

Construction Industry Council

Committee on Environment and Technology

The 1st Meeting of the Committee on Environment and Technology for 2009 was held on Wednesday, 21 January 2009 at 3:00 pm at Room 1201, Murray Building, Garden Road, Central.

Present:	Conrad WONG	(CW)	Chairman
	Andrew CHAN	(AC)	
	Tat-tong CHEUNG	(TTC)	
	Jan-ming KO	(JMK)	
	Wo-hei LAM	(WHL)	
	Peter LEE	(PL)	
	Wai-wai YU	(WWY)	
	C K AU	(CKA)	Director of Buildings
	Hau-wai CHEUNG	(HWC)	
	Ken CHEUNG	(KC)	Housing Department
	Pun-hing HO	(PHH)	Hong Kong Federation of Electrical and Mechanical Contractors
	Russell JONES	(RJ)	Hong Kong Construction Association
	Shiu-ming NG	(SMN)	Association of Plastering Sub-contractors
	Yun-cheung CHAN	(YCC)	Development Bureau
Anthony FOK	(AF)	Environmental Protection Department	
Kwok-keung LI	(KKL)	Electrical and Mechanical Services Department	
Hon-kwok WONG	(HKW)	Architectural Services Department	
In Attendance:	Kei-hung TAO	(KHT)	Development Bureau
	Rico CHEUNG	(RC)	Development Bureau
	Wing-cheong KWOK	(WCK)	Development Bureau (for Agenda item 1.7 only)
	Christopher TO	(CT)	Executive Director
	Ivan WONG	(IW)	Senior Manager (Council Services) 2
	Phoebe LEUNG	(PLG)	Manager (Council Services) 2
Apologies:	Long PANG	(LP)	Construction Site Workers General Union

PROGRESS REPORT

Action

1.1 Confirmation of the Progress Report of the 9th Meeting for 2007-08

Members took note of Paper CIC/ENT/R/009/08 and confirmed the progress report of the 9th meeting held on Friday, 21 November 2008 at Murray Building.

1.2 Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting

1.2.1 Guidelines on selection of practical research topics

Members confirmed the Guidelines on Selection of Practical Research Projects and Procedures for Handling Research Proposals as attached at Annex A of Paper CIC/ENT/R/009/08.

1.2.2 Suggestions on practical research topics

For the research on river sand substitutes, the Secretariat had sent letters to relevant organizations and so far only one organization responded that no similar project had been conducted. As to the research on adhesion technologies and fixing methods for external wall tiles, Members decided to set up a task force to define the scope of the research and work out a suitable research brief for consideration by the Committee. The Secretariat would proceed to invite Members to participate in the task force.

**CIC
Secretariat**

1.2.3 Update on Task Force on Construction Standards for Buildings

Discussed under Agenda item 1.6.

1.2.4 Proposal for Control of Volatile Organic Compound Emissions from Adhesives and Sealants

Members noted that the Environmental Protection

Department (EPD) had set up a task force with the CICTA, Hong Kong Construction Association, designers and suppliers to work with the trades to facilitate smooth transition to using compliant products. The EPD was conducting testing on common types of adhesives and sealants and found that a great proportion of the existing products being used by the industry could comply with the proposed requirements. The EPD would provide the information for reference of their task force and the Committee in due course.

1.3 **Formation of Hong Kong Green Building Council**

Members took note of the Paper CIC/ENT/P/001/09 and discussed the possible roles of the future Hong Kong Green Building Council in the continued development of a rating system for the assessment of the environmental performance of buildings in Hong Kong, and the associated accreditation and registration of qualified professionals.

[KHT left the meeting at this juncture.]

1.4 **Construction-related Research Database**

Members took note of the Paper CIC/ENT/P/002/09 and received a list of construction-related research topics as set out at Annex A for internal reference.

Members deliberated on the possible use of the construction-related research database and the roles to be played by CIC in that regard. Members shared the view that CIC should consider the following objectives:

- (a) to facilitate information flow between industry stakeholders and the research community;
- (b) to encourage construction-related practical research and development; and
- (c) to enhance the practical application of research results.

Action

Members decided to set up a task force to deliberate on and recommend the way forward for consideration by the Committee. The Secretariat was directed to summarize ideas put forth by Members to facilitate further deliberation by the task force.

**CIC
Secretariat**

1.5 Update on Trade Task Force on the Mandatory Implementation of the Building Energy Codes

Members took note of the Paper CIC/ENT/P/003/09.

A Member pointed out that implementation of energy audits for commercial buildings with units sold to individual owners would not be an easy task. It was acknowledged that the Trade Task Force was aware of the issue and contemplating applicable measures.

1.6 Update on Task Force on Construction Standards for Buildings

Members took note of the Paper CIC/ENT/P/004/09.

Members agreed that it would not be worthwhile for Hong Kong to set and maintain its local standards. However, migrating to other established systems after the phasing out of British Standards in March 2010 would deserve consideration. In addition, unifying construction standards and specifications adopted by different project organizations was not necessary in view of the specific requirements of individual organizations and works projects.

The task groups on architectural works and building services were advised to expedite their review. Members also reminded that any issues and problems identified by the task groups could be submitted to the Committee for further deliberation. Conclusions drawn from the studies by the task groups and the deliberations of the Committee might require further consultation with industry stakeholders in the future as necessary.

**Respective
Task
Groups**

[WWY left the meeting at this juncture.]

1.7 Update on Task Force on Construction Standards for Infrastructures

Members received the following presentations by Mr Y C Chan, the Chairman of the Task Force on Construction Standards for Infrastructures:

- (a) initial findings and recommendations of the Task Force on Construction Standards for Infrastructures; and
- (b) briefing on use of Eurocodes.

[JMK, TTC , KKL, PL and PHH left the meeting at this juncture.]

Members noted that the review by the Task Force mainly focused on specifications for materials and workmanship and other pertinent aspects of construction standards. The specifications came under scrutiny included General Specifications used by government works departments, the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) and the MTR Corporation. The Task Force found that there were no fundamental differences among the construction specifications for infrastructures except for the specifications on piling. Nevertheless, potential areas of harmonization of the specification were highlighted for the project organizations to consider in the future.

Members also noted that the Working Group on Eurocodes under the Works Branch of the Development Bureau was studying the use of Eurocodes in Hong Kong to prepare for the phasing out of British Standards for structural design. The system of Chinese Standards was considered but not recommended for adoption for the time being considering its complexity, difference in approach from current practice, the language issue and the effort needed to track evolution of and access to the range of standards.

Action

Members agreed with the observations of the Task Force that it is the right project owners to specify their materials and workmanship. They understood that the government works departments and HA had mechanisms to upkeep their specifications and design standards.

As to buildings works, Members noted that the Buildings Department (BD) being a regulatory body for private buildings had set and enforced safety, health and environmental standards within the purview of the Buildings Ordinance and Regulations and conducted regular review of their regulations and standards. Government buildings and public housing will also adopt BD's codes of practice.

In view of the above, some Members considered that different construction standards had already been taken through relevant government departments and setting up a separate centralized standards body for construction standards in Hong Kong might not be necessary. CIC's role could however be receiving reports periodically, e.g. every 5 years.

The Task Force reported that their findings and recommendations on Construction Standards for Infrastructures would be submitted in due course.

**TF-CS on
Infra-
structures**

1.8 Any Other Business

Nil.

1.9 Proposed Tentative Date of the Next Scheduled Meeting

26 March 2009 (Thursday) at 2:30 pm at Hong Kong Construction Association, 16/F, 180 – 182 Hennessy Road, Wanchai, Hong Kong

All to note

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:15 pm.