

EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF EOT CLAIMS IN SRI LANKAN ROAD PROJECTS UNDER PANDEMIC CONTEXT

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DECLARATION

I declare that this is my own work and this thesis/dissertation does not incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any other University or Institute of higher learning and to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where the acknowledgement is made in the text. I retain the right to use this content in whole or part in future works (such as articles or books).

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The above candidate has carried out research for the Masters dissertation under my supervision. I confirm that the declaration made above by the student is true and correct.

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Date:

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As a postgraduate, I was given the opportunity to carry out a research project for my Master's degree. The experience of carrying out a research project will definitely benefit me in my future professional career. Therefore, I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to my supervisor, Dr. K.A.K. Devapriya, Senior Lecturer, Department of Building Economics, University of Moratuwa, for his valuable guidance, insightful advice, and continuous support throughout the completion of this research study. I am also thankful to Prof. Dr. (Mrs.) Yasangika Sandanayake, course coordinator, and all the other lecturers of M.Sc. (CL&DR), for offering me the required knowledge for a successful research study. I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to the academic and non-academic staff of the Department of Building Economics, University of Moratuwa, for their valuable assistance and continued support in facilitating the successful completion of this research.

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ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic led to a significant surge in Extension of Time (EOT) claims in Sri Lankan road construction projects, primarily due to unprecedented disruptions, limited documentation, and a lack of prior experience in managing pandemic-related delays and claims. The approval process for EOT claims became prolonged and complex, resulting in disputes, project delays, and operational inefficiencies within the industry. Despite these challenges, there is a lack of research addressing effective mechanisms for evaluating and administering EOT claims in a pandemic context.

This study aims to explore pandemic-related delay causes, assess weaknesses in the current EOT claim process, and develop an improved framework for managing EOT claims in road construction projects under a pandemic context. A mixed methods research approach was adopted, involving an open-ended questionnaire survey administered to industry professionals to identify existing issues and potential improvement strategies regarding EOT claims. The findings were further validated through an expert panel interview to ensure industry relevance and practical feasibility. Statistical analysis, including the use of SPSS where appropriate, was employed to interpret and validate the survey results.

The study identifies the implementation of an Electronic Document Management System (EDMS) as the most suitable and effective proposal for enhancing EOT claim management practices under pandemic conditions when compared to the other proposed recommendations. The proposed mechanism is expected to improve documentation handling, transparency, tracking efficiency, and timely decision-making, thereby strengthening the overall EOT claim process within the Sri Lankan road construction sector in the pandemic context. Overall, this study provides key insights into the factors contributing to construction project delays, notification, and EOT approval issues during the pandemic, and proposes some other mitigation strategies and mechanisms to enhance the effectiveness of the EOT claim process in Sri Lankan road projects under pandemic conditions.

Keywords: Extension of Time (EOT), Claim Management, COVID-19 Pandemic, Construction Claims.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Description
EOT	Extension of Time
M.Sc.	Master of Science
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America
QS	Quantity Surveyor
PM	Project Manager

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