

## Commissioning in the UAE - So it works

One of the mandatory credit requirements introduced under the Abu Dhabi Estidama Pearl Rating System is that all developers must appoint an independent consultant to ensure robust commissioning and handover is both prepared for and then takes place, prior to practical completion. It is a monitoring role where an independent consultant is appointed by, and reports to, the client. This ensures that

1. Projects can be commissioned;
2. Projects are commissioned;
3. Projects are handed over.

The independent commissioning consultant must be appointed and integrated into the project team at an early stage in the project, around RIBA Stage C, to allow the project to gain planning consent with The Abu Dhabi Urban Planning Council (UPC). The UPC recognises the need for an independent consultant to monitor commissioning and handover because designing an efficient building is just the first step in ensuring a building is on track to being efficient. Buildings must also be commissioned and handed over correctly if operational energy and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are to be managed.

The engineering part of Estidama takes the best elements from Part L, LEED, ASHRAE, CIBSE and BREEAM and combines these in a common-sense methodology that can be implemented in practise. If the UK had a regulatory framework similar to Estidama, the UK's CO<sub>2</sub> targets would be more likely to become a reality.

### Key issues

- 'Estidama' means 'sustainability' in Arabic
- It is an initiative of the Abu Dhabi Urban Planning Council and a key aspect of Abu Dhabi's 'Plan 2030'
- It is a mandatory framework for development based on four 'pillars' of sustainability: social, cultural, economic and environmental and is tailored to the local environment and culture of Abu Dhabi
- The Pearl rating system is organized into seven categories; within each category there are mandatory and optional credits. Ratings range from a minimum of one Pearl to an exemplar level of five Pearls
- To achieve a one Pearl rating all the required credits must be met
- To achieve a rating above one Pearl a minimum number of credit points must also be achieved
- Government-funded projects must achieve a minimum of two Pearls

### Web links

- <http://www.upc.gov.ae/?lang=en-US>  
Abu Dhabi Urban Planning Council
- <http://estidama.org>  
Official Estidama web site

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