

Construction Manager as Advisor (CMA) Series FAQs

“Why use CMA-Series documents instead of C-Series documents?”

The Construction Manager as Advisor documents should be considered for use anytime the construction contract administration services for a project are not provided by the entity that prepares the design (Engineer). These documents clearly define the roles and responsibilities of the Construction Manager charged with managing the delivery of the Project and those of the Engineer.

“Shouldn’t a Construction Manager know how to use C Series documents? Why are CMA series documents needed?”

The Construction Manager as Advisor series of documents are closely based on the EJCDC C-Series Documents, and the core concepts embodied in the EJCDC C-Series Documents form the foundation for the CMA-Series Documents. However, the EJCDC C-Series documents are based on the premise that the Engineer will continue to provide the services of construction contract administrator and provide construction-phase engineering services. Using the C-Series documents when a construction management entity (or the Owner’s internal administrative personnel) other than the Engineer provides these services can lead to confusion regarding the roles and responsibilities of each party. The CMA-Series of documents clarify the respective roles and responsibilities of the Engineer and Construction Manager as Advisor recognizing the contributions each makes to the design and delivery of a construction project.

“Why did EJCDC think it necessary to publish this set of documents?”

The practice of construction management has evolved over the past couple of decades as projects continue to grow in size and complexity. Engineering has also grown more challenging, pushing designers to become more and more specialized in project design and less practiced in the complexities of project procurement and delivery. Entities specializing in managing the delivery of projects stepped in to fill this void and it became important to define the roles and responsibilities of both designers and construction managers, as well as the roles of the Owner when design and construction management services are no longer provided by the same entity. Conflicts were also apparent in the roles played by the Engineer and the Owner’s staff when Owner provides procurement and construction management services with internal resources. Simply put, the project delivery methods have changed, and EJCDC has evolved with them.

“If I’ve bought the C-Series documents, why should I buy the CMA-Series documents?”

The primary difference between the C-Series and CM as Advisor Series documents is how the roles of the Engineer and the entity providing construction management services are defined. Construction-phase engineering services constitute the practice of engineering and should only be provided by a licensed professional engineer—this critical role of the Engineer is carefully preserved in the CM as Advisor documents. The administrative and organizational services needed during the construction of a project do not require the expertise of the Engineer and can be provided by professionals that specialize in construction management.

“Can these documents be used for Construction Manager at Risk or Design Build Project Delivery?”

Although construction managers serving in an advisory capacity can offer their services for any project delivery method, the CMA-Series documents, as currently offered, anticipate that these documents will be used for a conventional design-bid-build construction contract, or similar contracts based on direct selection of the construction contractor. It is anticipated that contractors for these projects will be selected using competitive sealed bids, competitive sealed proposals, or be used with a negotiated contract with pre-selected contractors. It is recommended that the Design-Build Series documents be used for Design-Build (DB) projects. EJCDC is currently developing documents for the Construction Manager at Risk (CMAR) project delivery method. Until the CMAR documents are made available, C-Series or CMA-Series documents can be modified for use on CMAR projects, depending on the roles anticipated for the Engineer and Construction Manager.

“What changes are required to Engineering Agreements when a Construction Manager as Advisor is engaged for the project.”

The roles, responsibilities, and scope of services of the CM as Advisor are defined in CMA-501 Agreement between Owner and Construction Manager as Advisor (2021). The 2021 CMA Series documents also include CMA-500, Agreement between Owner and Engineer for Professional Services (when Owner retains a Construction Manager as Advisor) to define the Engineer’s role and scope of services, which change significantly when the Owner also engages a Construction Manager as Advisor.