

**Construction Industry Council**

**Construction Industry Training Board**

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Meeting No. 002/2019 of the Construction Industry Training Board for 2019 was held on Wednesday, 20 March 2019 at 9:30 am at the Conference Room, 5/F, Hong Kong Construction Trade Testing Centre, 95 Yue Kwong Road, Aberdeen.

Present:	Allan CHAN	(SKC)	Chairperson
	CHAN Kim-kwong	(KKCN)	
	CHAN Pat-kan	(PKC)	
	CHENG Sau-kuen	(SKCg)	
	CHOW Luen-kiu	(LKC)	
	Henry CHAU	(BCC)	
	Amelia FOK	(CYF)	
	Peter LAM	(OKL)	
	Dennis WONG	(DW)	
	Edmond WONG	(EW)	
	Joey LAM	(DS1)	
	WAN Chi-ping	(CPW)	
In attendance:	YAU Hau-yin	(HYYu)	Development Bureau
	Rick KO	(WCK)	Development Bureau
	CHAN Ka-kui	(KKCh)	CIC Chairman
	Albert CHENG	(CTN)	Executive Director
	Alex LEUNG	(AL)	Director – Collaboration & Trade Testing
	Francis WONG	(FW)	Director - HKIC
	CHU Yin-lin	(YLC)	Assistant Director – Training (Acting)
	Ivan KO	(IK)	Senior Manager – Trade Testing
	Davis LIU	(DsL)	Principal – Kowloon Bay Campus
	Rex YU	(SHY)	Principal – Kwai Chung Campus
	Kelvin LIN	(KnL)	Senior Manager – Professional Development Centre
	James WONG	(JsW)	Senior Manager – Construction Productivity
	Angus NG	(ANg)	Assistant Manager – Construction Productivity
	Jimmy LEUNG	(JyL)	Consultant – Collaboration Scheme and Apprenticeship Scheme Management
	Ellen FUNG	(EnF)	Manager – Apprenticeship Scheme

	Priscilla TAM	(PTm)	Management Manager – Board Services & Administration Support
	Formula CHEN	(FMC)	Assistant Manager – CITB Secretariat
	Roy WONG	(RyW)	Senior Officer – Career Support Services
Absent:	Joseph CHI	(JCI)	
	YU Sai-yen	(SYYu)	

## **Minutes**

### **Action**

#### **2.1 Confirmation of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

Members took note of Paper CIC/CTB/M/001/19 and confirmed the minutes of the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting held on 23 January 2019.

#### **2.2 Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting**

Item 1.4 – Framework for Consolidating Training of Apprentices

RyW reported that graduates of Construction Diploma Programme of Year 2018/19 of the Hong Kong Institute of Construction (HKIC) who had participated in the Apprenticeship Scheme would be required to attend the monthly events organised by HKIC. Such events mainly covered four major areas, namely Skills Enhancement, Safety Training, Soft Skills Enhancement and Industry Knowledge / Management / Technology and Innovation, with a focus on Soft Skills Enhancement in the first year and Skills Enhancement in the second year.

Item 1.5 – Suggestion on the Revision of Apprenticeship Scheme (Civil & Building Work Trades)

By the time the meeting was held, the Secretariat had not received any suggestion on the name of the scheme. After discussion, the management decided to name the scheme as “Construction Industry Council Technical Talents Training Programme” and a paper had been prepared for discussion in this meeting.

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Item 1.7 – Sponsorship of “WorldSkills Kazan 2019”  
(WorldSkills)

The Trade Testing Department had been actively liaising with more organisations and companies for sponsorship for the WorldSkills.

Item 1.8 – Coordinating the Skills Competitions

After the WorldSkills Competition, Executive Director would review relevant human resources in detail to decide which unit would be responsible for the coordination of the Skills Competitions in the long run.

Item 1.12 – Statistical Data of Trade Tests and Application Requirements

The relevant statistics had indicated the passing rates calculated both by headcount and by applications. The management had prepared a paper on application requirements for discussion at this meeting.

**2.3 Suggestions on the Revision of Apprenticeship Scheme (Civil & Building Work Trades) (for approval)**

Members took note of Paper CIC/CTB/P/015/19. AL briefed members about the suggestions on the revision of Apprenticeship Scheme (Civil & Building Work Trades), which included the expansion of apprenticeship eligibility to cover graduates of the HKIC’s Certificate in Construction Programme and Diploma in Construction Programme in all civil & building work trades and electrical trades, and graduates of Adult Full-time Short Courses in some trades with labour shortage; use of “Construction Industry Council Technical Talents Training Programmes” (The Chinese name of the scheme is 建造業議會技術專才培訓計劃) as the general title of all CIC training programmes for skilled workers and technicians; termination of the old “Apprenticeship Training Subsidy Scheme”, as no new apprentices or employers had participated in the “Apprenticeship Training Subsidy Scheme” since 2016.

AL continued to report that in order to encourage the industry to recognise and actively participate in the scheme, the management

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suggested the Development Bureau (DEVB) to consider incorporating the terms in public works contracts requiring contractors to employ apprentices of the training scheme and to consider completion of the scheme as one of the qualification requirements of hiring government frontline technicians.

(Post-meeting notes: The current entry requirements of the government frontline technicians require a certificate (or diploma / higher diploma) in related discipline from a polytechnic university / college in Hong Kong, or the Hong Kong Institute of Vocational Education or a technical institute / college, or equivalent. As the accreditation for HKIC courses is going on, it cannot be included in the entry requirements of the government frontline technicians. After the related courses have been accredited and recognized under Qualifications Framework equivalent to the aforementioned qualifications, it can be accepted as one of the qualification requirements.)

Members took note of the financial budget of the scheme in 2019 and the announcement of the Financial Secretary in the 2019-20 Budget that HK\$200 million would be allocated to enhance the training of construction workers and support CIC in enhancing the training of new blood to join the construction industry. Of which, a total of HK\$110 million would be used for that apprenticeship scheme while HK\$50 million would be used to increase the training allowances for students of HKIC's Certificate in Construction Programme and Diploma in Construction Programme. In addition, an amount of HK\$40 million would be used to encourage serving general workers to participate in the HKIC's Skills Enhancement Courses, with a view to upgrading them to intermediate tradesmen (semi-skilled workers).

The DEVB representative stated that it was planned to seek funding approval from the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council by the end of July. Should there be too many agenda items, the funding approval might be deferred to October or November. Executive Director said that the apprenticeship training scheme was expected to be launched in September 2019, and CIC would consider paying the upfront payment.

The CIC Chairman enquired whether the suggestion of extending the scheme to cover those Adult Full-time Short Courses on trades with labour shortage was a temporary or long-term measure. AL

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responded that it was a pilot scheme and an interim measure. In the long run, CIC hoped to enhance and reform the Advanced Construction Manpower Training Scheme – Pilot Scheme (ACMTS) and to encourage Adult Short Courses' students to participate in the reformed ACMTS. Subject to the satisfactory trial results, Adult Short Courses' students could become senior tradesmen (skilled workers) through the abovementioned two routes.

The CIC Chairman suggested naming the scheme as “Construction Industry Council Approved Technical Talents Training Programmes”, as the word “Approved” highlighted the scheme was under CIC stringent surveillance.

After deliberation, Members approved the following suggestions:

- (a) Adopted the use of “Construction Industry Council Approved Technical Talents Training Programmes” (The Chinese name is 建造業議會認可技術專才培訓計劃) as the general title of all CIC training programmes for skilled workers and technicians. The scheme for graduates of HKIC's Certificate in Construction Programme, Diploma in Construction Programme, and adult short courses of Bar-Bending & Fixing, Metalworks & Welding and Levelling & Surveying would be the “Construction Industry Council Approved Technical Talents Training Programmes – Senior Tradesman (Certificate)”.
- (b) Formally terminated the old “Apprenticeship Training Subsidy Scheme” of CIC.

**2.4 Adjustment to Application Requirements and Application Fee of Trade Tests (for approval)**

Members took note of Paper CIC/CTB/P/016/19. IK said that the suggestion aimed at candidates who frivolously put in their applications and those who abused the re-sit of trade tests. The suggestion was to avoid significantly uplifting the entry thresholds and depriving those in genuine need of taking trade tests.

A Member opined that the increase in test fee of E&M trade tests was too high. The current application fee of Electrical Worker (Grade A) was only HK\$350, and the wear and tear of materials in E&M trade tests was relatively less. In addition, trade unions

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should be allowed to issue proof of work experience to workers, who could also present Electrical Worker (Grade A) License or Construction Workers Registration Cards (CWR Cards) as proof. Another Member agreed to the need to prevent abuse, but stated that, in order to draw in more people to the industry, the entry threshold for semi-skilled workers should not be too high. Workers should not only be allowed to make an oath at Home Affairs Department. CIC should also consider allowing trade unions to issue proof of work experience to workers who applied for intermediate trade tests. A Member opined that the trade test fee and cost as well as the passing rate and fee should not be linked; the test fee of the first attempt should be lower and the re-test fee could be increased. The Member agreed to the need to prevent abuse, but stated that it was necessary to convey a clear message to workers. A Member opined that to partially refund the test fee to workers who passed the test in their first attempt could be considered. Another Member stated that applicants for trade tests (skilled workers) were required to have a minimum of 4 years of relevant work experience or possess a relevant intermediate trade test certificate and a minimum of 2 years of relevant work experience. As both options required 4 years of experience, there were no incentives for workers to apply for the intermediate trade tests.

IK responded that CIC required workers who were unable to obtain proof of work experience from their employers to go to the Home Affairs Department to make an oath as the oath had legal effect. It was hoped that the candidates did possess the related trade experience and had thought carefully whether they possessed the relevant skills and work experience before applying trade tests. The test fee did not include non-operating cost and CIC still had to use levy to subsidize around HK\$3,000 per trade test candidate. As there were as many as 20,000 trade test applications every year, the administrative cost of partial refund would be exorbitant and it would also cause inconvenience to workers who did not have a bank account. In addition, the implementation of “designated workers for designated skills” was an incentive to attract workers to apply for the intermediate trade tests.

The CIC Chairman reiterated that the adjustment of application requirements of trade tests and application fee was to prevent abuse, to allow applicants to thoroughly consider whether they possess the relevant skills and qualifications as well as to facilitate

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workers with related skills to take trade tests as soon as possible. CIC Chairman understood that it was not easy for workers to provide proof of work experience issued by their employers, but the years of experience of workers joining a trade union and the relevant licenses did not equate to the practical work experience of relevant trades.

A Member opined that workers should be encouraged to enroll for skills enhancement courses (intensive courses) before applying for trade tests, and a concession discount on trade tests could be provided to those workers. YLC responded that the HKIC was currently offering 50-hour part-time skills enhancement courses to general workers on Saturdays and Sundays. These students would be entitled to take two free intermediate trade tests and would be awarded a HK\$4,000 bonus for passing the test. The intensive courses would be enhanced in the future to attract more workers.

A Member suggested to consider setting up two queues for trade test applications, with an express queue for those who submitted all the necessary documents. A Member representing a trade union had no comments on the adjustment of test fee and agreed that the requirements for applying trade tests for skilled workers should be stricter. However, he opined that there was not much difference between the certification issued by a trade union and the statutory declaration made at the Home Affairs Department, and making a statutory declaration at the Home Affairs Department would exert pressure on workers. He restated that for the convenience of workers for applying for the intermediate trade tests, it would be inappropriate to request workers to make a statutory declaration. The DEVB representative pointed out that workers had to be honest no matter making a statutory declaration at the Home Affairs Department or requesting a trade union to issue proof of work experience. The difference between the two methods was that the statutory declaration at the Home Affairs Department had a legal effect. Another Member opined that the increase of the test fee of the trade test for skilled workers to HK\$1,000 was reasonable.

Executive Director said that it was a rather sensitive issue and expressed that it was not necessary to reach a decision at the meeting. The management could revise the proposal after taking into account of Members' views, and hold a consultation to enhance the proposal. The ultimate objective was to shorten the

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waiting time for trade tests and facilitate workers with related skills to have trade tests as soon as possible. The Chairperson stated that the management had already taken various factors into account when working out the proposal, and it was not easy to strike a balance between the prevention of abuse and the convenience for workers to put in their applications. Considering that workers might not be able to present employers' certifications and might not know how to make an oath, the Hong Kong Construction Trade Testing Centre should provide a standard oath sample for the workers. To allow sufficient time for the industry to understand and adapt to the new adjustment, the scheme would be implemented in 2020. The management would incorporate Members' views and submit the revised proposal to CITB for discussion. AL proposed to hold a discussion session on the subject before the next CITB meeting and invited CITB members to attend.

IK

**2.5 Manpower Forecast for Construction Workers for 2019-2023 (for endorsement)**

Members took note of Paper CIC/CTB/P/017/19. JsW briefed Members on the report on manpower forecast for construction workers for 2019-2023. According to the manpower forecast of construction workers from 2019-2023 projected by the Construction Industry Council (CIC) Manpower Forecasting Model, there would be a shortage of approximately 5,000 to 10,000 construction skilled workers in the short and medium terms.

Members endorsed the report on manpower forecast for construction workers for 2019-2023.

**2.6 ★Summary Report of the 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of Hong Kong Institute of Construction Management Board in 2019 (for information)**

Members took note of Paper \*CIC/CTB/P/018/19\* with no further comments.

**2.7 ★Table on Estimated Waiting Time for Full-time Short Courses (for information)**

Members took note of Paper \*CIC/CTB/P/019/19\*. The DEVB representative enquired about the reason for the suspension of recruitment of students for some machineries and crane operation

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courses. YLC responded that the waiting time for some machineries and crane operation courses was over a year and hence the admission was suspended. Due to the low training output of each class of these machineries and crane operation courses, the sole reliance on the CIC's training effort could hardly meet the industry demand. The CIC had already worked with the industry via the collaboration scheme to train talents and reached a consensus with the Labour Department on the arrangement of collaborative training on "Training Course for New Operators of Loadshifting Machines" in November 2018. JyL supplemented that two companies had joined the collaborative training on Wheeled Telescopic Mobile Crane Operation. Whereas, the management had previously met with the contractor of the Airport Authority Hong Kong to discuss the provision of collaborative training for operators of bulldozers, loaders and excavators. The contractor estimated that the manpower demand would peak in 2021. A Member stated that the training of machineries and crane operators could be organized in conjunction with institutes from the Mainland China if the cost of that approach was lower. YLC responded that the management had looked into the approach, but decided not to proceed after considering the issues of venue setup, cost, technical problem and insurance.

**2.8 ★Table on Waiting Time and Data for Trade Tests (for information)**

Members took note of Paper \*CIC/CTB/P/020/19\*. The DEVB representative stated that the paper estimated a slowdown in the application of trade tests in 2019, while the Financial Secretary proposed funding and measures in the Budget to encourage general workers to upgrade their skills and to become semi-skilled workers. In that way, the number of trade tests to be conducted might increase and CIC was recommended to make corresponding arrangements. IK said that CIC would closely monitor the situation and make suitable arrangements in a timely manner. The CIC Chairman stated that the data reflected high absence rates of trade tests in some trades, and reminded that special attention to that factor should be paid when adjusting the trade test fee and eligibility of application to prevent abuse.

**2.9 ★Table on Waiting Time for Plant and Machinery Operation Certification Courses cum Tests (for information)**

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Members took note of Paper \*CIC/CTB/P/021/19\* with no further comments.

**2.10 ★Statistical Data of Advanced Construction Manpower Training Scheme – Pilot Scheme (for information)**

Members took note of Paper \*CIC/CTB/P/022/19\* with no further comments.

**2.11 Any Other Business**

Reimbursement of Collaboration Training Allowances

A Member representing sub-contractors said that complaints from members had been received about the long application time for reimbursement of collaboration training allowances. JyL responded that a relatively stringent vetting procedure was adopted as the reimbursement was funded by public money. Employers must submit all the required documents which included invoices, trainees' salary pay slips / allowance receipt record and trainees' attendance record. However, some employers failed to provide all the documents, and there was a difference of 2 to 3 months between the date CIC received the invoices and the stated date of invoices. CIC would reimburse the allowances within the pledged period upon receiving all the required documents. Executive Director stated that all matters involving public money should be handled with great care, and suggested that the department in charge of collaboration scheme should enhance communication with employers and notify employers immediately if they did not submit all the required documents. AL suggested the department organising briefings again for relevant sub-contractors to explain the procedures.

JyL

Achievement Statements

AL reported that HKIC, the Trade Testing Department and the Collaboration Scheme Department had drawn up their achievement statements.

Construction Industry Outstanding Apprentice Award

AL reported that the first Construction Industry Outstanding Apprentice Award would be held this year and the nomination

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deadline was 30 April 2019. He appealed to Members for their active support. The award presentation ceremony would be tentatively held at the Alumni Lo Pan Dinner on 29 June 2019.

**2.12 Tentative Date for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting in 2019**

The next meeting was tentatively scheduled for 15 May 2019 (Wednesday) at 9:30 am at Board Room, CIC Headquarters, 38/F, COS Centre, 56 Chun Yip Street, Kwun Tong, Kowloon.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:50 am.

**CITB Secretariat  
March 2019**