

Construction Industry Council
2nd Progress Report of Committee on Environment and Technology

Purpose

This paper outlines the main points discussed at the 2nd meeting of the Committee on Environment and Technology held on 28 June 2007. The record of attendance is at Annex.

Issues Discussed

2. Members discussed the following items –
 - progress of implementing improvement measures to Building Environmental Assessment Method (BEAM)¹; and
 - way forward on construction standards.

Progress on Matters Arising from the 1st Meeting on 31 May 2007

3. Members noted the following –

Paragraph 10(a)

Co-opted members and Government Representatives had been invited to join the Committee.

Paragraph 10(b)

The Secretariat had distributed to Members CD-ROM's containing relevant working documents and discussions records of the former Provisional Construction Industry Co-ordination Board (PCICB) on the priority tasks.

Paragraph 10(c)

Funding for the activities of the Committee would be discussed by CIC in due course.

¹Formerly called "Hong Kong Building Environmental Assessment Method" or "HK-BEAM"

Paragraph 10(d)

A schedule of dates for Committee meetings in 2007 was tabled to facilitate advanced planning.

Progress of Implementing Improvement Measures to BEAM

4. The HK-BEAM Society reported on progress made in implementing the improvement measures included as conditions by the former PCICB's in recommending BEAM as the way forward to achieve an integrated assessment scheme for the local construction industry. On inviting professional institutions/organizations like Professional Green Building Council (PGBC) to join the HK-BEAM Society Executive Committee, the membership of the committee would be expanded from 10 to 25 to make room. The HK-BEAM Society had secured the agreement in principle from PGBC and other organizations to join.

5. On implementing HK-BEAM Society's proposal for the network of assessors that aimed to allow other members of the industry to acquire qualification for undertaking BEAM assessments, the membership of the BEAM Wider Assessor Network Working Group had been expanded to include other stakeholders (including the potential new members of the HK-BEAM Society Executive Committee). The working group would finalize the procedures, quality assurance arrangements and fees for assessor accreditation and project verification.

6. On incorporating the desirable features of BD's Comprehensive Environmental Performance Assessment Scheme (CEPAS) into BEAM, the HK-BEAM Society was drawing up the development brief for incorporation of CEPAS features and alignment with ISO 21931 on framework for assessing environmental performance of construction works. Before embarking on the exercise, interested experts from the industry including the PGBC would be invited to join a technical review panel for advising on the review process.

7. On making efforts to raise the awareness of the industry and the public on the benefits of undertaking environmental performance assessments, the Society was working on several fronts including raising awareness of benefits of assessment, creating more incentives for obtaining BEAM grading as well as partnering with different organizations on industry-wide events and seminars.

8. Since the HK-BEAM Society was a non-profit making, it would need to raise funds for implementing the agreed improvements and was considering seeking sponsorship and donation from industry organizations. The Society would also appreciate CIC's support in promoting the adoption of BEAM by the local construction industry. In response, Members advised that the way forward on collaboration with the HK-BEAM Society and other organizations in promoting green buildings would be discussed in due course. Meanwhile, the HK-BEAM Society was requested to consider inviting local green groups to join the HK-BEAM Society Executive Committee so as to solicit their input on future development of BEAM and secure their support in promoting building environmental performance assessment. The Society was also invited to make regular progress report to the Committee.

Way Forward on Construction Standards

9. The Secretariat reported on the findings of a preliminary review of the present position on development of construction standards in Hong Kong. With the lack of a construction standards body, BD was the main promoter of construction standards for private building projects while the Works Departments (WD) under ETWB and HD had well-established general specifications for public works and public housing projects covering civil engineering, building and E&M works as well as in-house design codes, guidelines and design manuals that drew extensively from related codes of other economies (in particular British codes).

10. BD supplemented that the Building Authority controlled private building works through inter alia setting standards for private building and design construction in the Buildings Ordinance and its subsidiary regulations, Codes of Practice, Design Manuals and Practice Notes. BD was migrating to performance standards in recent years and had issued Code of Practice and Design Manual to prescribe the manner for satisfying its performance standards so as to help the industry in achieving compliance.

11. The Secretariat highlighted various issues on construction standards, including establishment of a central construction standardization body on which the former Works Bureau conducted consultancy studies in 1999 and 2000; difficulties in obtaining approvals for building materials manufactured to alternative standards resulting from the lengthy procedures for assessing their suitability; lack of alignment in specifying building materials caused by inconsistent approaches adopted by different client organizations; and introduction of Eurocodes, a new set of European structural design codes for building and civil engineering works, which

would replace the British Codes used extensively in Hong Kong by 2010 after a period of consistence.

12. While Members generally agreed that there was no need to establish a standards body, they wished to improve the current fragmented approach whereby BD and public sector client organizations developed their own standards without effective co-ordination. As such, CIC should play a proactive role in unifying the approach to construction standards 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; identifying alternative material standards that would be suitable for local application so as to create greater flexibility in the choice of building materials; and co-ordinating the efforts made by the industry to migrate to Eurocodes. These initiatives could be pursued through forming task forces with participation from BD, the public sector clients, professional institutions, contractors associations and other concerned industry stakeholders for tackling specific subjects starting with the standards for common materials.

13. In response to requests from contractors associations, ETWB would establish a working group consisting of representatives from WD's, HD, professional institutions and associations as well as contractors' associations to systematically review construction standard for public works projects starting with the most common materials such as concrete and steel reinforcement. Given the close relation of this exercise with the development of a unified approach to construction standards, ETWB was requested to provide further details of the working group to facilitate discussion on how CIC could dovetail with its deliberations.

Further Actions

14. The following further action was agreed –

- (a) PGBC would be invited to brief the Committee on their efforts in promoting green buildings; and
- (b) ETWB would provide further details of the working group for reviewing construction standards for public works projects.

CIC Secretariat
July 2007

Committee on Environment and Technology

**2nd Meeting held at 2:30 pm on 28 June 2007
in Conference Room 1201, Murray Building**

Record of Attendance

Present

Mr Conrad Wong	Chairman
Dr Andrew Chan	
Mr CHEUNG Tat-tong	
Mr LAM Wo-hei	
Mr CHEUNG Hau-wai	Director of Buildings
Mr Lawrence Lau	Environmental Protection Department
Mr Y C Chan	Environment, Transport and Works Bureau
Mr P H Ho	Hong Kong Federation of Electrical and Mechanical Contractors
Mr Ken Cheung	Housing Department

Absent with Apologies

Prof KO Jan-ming
Mr Peter Lee

In Attendance

**For discussion of “Progress of Implementing Improvement Measures
to Building Environmental Assessment Method”**

Mr Michael Arnold	HK-BEAM Society
Mr Kevin Edmunds	HK-BEAM Society

Construction Industry Council Secretariat

Mr K H Tao	Chief Assistant Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Works) 1
Mr Solomon Wong	Assistant Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Works) Public Works Systems Administration 1