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Computer-oriented Administrative Checking System of Building Design: Standard coding system based on ACT and CIB concepts

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Abstract

This paper is a brief description of an ongoing Japanese national project to develop computer-oriented checking system for lawfulness of building design. This system is considered to bring several drastic effects onto the industry derived from reduction of judgement time and ambiguity caused by personal equation and so on. Major subjects to be investigated in the first stage of development until April 1992 are databases of relating building codes and geographical data, standardized data description formats for outline figure and structure of sites and buildings and rationalized drawing methods with less redundancy. Revised framework for standard coding system is proposed.

1. Introduction

Various kind of CAD systems are used in growing number of architect offices and design divisions in general contractors. Accordingly, demand for effective data exchange between different CAD systems has recently increased to much extent. It is considered very difficult, however, to have such an exchange system with wide popularity in the Japanese construction industry. Standardization is a quite difficult task in this field caused by high activeness and large scale size of the industry.

A most feasible solution to breakthrough this chaotic situation is to introduce some kind of standards or recommendations into a common specific point in the building processes. As is often the case, practical building design projects in Japan must be checked their legitimacy by administrative authorities.

The checking system is currently of manual practice and has been strongly requested to change into much more sophisticated advanced way utilizing information and automation technology. This administrative check is well regarded as an above-mentioned specific point in the building processes common to almost all kinds of building projects.

2. Development of the system required

A national project called "Development of Advanced Checking System of Building Projects" has been executed since April 1989. One of its long range
targets is to accomplish a paperless checking system against digitalized
application data made by CAD systems in the building design or briefing process.
This system is considered to bring several drastic effects onto the industry as
follows:

- to reduce judgement time
- to reduce ambiguity caused by personal equation
- to reduce application cost and time by directly utilizing CAD data
  formalized in planning and design phases
- to facilitate the spread of practical CAD use in the industry

Within the first stage of the R&D project, since April 1989 to April
1992, relating building codes and geographical data are planned to be installed
in the system as digital reference databases. Standardized data description
formats are also to be determined to denote outline figure and structure of
sites and buildings to be checked. Application with ordinary documentations
such as drawings and specifications is parallely available in the first stage
of execution. Therefore, rationalized drawing methods with less redundancy is
also planned to be established.

3. ACT standard coding system

Although there is yet no standard coding system widely prevailing in
the Japanese construction industry, a conceptual framework for the potential
standard coding system has been developed in another national R&D project.
This basic structure called ACT, Advanced Construction Technology, coding
system has been accepted in several large R&D projects to be the bases of their
relevant coding systems.

ACT standard coding system consists of six major coding subsystems
which again consist of several small tables as follows;

    group 1 : CONDITION
      location, area type, area attribute, building type,
      user attribute

    group 2 : METHOD
      management method, construction system,
      investigation, rule

    group 3 : SPECIFICATION / PERFORMANCE
      physics, function, specification, use

    group 4 : RESOURCE
      man, machine, energy, material, money

    group 5 : ACTIVITY
      phase, activity

    group 6 : RESULT
      space, structure, finish, services
This system is of a sort of modification of so-called CIB coding system concept with three basic groups; resources, activities and results. Group 1 to 3 of ACT coding system are derived from environmental items with high difficulty to be classified into the basic three groups.

4. Revision of ACT coding system

A standard coding system is an essential factor to the successful checking system to utilize common reference databases and to accept building project data made by different CAD systems. ACT standard coding system is a congregation of independent coding subsystems. The system is to work as a common base for different practical coding systems to ensure effective data exchange. Direct use of ACT system is not recommended for ordinary practices because of its redundancy. Therefore, it should be noticed that the advanced checking system needs its own practical coding system based on ACT standard coding system.

Current ACT coding system is a sort of prototype and incompletely formalized. It should be modified to meet with practical requirements in actual cases prior to development of the practical coding system in question. ACT coding system is planned to be revised to get in harmony with internationally standardized coding system for building practice in the near future.

The figure shows the result of modification.

5. Conclusion

Ongoing study on standard coding system in the advanced checking system has proved the necessity of such a standard coding system like ACT. To cope with the progress of CIB coding system development, ACT coding system has been revised to some extent and checked its effectiveness. ACT system is considered to be more comprehensive than CIB system currently proposed. Efforts should be made to harmonize ACT and CIB systems with each other.

6. Acknowledgment

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