

On The Level

Straight Talk from
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Stimulus Package— The Starting Gun Faces Us

I'm **very** concerned.

In its race to create jobs and spend money, the federal government will most likely fire the starting gun prematurely by pushing jobs out the door without establishing the right cost avoidance procedures. The Feds will create jobs, *but* unless they deploy the proper procedures (up-front planning, adequate design, input of construction expertise, smart Division I General Conditions stating control and performance specs, proper and mandatory reviews of all funding estimates by certified estimators, smart incentive-based contracts, and more), **they will create huge, record-setting cost- and schedule-related problems in the future.**

And **the problem will compound and spread** since much of this money will be passed onto states and municipalities—whose problems mirror those of the Feds.

I foresee a record-setting level of change orders and claims coming in the next 5–10 years as result of this "spend-it-fast" mentality. The federal government has had a track record of overspending projects, under-assessing contingency and risk, and not having the right expertise or practices in-house to prevent spending money.

As a nationwide trainer for one of this country's largest suppliers of estimating data, I see personally that **the Feds needs a lot of help, advice, and assistance.**

Here's my alliterative take on the situation: the **government agencies are not properly prepared and pre-equipped with the personnel, procedures, practices, or processes to prevent the problems that they are about to propagate.**

What is needed? Adopting and implementing the Best Practices available for Cost-Schedule-Risk Avoidance.

The government has been shooting itself in the foot for too long. As practicing professionals and experts, we need to prevent them from shooting themselves in the heart, because **this time the starting gun is aimed at us all.**

