

Construction Training Council

1st Meeting of Construction Industry Training Board in 2009

Purpose

This paper sets out the main points discussed at the 1st Meeting of the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) held on 19 January 2009. The record of attendance is given at Annex A.

Progress on Matters Arising from 5th Meeting held on 20 October 2008 and 6th Meeting held on 20 November 2008

2. Members noted the following-
 - i) the analysis on the manpower needs concerning the Youth Work Experience and Training Scheme had been completed. Recommendations would be presented to the Board for consideration at the next scheduled meeting;
 - ii) the proposal on the Building Information Modelling (BIM) Course had been submitted to the Sub-committee on Training for consideration, details of which would be reported under a separate agenda item;
 - iii) with regard to the discussion with contractors relating to the Collaboration Training Scheme for Civil Workers, two among the four contractors contacted have already shown their interests in joining the scheme. As such, an update would be reported under a separate agenda item;
 - iv) a proposal on strategies addressing the problems of ageing and succession gap in certain civil trades within the industry would be presented under a subsequent relevant agenda item;
 - v) open tender documents for setting up Tin Shui Wai Training Ground have already been drafted. The estimated cost would be about HK\$2 million and it was proposed to invite contractors which are on the government's List of Approved Contractors for Public Works and are eligible for undertaking category A contracts (i.e. contracts of a value below HK\$20,000,000) to submit tender. The Board's opinion concerning the tender list

would be sought later by way of circulation of papers. In addition, a member suggested that legal advice should be sought regarding the short-term tenancy agreement to be signed with the HKSAR Government concerning the grant of land for establishing Tin Shui Wai Training Ground;

- vi) the CITB decided to extend the agreement with the Vocational Training Council for 18 months until the end of August in 2010 by way of circulation of papers. During the extended period, the cost increase would be 15%. Besides, the CICTA would take back the 12 E&M trade tests from the Vocational Training Council in five phases. The relevant arrangements would be submitted to the Committee on Administration and Finance for approval;
- vii) the two proposals of offering half test fee concessions to workers with skills certificates issued by trade unions, and of allowing workers just to take the failed parts on any subsequent attempts as well as the review of the Employers Subsidy Scheme mechanism would be submitted to the relevant sub-committee or the CITB for consideration after the structure of the committees under CITB was decided upon for the new term;
- viii) views of Members of the Sub-committee on Trade Tests concerning the test contents of the proposed 'Trade Test for the Tower Crane Erector' were sought earlier by way of circulation of papers. However, no consensus was reached yet and further deliberations on this would be made later;
- ix) an update on the issue of the public tender processes with regard to the two specified courses on 'Cable Jointer (Power)' and 'Overhead Linesman' would be given in a subsequent report;
- x) the CITB budget estimates for 2009 have already been submitted to the Committee on Administration and Finance and the Construction Industry Council for approval; and
- xi) the CICTA would submit its quarterly reports for the 2009 to the Committee on Administration and Finance in May 2009, August 2009, November 2009 and February 2010.

Recommendation on the restructuring of the working groups under the CITB

3. The Board noted the structure and the terms of reference of the working groups under the CITB for the previous year. The Board also noted that a review on the relevant structure was required after it had been operating for one year.

4. A member pointed out that CITB did not have to discuss various tasks like administration, finance and human resources etc as the former Construction Industry Training Authority did. Therefore, the Board could have more time to discuss issues about training and trade testing directly rather than deliberating the recommendations of the Training Sub-committee and Trade Testing Sub-committee. Much time could be saved. After discussion, the Board accepted the recommendation of incorporating the Sub-committee on Training and the Sub-committee on Trade Testing into the CITB so that the deliberation process and the decision-making procedures could be simplified. CITB also agreed to set up special task forces to handle special issues as and when required in the future. Relevant persons would be invited as co-opted members where appropriate.

5. As for the Sub-committee on the Employers Subsidy Scheme, the Board took note of the requirement for the sub-committee to examine subsidy applications from employers within a prescribed timeframe. If the three-tier examination flow, where the management staff first examined all subsidy applications, which were then submitted to the Sub-committee for approval before being forwarded to the CITB for endorsement, was to be maintained, an effective supervision on the implementation of the subsidy scheme could be ensured. As regards the 'Board of Studies on Construction Safety Courses' set up in accordance with the regulations of the Labour Department, the Board also agreed to retain it so that it would approve the contents and the examination results of relevant safety courses.

6. The Board also agreed to invite Members by circulation of papers to join, if they wish, the 'Sub-committee on the Employers Subsidy Scheme' and the 'Board of Studies on Construction Safety Courses' to be retained under CITB in due course.

3rd Summary Report of Sub-committee on Training

7. The Board noted the items as discussed at the 3rd Meeting of the Sub-committee on Training and made suggestions on the following items:

- i) the recommendation for offering the Shotfirer Training Course was accepted. However, it was opined that at the initial stage of the launch of the course, a cost-based tuition fee of \$3,700 should be charged. Later on, based on the enrolment results, the CITB

would consider if a full reimbursement of the tuition fee should be awarded to those who successfully completed the course in an attempt to attract new-entrants to join the industry;

- ii) the recommendation for running the 'BIM Basic Course' was accepted. However, an assessment was required to be added at the end of the course to ensure the quality of the course. In addition, other part-time courses should also be added with assessment elements if required;
- iii) in principle, it was agreed to offer the Full-time Adult Short Course in Repair and Maintenance in Building Works. However, the target trainees, entry requirements, qualification to be attained upon course completion, as well as the possibility of dividing the course into modules had to be re-considered. In addition, the Board requested the management staff to submit the prevailing guidelines on setting the level of fee/subsidies regarding every course at the next scheduled meeting for the Board's consideration;
- iv) the recommendation that those who have completed the 'Theoretical and Practical Training of Signalers and Riggers for Construction Industry' held in the past three years were to be exempted from taking the theory class held on the first day for the 'Silver Card Course - Construction Materials Riggers' was accepted, whereas the recommendations of maintaining the course fee at \$170 was also accepted;
- v) views of course advisory panels on training/trade test matters would be submitted directly to the Board for information later;
- vi) it was agreed that it was necessary to seek qualification assessments on courses conducted by the CICTA in the long run so that the courses could be included under the Qualifications Register. In addition, it was considered appropriate to submit the Construction Supervisor / Technician Programme for assessment first and make preparation beforehand. However, the Board proposed that a "bridging" arrangement with the recognized qualifications of the Buildings Department should be strived for at the present stage;
- vii) the proposal to offer the bar-bending class and painting and decorating class under the 'Construction Industry Youth Work Experience and Training Scheme' would be submitted to the

Board for approval at a later stage. It was expected that they would be launched in the first half of 2009; and

- viii) since the public is becoming more concerned about heritage conservation recently whilst the SAR Government would press ahead the work on conservation of Hong Kong heritage in the coming years, it was necessary for CICTA to follow up the training demands in this area by launching the required heritage conservation courses.

2009 Work Plan for CICTA

8. Members noted the routine tasks carried out by the CICTA in 2009, which would include the provision of various types of training courses, trade tests and workers registration services. The CICTA would provide roughly 1,800 full-time places and 61,000 part-time places together with 10,000 trade testing places. In addition, different work plans would be carried out in response to the needs of the industry. The objectives of these new plans would include attracting more suitable persons, including teenagers, to join the construction industry so that the succession problem in certain trades would be solved. Other objectives include providing trained personnel for infrastructure projects and assisting workers to switch between trades. These new plans include: setting up Tin Shui Wai Training Ground; co-organizing the 'Civil Workers Training Scheme' with contractors; launching the 'Construction Industry Youth Work Experience and Training Scheme'; the provision of training courses for workers returning from Macau and for carrying out the minor works projects; reviewing the course structure of Basic Craft Courses and Construction Supervisor / Technician Programme in order to cope with the 334 new academic structure; and the progressive taking back of the construction-related E&M trade tests from the Vocational Training Council etc.

9. Some Members opined that, in order to enhance the employability of in-service workers and the returned workers, they should be given assistance to enable them to switch between trades. As such, the actual training needs of these workers should first be found out through liaising with relevant trade unions and contractors and job vacancies should be identified so that these workers would be absorbed subsequently. As for the 'Civil Workers Training Scheme', a Member suggested that, since the training period for civil trades was normally longer, it was necessary to ensure the number of persons who successfully complete the training could meet the labour demand at different stages of the relevant projects.

Setting up Assessment Panel for the Public Tenders of the Two Specified Courses

10. Members noted that the setting up of an assessment panel for the public tenders of the two specified courses, 'Cable Jointer (Power)' and 'Overhead Linesman', was approved by the Board by circulation of papers earlier. However, the member list of the panel has not been finalized yet due to the new term of office of the Board. Therefore, it was necessary to nominate Members to join the panel at this meeting.

11. Amongst the Members, Ir Poon Lok-to, Otto, Ir Jimmy Tse, Mr Lai Yuk-fai, Stephen and Mr Tao Kei-hung agreed to serve in the panel. They would vet the tender details with the Director (Training) so that the tender would be approved the soonest and the two specified courses would be provided soon.

Any Other Business

12. The Chairman related to the meeting that the donation received by the Community Chest was expected to drop due to the financial tsunami. As such, the funds for its member agencies would also be affected. The Board agreed that the CICTA would provide "free labour service" for repair and renovation works for member organizations of the Community Chest if required. By doing this, contributions would be made to the community whilst more practice opportunities would be provided to trainees. However, such arrangement should be voluntary and the CICTA should also secure adequate insurance protection for the instructors and trainees concerned.

13. The following further actions were agreed-

- a) recommendations would be made to the Board at the next scheduled meeting concerning the analysis on the manpower needs of the Youth Work Experience and Training Scheme. Recommendation on the launching of the bar-bending class and the painting and decorating class under the scheme would be submitted to the Board for consideration;
- b) the updates on the 'Collaboration Training Scheme for Civil Workers' would be reported to the Board;
- c) views of Members concerning the tender documents of the setting up of Tin Shui Wai Training Ground and the contractors listed on the government's List of Approved Contractors for Public Works who are eligible for undertaking category A contracts would be sought by circulation of papers;
- d) the Sub-committees of Training and Trade Testing would be put

under the CITB. However, the ‘Sub-committee on Employers Subsidy Scheme’ and the ‘Board of Studies on Construction Safety Courses’ would be retained. Later, Members would be invited, by circulation of papers, to join the Sub-committee / Board of Studies;

- e) recommendations on offering half trade test fee concessions to workers with skills certificates issued by trade unions, and on allowing workers just to take the failed parts on any subsequent attempts would be submitted to the Board for consideration;
- f) recommendations made after a review of the ‘Employers Subsidy Scheme’ would be submitted to the relevant sub-committee for consideration;
- g) the ‘Shotfirer Training Course’ and the ‘BIM Basic Course’ would be launched according to the resolution of the Board. However, an assessment element should be added at the end of the latter course. As for the Full-time Adult Short Course on Repair and Maintenance in Building Works, the target trainees, the entry requirements, the qualification to be attained upon course completion, as well as the possibility of dividing the course into modules would require re-consideration before the course proposal would be submitted to the Board for consideration again;
- h) the prevailing guidelines on setting the level of fees/ subsidies regarding every course would be submitted at the next scheduled meeting;
- i) it was necessary in the long run to seek qualification assessment on courses conducted by the CICTA. However, the Board proposed that a “bridging” arrangement with the recognized qualifications of the Buildings Department should be strived for at the present stage for the Construction Supervisor / Technician Programme;
- j) the training needs in the area of heritage conservation was to be addressed and required courses to be launched;
- k) the 2009 work plan for CICTA as endorsed would be implemented;
- l) four Members, together with the Director (Training), would serve

as members of the assessment panel to vet the only tender for the two specified courses of 'Cable Jointer (Power)' and 'Overhead Linesman'; and

- m) the "free labour service" for repair and renovation works for member agencies under the Community Chest would be followed up.

CITB Secretariat
February 2009

Construction Industry Training Board
1st Meeting held on 19 January 2009 at 2:30pm
In Conference Room, 7/F, Management Training & Trade Testing Centre

Record of Attendance

Present

Ir Billy W H Wong	Chairman
Mr Cheung Tak-hing	
Mr Chow Luen-kiu	
Ir Helen P J Kwan	
Mr Lai Yuk-fai, Stephen	
Dr Leung Hip-hung	
Mr Lok Kwei-sang, Tandy	
Ir Poon Lok-to, Otto	
Mr Tao Kei-hung	
Mr Jimmy L L Tse	
Mr S H Tso	

Apologies

Ir Thomas O S Ho
Mr Donald W H Choi

In Attendance

Ir Christopher To	Executive Director Construction Industry Council
Mr Charles Wong	Director (Training) Construction Industry Council
Mr Wong Chi-lap	Senior Manager (ST & TT) Construction Industry Council Training Academy
Mr Chu Yin-lin	Senior Manager (CT) Construction Industry Council Training Academy
Mrs Sophie Leung	Secretary Construction Industry Council Training Academy
Mrs Shirley Lam	Assistant Secretary Construction Industry Council Training Academy