

Construction Industry Council

Construction Industry Training Board

The 1st Meeting of the Construction Industry Training Board was held on Wednesday, 6 January 2010 at 9:30 am at Conference Room, CICTA Management Training and Trade Testing Centre, Level 7, No. 95 Yue Kwong Road, Aberdeen, Hong Kong.

Present: Ir Billy W H Wong Chairman
Mr Enoch Lam
Mr Chow Luen-kiu
Mr Cheung Tak-hing
Dr Lo Kin-ki
Ir Poon Lok-to, Otto
Mr Lok Kwei-sang, Tandy
Mr Jimmy Tse
Ir Helen Kwan

In Attendance: Ir Jimmy Chan Chief Assistant Secretary (Works) 6,
DEVB
Ir Christopher To Executive Director, CIC
Mr Charles Wong Director (Training), CIC
Mr Wong Chi-lap Senior Manager (ST), CIC
Mr Chu Yin-lin Senior Manager (CT), CIC
Mrs Sophie Leung Secretary, CITB
Ms Shirley Lam Assistant Secretary, CITB

Apologies: Ir Thomas Ho
Mr S H Tso
Mr Donald Choi
Mr Lai Yuk-fai, Stephen

PROGRESS REPORT

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1.1 Confirmation of the Progress Report of the 5th meeting held in 2009

Members took note of Paper CIC/CTB/R/005/09 and confirmed the progress report of the 5th meeting held on 14 October 2009.

1.2 Matters arising from the last meeting

1.2.1 Agenda item 1.2.3 – Progress on preparation of courses on restoration of heritage buildings

The above item would be discussed under a separate item below.

1.2.2 Agenda item 1.2.4 – Training Course for Ground Investigation Assistant Operator

Members noted that the Hong Kong Construction Association (HKCA) would lend CICTA the plant and equipment to conduct the above course. At the same time, HKCA was studying the provision of subsidy to its members to sponsor staff to take the said course. It was expected the course would be launched in March 2010.

1.2.3 Agenda item 2.1 – Full-time Adult Short Course in Underground Pipe Laying

Members noted the Water Supplies Department opined that the proposed course content was appropriate at this stage and the CICTA was following up on the technical requirements for the replacement and repair of pipeline works.

1.2.4 Agenda item 2.2 – Building Maintenance Worker Training Course

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The above item would be discussed under a separate item below.

- 1.2.5 Agenda item 2.4 – Provision of ‘Off-the-shelf Training Packages’ to cope with the 2nd Phase Implementation of the Factories and Industrial Undertakings (Loadshifting Machinery) Regulation

Members noted that the Construction Industry Council had approved a sum of \$200,000 as the production cost of the training packages.

- 1.2.6 Agenda item 2.5 – Tender analysis report and recommendation for procurement of a new tower crane

The above item would be discussed under a separate item below.

- 1.2.7 Agenda item 3.1 – Tender analysis report and recommendation for construction of structural steel working platform of telescopic cage of tower crane

Members noted that the CICTA would invite tenders for the design of the structural steel working platform of the telescopic cage.

- 1.2.8 Agenda item 4.1 – Subdivision of Trade Test for Marble Workers

The above item would be discussed under a separate item below.

- 1.2.9 Agenda item 4.3.2 – Speeding up the training of supervisors/ foremen

Members noted that the CICTA was studying the training needs of supervisors for projects involving environmental monitoring and wetland restoration with relevant academic institutions, contractors and government departments. It was also noted that

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CICTA was actively pursuing the cooperation with contractors in training up the required supervisors within a short period of time. SM(CT)

1.3 Presentation on Study Tour to Guangzhou for Restoration of Heritage Buildings

Members took note of Paper CIC/CTB/P/001/10 and the direction for course development as suggested by the CICTA representatives after the study tour.

As for the requirements of the course instructors, Members opined that the CICTA should first collect data on the heritage buildings in Hong Kong, study the restoration required and the skills involved. After that, CICTA had to carry out a review of the deficiencies of the instructors in the area of restoration techniques before making any training proposals. For course entry requirements, Members opined that since monument restoration usually demanded a higher level of technique and quality, the entry threshold had to be uplifted to the skilled worker level. Meanwhile, the qualification attained by trainees after course completion should be carefully set. The requirement to get qualified as “master craftsmen” and the advancement ladder thereof should be pursued as soon as possible. In addition, a Member proposed that the CICTA should also consider providing training courses for trades like stone masons and electrical workers that were relevant to heritage restoration. SM (CT)

1.4 Surrender of certain area in Sheung Yuet Road Training Ground to the government for building the Walkway System

Members took note of Paper CIC/CTB/P/002/10 and noted that a developer in the district of Kowloon Bay had approached the government expressing its intention to build and maintain the Walkway System in the district. However, since the Walkway System concerned would occupy certain area in CICTA Sheung Yuet Road Training Ground, the developer had written to CICTA. In the letter, the developer indicated it could rebuild those facilities within the area in the training ground that would

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be affected on behalf of the CICTA so that the CICTA could surrender the area concerned to the government for the developer to build the relevant section of the walkway system.

Members opined that the management had to clarify the proper steps to be taken and to make sure that the surrender of a portion of the land should only involve the Lands Department. A proposal was to be submitted again to the CITB for consideration.

SM (CT)

1.5 Fee Proposal on Building Maintenance Worker Training Course

Members took note of Paper CIC/CTB/P/003/10 and noted that the CICTA had held a meeting with relevant government departments and a number of industry representatives in November 2009 after the last meeting in order to follow up on CITB's comments. At the meeting, all participants accepted the contents of every module and the assessment mechanism of the proposed course. They also opined that the course content and training hours of Module 6, i.e. 'Customer Service', were appropriate. In addition, participants opined that the course fee should be further reduced so as to lessen workers' burden. However, since maintenance projects in the future were anticipated to grow continuously, some Members were concerned that the expenditure in this aspect would rise if CICTA subsidized the proposed course.

Members opined that the CICTA had to re-examine the start-up cost of the proposed course and make reference to the way to control costs adopted by other bodies in running similar courses. Members also suggested that the CICTA might first provide the course on commissioned basis according to Housing Department's specifications for the department's maintenance contractors. If there were actual training needs in this area in the future, the CICTA would then consider the launch of the courses on regular basis. Members further discussed the certification and qualification to be awarded to workers after their completion of the proposed regular courses. A Member proposed that it was not advisable to issue individual certificates

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for different commissioned courses on maintenance works for different employers. Instead, the formulation of a standardized qualification for maintenance workers should be considered. D (I)

(Mr Jimmy Tse left the meeting at this junction.)

1.6 Amendment to Entry Requirements of Tower Crane Routine Inspection and Maintenance Course

Members took note of Paper CIC/CTB/P/004/10. It was noted that since the Task Force on Safety of Tower Cranes of the Construction Industry Council had amended the entry requirements of Inspection and Maintenance Workers in the Guidelines on Safety of Tower Cranes, industry practitioners fed back to the CICTA that they hoped workers with a minimum of 8 years' experience in inspection and repair of tower cranes but without any technical training/trade test certificates might also enroll onto the above course.

Members discussed the way to verify the experience of the course applicants and suggested that the management after establishing the verification mechanism could submit the proposal for CITB's consideration by circulation of paper. D (I)

1.7 Proposal of Commissioning a Consultancy to Conduct a research on Target Trainees of Full-time Courses

Members took note of Paper CIC/CTB/P/005/10 and noted the objectives and methodology of the above research. The study and report would take 5 months to complete and the preliminary cost was expected to be in the range of \$220,000 to \$250,000.

After discussion, Members agreed to commission a consultancy to carry out the research and the amount of money required would wholly come from the \$3,600,000 allocated for the promotion of full-time courses in the 2010 Budget Estimates. Meanwhile, it was also agreed that the management would advertise the full-time course commencement in the press before the completion of the research. The annual cost was estimated D (I)

at around \$750,000.

1.8 Proposed Trade Test Questions for Marble Workers, Plasterers and Joiners after Trade Test Subdivision and Amendments to Trade Test Questions for Trade Test on Marble Workers

Members took note of Paper CIC/CTB/P/006/10 and noted that the technical requirements and relevant test questions for Marble Workers (Dry Fixing) and Marble Workers (Wet Fixing) had been drawn up after much discussion with relevant organizations. It was anticipated that the total expenditure for phase one of the subdivision of trade tests would possibly increase by hundreds of thousands due to material consumption of marble. However, since the number of candidates was only a preliminary estimate, no additional funding would be required at this stage. Whereas, due to the changes to the methods and standards of wet fixing and dry fixing, the CICTA suggested to amend accordingly the existing trade test questions for Marble Workers.

After discussion, Members approved the trade test questions for Marble Workers (Dry Fixing) and Marble Workers (Wet Fixing) of phase one of the subdivision of trade tests as well as the amended trade test questions for Marble Workers.

A Member suggested that the CICTA could approach developers for surplus marble for the conduct of trade tests/training so as to reduce the said costs.

As regards the trade test questions for phase two Subdivision of trade tests, they would be submitted to the CITB for consideration after the technical requirements of a Carpenter (Formwork Stripping) had been agreed upon.

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1.9 Report on Follow-up of Procurement of a New Tower Crane

Members took note of Paper CIC/CTB/P/007/10 and noted that the CICTA had invited a related person from a Member's company to offer independent advice on technical assessment criteria and technical evaluations on the two tenders after the

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discussion held in mid-October 2009 on the tender analysis report. The views sought were subsequently reported for Members' consideration in November by circulation. Finally, a total of 9 Members indicated acceptance whereas two other Members suggested that performance history and safety records of the two tenderers had to be considered. Although some Members expressed their wish to complete the procurement as soon as possible for the conduct of the required courses and trade tests, the CITB opined that the final decision should be made only after the safety issues raised by Members had been followed up, and their concerns addressed.

1.10 Summary Report of the 2nd Meeting of the Board of Studies on Construction Safety Courses held in 2009

Members took note of and accepted Paper CIC/CTB/BOSSC/R/002/09.

1.11 Summary Report of the 2nd Meeting of the Sub-committee on Employers Subsidy Scheme held in 2009

Members took note of Paper CIC/CTB/ESS/R/002/09 and noted that 146 applications in total, which far exceeded the quota of 75 places as approved by the Committee on Administration and Finance, had been received under the revised Apprentice Subsidy Scheme (Trial). The Sub-committee suggested to accept all eligible applications for CITB's consideration.

Members also noted that the Committee on Administration and Finance had fixed the subsidy quota at 75 and reserved around \$3,000,000 when considering the budget for the scheme earlier. The scheme would also be reviewed after a trial run of 12 months.

It was pointed out that amendment proposal was not recommended at this stage since the Committee on Administration and Finance had already set the quota of the scheme clearly. In addition, it was opined that the pecuniary measure of providing short-term subsidies to graduates might twist the labour market. It was reported that a research had

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found that the wastage rate would be greatly reduced if graduates would stay employed in the industry for one year, a Member thus suggested compiling the figures of trainees who stayed in the construction industry for a period, say a few years after graduation for reference. This initiative would also facilitate the allocation of resources in the future and point the way forward.

After further discussion, Members agreed to allow all eligible applicants to share the approved budget equally, i.e. \$1,000 each month for each graduate for a period of 12 months, to avoid complaints of unfairness should only part of the applicants get the subsidies. The CITB also requested the management to draft a discussion paper on the graduate wastage rates and the arrangement of the subsidy scheme at a later stage. SM (ST)

1.12 Any Other Business

The Chairman suggested that future agenda items should focus on strategic issues for more in-depth discussions. D (T) & All to note

1.13 Tentative date of next meeting

To be advised. All to note

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 12:10 pm.

CITB Secretariat
January 2010