

(Draft)

**Construction Industry Council**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Progress Report of Committee on Environment and Technology**

**Purpose**

This paper outlines the main points discussed at the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Committee on Environment and Technology held on 30 August 2007. The record of attendance is at Annex.

**Issues Discussed**

2. Members discussed the following items –
  - The Green Buildings Movement and Hong Kong – What’s Next?
  - Task Force on Eurocodes

**Progress on Matters Arising from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting on 28 June 2007**

3. Members noted the following –

Paragraph 14(a)

The Professional Green Building Council (PGBC) would make a presentation on promoting green buildings in Hong Kong.

Paragraph 14(b)

The way forward on construction standard would be discussed at the meeting.

**The Green Buildings Movement and Hong Kong – What’s Next?**

4. PGBC was founded in late 2002 by the Founding Members namely, HKIA, HKIE, HKIS and Hong Kong Institute of Landscape Architects. The Hong Kong Institute of Planners joined in 2005. PGBC’s objectives were to conduct collaborative research on green buildings, organize researches and training courses. In line with these objectives, PGBC organized the Green Building Labeling Symposium in 2004, the Urban Climate + Urban Greenery Symposium in 2006, sent delegations to various overseas conferences and was preparing for the SB07HK Regional Conference to be held in December 2007.

5. PGBC highlighted the proactive efforts being made by the government of other advanced economies in promoting green building. The Tokyo Metropolitan Government and some pioneering states in US and Canada had mandated environmental performance assessment for public building projects. Some US and Canada states might move towards mandating such assessment for private-sector projects through building regulations and planning control. On the other hand, there was considerable scope for further dovetailing the pursuit of green buildings with government policies in Hong Kong.

6. PGBC would accept the invitation made by HK-BEAM Society to nominate three representatives to join the HK-BEAM Society Executive Committee so as to strengthen the professional support for pursuing the improvements to BEAM prescribed by the former PCICB as conditions for recommending the adoption of BEAM as the assessment scheme for the local construction industry. PGBC hoped that its active participation in HK-BEAM Society would help in developing BEAM into an assessment tool with industry-wide recognition. CIC was requested to complement these efforts by closely monitoring the improvements being made to BEAM.

7. PGBC was prepared to contribute on transformation of the mainstream market by increasing both the supply and demand for green buildings. On supply side, key market stakeholders should be encouraged to deliver green buildings through proper recognition of such efforts. On demand side, the demand for green buildings should be increased through government policy and leadership. PGBC also proposed to consider whether criteria for giving floor area exemption for the provision of prescribed green features in private buildings under the Joint Practice Notes issued by BD, Lands D and Plan D could be changed, e.g., to add the achievement of improvements in environmental performance demonstrated through appropriate assessments (especially on those aspects related to site/neighbourhood impacts) as a prerequisite for such exemption.

8. Members noted that green building initiatives were pursued in other economies through coherent institutional arrangements. For example, in the United States, the Green Building Council encompassing all sectors of the building industry was the focal point for promotion of green building and the adoption of Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) as the assessment method for benchmarking environmental performance. In Hong Kong, such efforts were spread across PGBC and HK-BEAM Society and there was a lack of clear interfaces between these organizations and CIC. Moreover, it was apparent that the effectiveness of both PGBC and HK-BEAM Society was affected by the lack of resources.

Members agreed that the establishment of a logical institutional arrangement that would address the existing structural and resources issues would be crucial for the further development of green buildings in Hong Kong. The Secretariat would formulate a suitable way forward along this direction for further discussions.

### **Task Force on Eurocodes**

9. CIC's role on construction standards was discussed at the 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Committee on 28 June 2007. Members generally agreed that CIC should improve the current fragmented approach through co-ordinating the standards adopted by the local construction industry; adapting the standards of other economies for local application; identifying appropriate standards for new building material; and identifying alternative material standards that would be suitable for local application. Given CIC's lack of experience, it might be more pragmatic to make a start on a specific initiative so as to gradually build up the capability on construction standards. In this regard, the deliberation of the way forward on the Eurocodes was identified as one of the suitable start-up projects.

10. The Eurocodes was a set of comprehensive structural and geotechnical design codes that would eventually replace the current codes used in Member States of the European Union (including UK) by March 2010. Given the extensive use of British codes in Hong Kong, the local construction industry would have to find ways to cope with replacement of British codes. The possible options would include adopting the Eurocodes, switching to other standards or continuing the use of British codes after their withdrawal in UK. It was proposed to set up a task force under the Committee to conduct in-depth deliberations and make recommendations on the way forward.

11. While there was some support for the task force, most Members doubted whether priority should be accorded to Eurocodes since BD had just issued new structural design codes. It was suggested that it would be better to start with an overall review of local construction standards to determine the priority areas requiring co-ordination by CIC. However, there were concerns that the wide scope of such an assignment would not be conducive to focused discussions and achievement of tangible deliverables within reasonable timeframes. The Secretariat was asked to further consider the way forward and develop new proposals for consideration.

## **Any Other Business**

12. EPD submitted an information paper introducing the risk-based remediation goals which had been adopted as the new contaminated land standards for Hong Kong on 15 August 2007 following its earlier endorsement by the Advisory Council on Environment in May. Members would forward their comments on the new standard to the Secretariat within two weeks. Discussion of the paper would be arranged if Members considered necessary.

## **Further Actions**

13. The following further action was agreed –

- (a) the Secretariat would develop a proposal on the way forward for promoting green buildings;
- (b) the Secretariat would develop a suitable proposal on the way forward on construction standards; and
- (c) Members would advise the Secretariat of their comments on EPD's paper on contaminated land standards within two weeks.

**CIC Secretariat  
September 2007**



## **Construction Industry Council Secretariat**

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