

**Construction Industry Council**

Meeting No. 001/16 of the Construction Industry Council for 2016 was held on Friday, 26 February 2016 at 2:30 pm at Meeting Room 1, Construction Industry Council Headquarters, 15/F Allied Kajima Building, 138 Gloucester Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong.

Present	:	Ka-kui CHAN	(KKCh)	Chairman
		Allan CHAN	(SKC)	
		Chi-chiu CHAN	(CCC)	
		Pat-kan CHAN	(CPK)	
		Ivan Chin-shing FU	(FI)	
		Chi-wah LAI	(CWLi)	
		Stephen LAI	(SLI)	
		Robert LAM	(PHL)	
		Christopher LEUNG	(KYL)	
		Kenneth Kon-fei MO	(KM)	
		Kwok-kwan NG	(NKK)	
		Lawrence NG	(LN)	
		Shu-jie PAN	(PSJ)	
		Kevin POOLE	(KP)	
		Eliza Yeuk-lan WONG	(EWYL)	
		Sze-chun WONG	(SCW)	
		Wilfred Shek-chun WU	(WSCW)	
		Ringo Shek-man YU	(RiYu)	
		Sai-yen YU	(SYYu)	
		Chi-keung HON	(HCK)	Permanent Secretary for Development (Works)
		Siu-wai HUI	(SWH)	Director of Buildings
		Ada FUNG	(AF)	for Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)
In Attendance	:	Dominic CHOW	(DCW)	Development Bureau
		Christopher TO	(CT)	Executive Director
		LEE Oi-yen	(OYL)	Assistant Director – Registration Services
		Cheryl IP	(CI)	Assistant Director - HR, Facilities Management & Admin
		Ivan KO	(IK)	Senior Manager – Training & Development
		Miranda YEAP	(MYP)	Senior Manager – Council Services
		Belle HO	(CYH)	Manager – Council Services

Apologies : Paul CHONG (PC)  
Reuben CHU (RCU)  
Philco Nai-keung (NKW)  
WONG

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[The open-door session of the meeting started at 4:15 p.m.]

**1.8. Confirmation of Minutes of the Previous Meeting  
(Open-door Session)**

Members referred to Paper CIC/CMT/M/006/15 and approved the minutes of the open-door session of the 6<sup>th</sup> meeting of 2015 held on Friday, 11 December 2015 at Meeting Room 1, Construction Industry Council Headquarters, 15/F Allied Kajima Building, 138 Gloucester Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong.

**1.9. Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting  
(Open-door Session)**

There are no matters arising from the previous meeting.

**1.10. 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of Committee on Productivity and Research  
(Com-PNR) for 2015**

Members took note of the Paper CIC/CMT/P/007/16.

The following issues were highlighted:

- Item 3.2 - Construction Hong-Kong Automation Robotics Laboratory Implementation Strategy (CHARLIS)  
Professor Thomas Bock from the Technische Universität München delivered a presentation in the Com-PNR meeting on his 5-year strategy on construction robotics research to be developed in phases in Hong Kong. Professor Thomas Bock was preparing a proposal for a trial to be conducted in Hong Kong in one to two years' time.
- Item 3.3 - An Empirical Study of Construction Time Performance of High-Rise Private Building Projects in Hong Kong  
Dr. Daniel Chan from the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, the Principal Investigator, presented the progress and findings of the research project funded by the CIC Research Fund in the Com-PNR meeting. The project aimed to provide indicators on construction time and project scheduling for the industry.

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It was scheduled to be completed by end of February 2016.

- Item 3.4 - The Scheme Design Buildability Assessment Mechanism (SDBAM)  
Dr. Patrick Lam from the Hong Kong Polytechnic University and his research team had developed the SDBAM. The software could reflect actual buildability level and identify buildable and non-buildable features of local building projects. Members of Com-PNR showed interest in further promoting this software to the industry but noted that licensing issues with the university would be addressed.

The Chairman enquired if the provision of incentives would attract the industry to conduct trials using the research results. KYL responded that shortening the approval process by relevant government departments for new technologies would be more effective than providing incentives. The identification of mature technologies for testing was important.

The Chairman requested Com-PNR and Com-EIT to submit a Paper to advise the Council on the status of application of research results and suggestions on how to increase application.

**Com-PNR  
& Com-EIT**

AF suggested that regulators should be invited at the early stage of a research project to address their concern regarding approval criteria and process. In response, SWH said that the Buildings Department was willing to participate.

Members had no further comments on items in Paper CIC/CMT/P/007/16.

**1.11. 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) for 2015**

Members took note of the Papers CIC/CMT/P/008/16 and CIC/CMT/P/009/16. SKC reiterated that a long term plan on training should be prepared and it was important to attract youngsters to join the construction industry.

The following issues were highlighted:

- Item 10.1 – Members noted that:
  - (a) A representative from the Water Supplies Department

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(WSD) attended the meeting to answer the questions of Members about supplementary information in relation to Waterworks Regulations. Under the law, a licensed plumber must be held responsible for waterworks in a project and must play a part in the supervisory work. Members of the CITB felt uneasy about the definition of “supervision” and the delineation of “adequate supervision”. It was hoped that the minimum inspection frequency of a licensed plumber for site supervision could be laid down. There was also concern that there might not be enough active licensed plumbers to cope with the industry demand. In addition, Members of the CITB opined that the respective level of soldering skills of a licensed plumber was comparable to that of a skilled worker in plumbing. As such, certain project works, e.g. minor works to be carried out by a skilled worker in plumbing without the supervision of a licensed plumber on the spot should be pursued.

- (b) Members of the CITB had been invited to join the Task Group on Machineries and Crane Operation to holistically review the safety certificates, operations, training and trade tests for machineries and crane operators with the Committee on Construction Safety and Labour Department.
- Item 10.2 - Members of the CITB endorsed the results of the manpower forecast of construction workers under CIC Manpower Forecast Model in 2015, i.e. a shortage of around 10,000 to 15,000 skilled workers in the coming five years. Members also discussed the updated construction expenditure forecast and proposed to conduct a sensitivity study on the effect of changes to the economic data.
  - Item 10.4 – Members noted the retention rate of trainees under cooperative training schemes from 1 January to 31 May 2015 and the full year of 2014 which was between 60% to 70%. The Report on benchmarks of efficiency for cooperative training schemes was accepted.
  - Item 10.5 – Members of the CITB agreed to include the concreting trade in the Subcontractor Cooperative Training Scheme. The Report on review of Subcontractor (Concreting) Cooperative Training Scheme – Pilot Scheme was accepted.

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- Item 10.8 – The proposal for setting up a new safety training centre at Sha Tin Training Ground would not proceed further as it was not cost effective. The secretariat would search for a new venue for the new safety training centre.
  
- Item 11.2 - Members noted that:
  - (a) The Management had taken follow up actions regarding the two proposals made in the sharing session held with government departments and professional bodies of waterworks, which included strengthening the publicity of courses on plumbing and pipefitting, and reviewing incentive measures. For the suggestions that some works, like minor works, should be carried out and supervised by skilled workers in plumbing and that waterworks would be categorized by making reference to the practices of handling different grades of electrical works by different types of licensed electricians, the management would first meet and discuss with industry stakeholders.
  
  - (b) Regarding the concern on whether the Government could roll out enough construction projects to maintain the employment opportunities of construction workers when the construction expenditure dropped, the Research Department of CIC and the consultant would conduct a sensitivity study in the next construction expenditure forecast to explore the effects of change in economic data on the construction expenditure.
  
- Item 11.3 - Members of the CITB agreed to offer the Basic Appreciation Course on the Safe Use of Cranes for Frontline Supervisors.
  
- Item 11.4 - Members of the CITB agreed to continue for the time being to award the Intermediate Trade Test Certificate of relevant trades to candidates who got 50 to 59 marks in the Trade Test for Construction Craftsmen on the premise of safe operation and use of tools. Yet, follow-up should be taken to provide a better articulation to these candidates who would not have to re-take the test.
  
- Item 11.5 - Members noted that a new round of publicity campaign for boosting the number of candidates for trade tests would focus on three publicity activities, which included strengthening promotion through outdoor media, increasing promotional activities targeted at ethnic minorities, and

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enhancing the image of trade testing.

- Item 11.6 - Members noted the proposed academic progression pathways to Higher Diploma/Associate Degree programmes at universities for trainees and graduates of full time Construction Supervisor/Technician (CST) Programme.
- Item 11.8 - Members noted the results of the survey report on trainees of full-time courses in 2014-15 with a total average score of around 4 (the full score was 5). This indicated that trainees were satisfied with the overall arrangement of the courses.
- Item 11.9 - Members noted the concern of the Task Force on Training over the installation of one more crane at Tai Po Training Ground. After meeting with the representative of villagers, they did not oppose to the installation. The view of the villagers would be relayed to the Tai Po District Office for their follow up actions.
- Item 11.10 - The actual number of applications through “senior workers registration arrangement” and trade tests in a single month in November 2015 were around 2,500 and 1,700 respectively. The waiting time for trade tests was less than 2 months. The waiting time for most training courses was less than 6 months except those related to machineries and crane operation.
- Item 11.14 – CIC and the Labour Department would work closely regarding the promotion of Recruitment Days of Subcontractor Cooperative Training Scheme (SCTS).

In order to shorten the waiting time for training courses, the Chairman suggested using simulators in training. In response, IK advised that simulators were being used in training.

In response to AF’s enquiry on how the waiting time for trade tests could be maintained at less than 2 months to meet the increase in demand resulting from the implementation of “Designated workers for designated skills” provision, IK replied that the capacity of sites utilised for trade test was 70%. The capacity could be further increased by upgrading the test sites and by introducing Saturday, Sunday and night shifts. He added that in order to facilitate the preparation of trade tests, the questions of previous trade tests were

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uploaded to the website. CT supplemented that the instructors would also explain to the students the reason for failing the trade test.

A Member suggested that trade tests could be conducted using contractors' sites and machineries. In response, the Chairman requested submitting a paper to examine the feasibility of the suggestion.

**CITB**

Members had no comments on other items in Paper CIC/CMT/P/008/16 and CIC/CMT/P/009/16.

**1.12. 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of Steering Group on Implementation of CWRO Amendments for 2016**

Members took note of the Paper CIC/CMT/P/010/16.

The following issues were highlighted:

- Item 1.2 - In response to the suggestion of Steering Group Members on strengthening the outreach service on private construction sites, 15 out of the 39 sites visited between September 2015 and January 2016 were from the private sector whereas for those 34 sites scheduled for outreach from February to May 2016, 23 of them would be private sector sites.
- Item 1.3 - The work of CITB for the Amendments to the CWRO were as follows:
  - (a) 1,711 enrolments for trade tests were received in January 2016 and there were 19,335 enrolments accumulated, which exceeded the target by 10%. The passing rate of trade tests was about 70-80%.
  - (b) The new metal scaffolding testing workstations in the Aberdeen Trade Testing and Training Centre would operate in March 2016. The test capacity would be increased by 50% by then.
  - (c) The secretariat had produced promotion materials in Nepalese, Hindu and Urdu, and provided ethnic minority workers with exclusive training courses in collaboration with trade unions in order to enhance their skill levels.

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- Item 1.4 - The work of CWRB for the Amendments to the CWRO were as follows:
  - (a) As of the end of January 2016, about 20,990 applications under Senior Workers Registration Arrangement (SWRA) were received, in which about 19,100 had been issued with new registration cards. 2,735 applicants took oath on site by the Commissioners for Oaths delegated by the Development Bureau. The arrangement of taking oath on-site was very well received by workers.
  - (b) Identified in the trial run inspection, 280 out of 452 registered general workers carrying out skill works of designated trade divisions on the construction sites were unable to provide the information of their instructors.
  - (c) Starting from the end of January 2016, letters were gradually sent out to workers who passed the trade test to remind them to update their registration status to become skilled/semi-skilled workers. As of mid-February 2016, around 17% of the 1st round of target workers (about 6,600) replied to update their registration status.
  
- Item 1.5 - The feasibility of conducting training and trade tests for workers in overseas centres was being studied. A Consultant was being engaged to conduct an investigation to provide a benchmarking mechanism and thereby to establish an accreditation framework for qualifying skilled construction workers. Complying with the implementation of “Designated workers for designated skills” provision from April 2017, the framework would be used for recognising the corresponding skill levels, qualifications and experience of workers across different overseas territories. The liaison work with various parties was being conducted.

Members had no comments on other items in Paper CIC/CMT/P/010/16.

**1.13. 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of Construction Workers Registration Board for 2016**

Members took note of the Paper CIC/CMT/P/011/16.

The following issues were highlighted:

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- Item 1.3.1- As of 31 December 2015, a total of 2,616 people registered as skilled workers through simplified specified training courses. A total of 18,894 applications were received through Senior Workers Registration Arrangement from 1 January to 31 December 2015, of which 16,617 applications were completed. The number had met the Board's target with an average of over 2,000 applications received each month.
- Item 1.3.2 - Since the launch of the 1st phase of Construction Workers Registration System (CWRS) from 18 December 2015 to 15 January 2016, 4 contractors had adopted the new system and the number was expected to increase to 47 by the end of January.

The technical issues identified in the 2nd phase of the on-site pilot test were being addressed by IT Department, including the technical problems raised in the letter issued by HKCA on 21 January 2016.

- Item 1.3.3 – Two tasks would be completed by the Sub-committee on Registration:
  - (a) To publish the Guideline on Reasonable Measures for contractors to facilitate the implementation of “Designated workers for designated skills” provision.
  - (b) To deliberate enquiries regarding the skill description under Schedule 1 of CWRO.
- Item 1.3.5 –A record of about 1,700 people visited the new CIC Service Centre in Tsing Yi since its establishment on 4 January 2016. Besides, the provision of outreach services for worker registration would continue.
- Item 1.3.6 - The inspection team had achieved the targets set for 2015 with 1,502 construction sites and 15,192 workers registration cards inspected respectively. The new targets set for 2016 would be 1,250 construction sites and 12,500 registration cards.

The reason for the lower target for 2016 was due to the reservation of resources for conducting trial for “Designated workers for designated skills”. The headcount for the inspection team would be increased in 2017.

CT referred to PC's suggestion of setting up a new CIC Service

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Centre in other MTR stations following the opening of the CIC Service Centre in Tsing Yi. The issue would be further discussed in the CWRB meeting.

AF understood that some workers had difficulties in submitting applications through the Senior Workers Registration Arrangement.

Another Member urged that the deadline of 30 September 2016 for application through Senior Workers Registration Arrangement should be communicated to the workers now. The workers should not have expectation that the deadline would be deferred.

The Chairman agreed and requested to strengthen the site promotion through the use of posters and banners.

KM enquired how to assess the required number of skilled and semi-skilled workers. OYL reported that an assessment was being performed with joint efforts between the Development Bureau and CIC. The finding would be deliberated in the Steering Group on Implementation of CWRO Amendments.

Members had no comments on other items in Paper CIC/CMT/P/011/16.

**1.14. Any Other Business**

1.14.1 MYP gave a presentation on the relevant highlights related to the construction industry in the HKSAR Government 2016-17 Budget delivered by the Financial Secretary on 24 February 2016:

(a) Government Support to VTC

To further encourage continuing education, a pilot scheme would be implemented to provide tuition fee subsidy for three cohorts of students admitted to designated professional part-time programmes offered by the Vocational Training Council starting from the next academic year. Programmes in the disciplines of construction, engineering and technology would be covered. The total commitment would be \$200 million, benefiting 5,600 people.

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(b) Government Support to CIC

A total of \$420 million had been allocated over the past six years to support the Construction Industry Council in enhancing its training and promotion efforts to attract more new entrants to the industry. As at 2015, 18,000 semi-skilled workers had completed their training. The Government would continue to collaborate with the industry in upgrading practitioners' skills, putting in place a clear career ladder, improving the working environment, and ultimately increasing the manpower for the industry.

1.14.2 The Chairman invited Members to participate in the visits to CIC's Training Centres and Training Grounds arranged for them in March 2016.

1.14.3 MYP invited Members to join the CIC Technical Seminar on Competition Law for the Construction Industry which would be held on 15 March 2016 p.m. at Cliftons Hong Kong in Central. Registration would be free for Council Members while HK\$500 would be charged for other participants.

**1.15. Tentative Date of Next Meeting 002/16**

The next meeting was scheduled for 29 April 2016 (Friday) at 2:30 p.m. at Meeting Room 1, Construction Industry Council Headquarters, 15/F Allied Kajima Building, 138 Gloucester Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong. **All to note**

There being no further business, the open-door session of the meeting was adjourned at 5:30 p.m.