the whole construction industry.

Tell us a bit more about your job?

I'm overseeing the commercial matters pertaining to a number of the civil engineering works across the Doha Metro Network. Consisting of four lines, the Metro network will cover the Greater Doha area and will include connections to town centres and vital commercial and residential areas. In central Doha, the Metro will be underground, whilst at the outskirts it will mainly be at ground level or elevated.

How did you use your CIOB qualification to help your career?

Membership has definitely helped me get work, particularly in the Middle East. Having MCIOB helped me get a visa to work in the UAE as director of operations for a property development company based in Dubai and Abu Dhabi. I moved to Qatar in 2012 with Turner & Townsend, where I was seconded to Qatar Rail. When the opportunity to work for Qatar Rail on a permanent basis came up, I jumped at the chance, but needed to prove I had a degree. Fortunately by this time the CIOB had commissioned NARIC, the UK government funded body which verifies qualifications from around the world, to assess the worth of the membership. NARIC concluded that MCIOB was comparable to a degree and FCIOB at post-graduate level.

What's your involvement with the CIOB?

I'm chairman of the Middle East and North Africa regional council and a CIOB ambassador and was elected regional president in 2011. I'm also involved in mentoring other experienced practitioners like me to get their CIOB membership qualifications.

What do you like about working in the Middle East?

I love the multicultural working environment, and the life style suits my kids, who are 13 and 14. There are huge opportunities here with so much investment being made in infrastructure. Doha is like Dubai 10 years ago, though the development is being carried out in a more considered way.

Describe your career highs and lows?

The low point was definitely seeing the industry implode after the credit crunch. The highlight was being voted CIOB's first regional president for the Middle East in 2011. It's really been the greatest honour.