

Construction Industry Council

Construction Industry Training Board

The 4th Meeting of the Construction Industry Training Board was held on Tuesday, 18 August 2009 at 3:05 pm at Conference Room, CICTA Management Training and Trade Testing Centre, Level 7, No. 95 Yue Kwong Road, Aberdeen, Hong Kong.

Present: Ir Billy W H Wong Chairman
Mr Chow Luen-kiu
Mr Enoch Lam
Mr Cheung Tak-hing
Mr S H Tso
Dr Leung Hip-hung
Ir Poon Lok-to, Otto
Mr Donald Choi
Mr Lok Kwei-sang, Tandy
Mr Jimmy Tse
Ir Helen Kwan

In Attendance: Ir Jimmy Chan Chief Assistant Secretary (Works),
DEVB
Ir Christopher To Executive Director, CIC
Mr Charles Wong Director (Training), CIC
Mr Wong Chi-lap Senior Manager (ST), CICTA
Mr Chu Yin-lin Senior Manager (CT), CICTA
Mrs Sophie Leung Secretary, CITB
Mrs Shirley Lam Assistant Secretary, CITB

Apologies: Ir Thomas Ho
Mr Lai Yuk-fai, Stephen

PROGRESS REPORT

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1.1 Confirmation of the Progress Report of the 3rd meeting held in 2009

Members took note of Paper CIC/CTB/R/003/09 and confirmed the progress report of the 3rd meeting held on 25 May 2009.

1.2 Matters arising from the last meeting

1.2.1 Agenda item 1.3 – Capacities for Basic Craft Courses and Construction Supervisor/Technician Programmes

The CICTA would adjust according to Members' opinions the allocation of capacities of the above courses and programmes in response to the reform of the academic structure and practical needs of the market. CICTA would follow up actively the collaboration with contractors in the provision of supervisor training programmes.

1.2.2 Agenda item 1.11 – Promotion and advertising activities for 2009 full-time courses

The above item would be discussed under a separate agenda item below.

1.2.3 Agenda item 1.14 – Construction Workers Registration Authority's request on CICTA to add sub-divided trade tests for certain designated trades

Members noted that the Committee on Administration and Finance had already approved the launch of Stage 1 of sub-division of trade tests for the trade tests of certain designated trades in response to the Construction Workers Registration Authority's request. As regards the Stage 2 of sub-division of trade tests, further actions would be taken after clarifications from relevant parties on the technical aspect of the trades involved were sought.

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- 1.2.4 Agenda item 1.15 – Offering of half test fee concessions to workers with recommendations from labour unions to take building and civil trade tests

Members noted that the Committee on Administration and Finance opined that the idea of offering half test fee concessions to workers with recommendations from labour unions was inappropriate and the proposal was not accepted.

[Mr Lok Kwei-sang, Tandy joined the meeting at this juncture.]

- 1.2.5 Agenda item 1.17 – New Employers Subsidy Scheme and adjustment to 2009 Budget Estimates

Members noted that the Committee on Administration and Finance had agreed to make additional provision for those applications in excess of the quota under the original Scheme and had also approved the funding required for the 75 places under the new Scheme. The new Scheme would be put on trial for one year.

- 1.2.6 Agenda item 1.20 – Tin Shui Wai Outdoor Training Ground

Members noted that the Committee on Administration and Finance had approved an additional provision of \$2.15 million as capital expenditure for the setting up of Tin Shui Wai Training Ground and approval of the building plan by relevant government departments was being awaited.

[Mr Jimmy Tse joined the meeting at this juncture.]

1.3 Full-time Adult Short Course for ‘Tunnel Workers’

Members took note of Paper CIC/CTB/P/050/09. A Member opined that the proposed training period of 25 days was

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insufficient in view of the diversity of the job duties of a tunnel worker. In addition, the proposed construction of a concrete tunnel for training could hardly simulate genuine tunnel conditions. Therefore, it was suggested the above training be included in the 'Civil Trades Cooperative Training Scheme' with CICTA taking up the provision of preliminary safety training. Trainees would be made to undertake on-site training at construction sites of contractors and the results would be more satisfactory. The training capacity under the Training Scheme would also be greater as compared with the current proposal of 12 persons per class. It was believed that the anticipated demand for more than 1,000 'tunnel workers' during the peak period of infrastructure construction would more likely be met. Members also noted that the CICTA was already providing trade tests for tunnel workers.

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Another Member remarked that the CICTA had to review the name of 'full-time adult short course' in the light of the changes in current legislation and society, and to consider the provision of different full-time courses for new entrants and in-service personnel respectively.

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1.4 'Top-up Course for Registered Minor Works Contractors'

Members took note of Paper CIC/CTB/P/051/09 and noted that the content of the above course was formulated subsequent to an extensive consultation by the Buildings Department with industry practitioners. Members pointed out that this course should stress and strengthen safety training and noted that considerable teaching hours of the course proposal had been allotted to this aspect of training.

After discussion, Member endorsed the provision of a 'Top-up Course for Registered Minor Works Contractors' on a part-time evening basis for 'authorized signatories' of minor works contractors who intended to get registered under Classes I or II/III but did not hold relevant academic qualifications.

The course would be offered in modules, which would include a compulsory core module and seven individual modules for different types of works for selection. Fee for each module would range from \$200 to \$1,800 and class size would be 30

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persons. A trainee would have to attend the core module and attain an attendance rate of 80% or above of the elective module as well as to pass the assessments of the modules concerned before being awarded a completion certificate. Members also suggested that the responsibility of contractors in taking out insurance be highlighted in the course.

1.5 Follow-up report of running two training courses to complement the Buildings Department's introduction of the Minor Works Control System

Members took note of Paper CIC/CTB/P/051a/09 and noted that the concerns of the CITB earlier about the insufficiency of the course content on construction safety topics met positive response from the Buildings Department. A new registration requirement was added, which provided that all applicants applying for registration as Class III minor works contractors had to complete a mandatory safety training course first. Accordingly, Members agreed to the provision of:

- i. 'Mandatory Short Training Course for Individual Practitioners applying to register as Class III Registered Minor Works Contractors; and
- ii. 'Continuing Professional Development Course on Building Technology (Structures for Amenities) for Registered Specialist Contractors (Ventilation Works Category)'

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The above two courses would be conducted on the part-time day and part-time evening basis. Class size would be 50 persons and 25 persons respectively and their respective course fees would be \$150 and \$360 each.

1.6 Progress on preparation for courses on restoration of heritage buildings

Members took note of Paper CIC/CTB/P/052/09 and noted that the CICTA had drafted the outlines of two courses and was planning to organize a study tour to the Mainland for observation and exchange, and the Guangzhou Municipal Cultural Bureau was contacted. Members agreed to have an

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understanding of the restoration craftsmanship of built heritage in the Mainland through exchange at the outset as reference materials to enrich the proposed courses. Members also proposed that it might consider inviting Mainland instructors to come to Hong Kong and assist in the drafting of course outlines as well as teaching relevant craft skills. In addition, since some built heritage would require restoration methods and materials unique to the West, bringing in western concepts of heritage restoration and inviting relevant instructors to come to Hong Kong to pass on European restoration techniques to CICTA instructors would be considered. Members continued to point out that the CICTA should finalize the contents of the courses concerned only after collecting sufficient information.

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1.7 ‘Revalidation Certification Course for Construction Materials Sampler’

Members took note of Paper CIC/CTB/P/053/09. In view of the fact that the Housing Department had already specified the requirement of taking the ‘Certificate Course for Construction Materials Sampler’ in its works contracts, it was not advisable to amend the course title at this stage. In addition, industry practitioners considered that the course contents were still applicable whereas the Housing Department indicated it would also recognize the proposed refresher courses in their contracts. Members agreed to run a one-day ‘Revalidation Certification Course for Construction Materials Sampler’ for those who had obtained the recognized qualifications to undergo revalidation. The number of trainees per class would be 20 persons and the course fee would be \$250 each. A trainee had to pass a written test and a practical test before being awarded a revalidation certificate with a validity of five years.

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1.8 ‘Training Course for Ground Investigation Assistant Operator’

Members took note of Paper CIC/CTB/P/054/09 and noted the opinions of the Site Investigation Contractors Committee of the Hong Kong Construction Association towards the inclusion of the above course into the Civil Trades Cooperative Training Scheme and its wish for a systematic and comprehensive training course offered by CICTA for new entrants.

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After discussion, Members agreed to have CICTA to run the above course in principle. However, there was reservation on the class size of 8 in view of the relatively high total course development cost of \$240,000. Members pointed out that the job duties of a ground investigation assistant operator were not at all complex and it might consider increasing the class size or re-designing the training mode so as to minimize training costs. In addition, a Member pointed out that there was a considerable number of registered ground investigation assistant operators and it was necessary to clarify the actual manpower demand in the industry with care. Members also expressed views on the arrangement of employing part-time instructors and opined that it was necessary to employ the instructors concerned on monthly, instead of hourly, basis to ensure the continuity of the course delivery. Members requested the CICTA to report further development of the above issues at the next meeting.

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1.9 Representative from VTC

Ir Wong, on behalf of CITB, expressed his gratitude to Dr Leung Hip-hung, who was attending the meeting the last time as a VTC representative due to change of duties.

[Dr Leung Hip-hung left the meeting with apologies at this juncture.]

1.10 Research proposal on market and corporate identity of Construction Industry Council Training Academy in 2010

Members agreed that Paper CIC/CTB/P/055/09 was to be held in abeyance and noted that D(T) would adjust the research approach and budget, which would focus on examining the reasons for people not willing to join the industry and would identify the incentives for people to join the construction industry.

1.11 ‘Certification Course Cum Test for Derrick Operators’

Members took note of Paper CIC/CTB/P/056/09 and

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understood that the Maritime Services Training Institute of the Vocational Training Council had already decided to suspend the provision of tests for the operators concerned. Industry practitioners, however, hoped that the CICTA would offer the tests for the construction industry. Representative from the Labour Department was supportive of the suggestion.

After discussion, Members endorsed the running of a three-day Certification Course cum Test for Derrick Operators. Each class would consist of eight candidates. A candidate would have to finish the refresher course on the first day before sitting for the subsequent written test and practical test. A candidate had to get 60% or above in the written test and the practical test before being awarded a certification card with a validity of five years. The course fee would be \$1,200 and the CICTA would use the amount of \$500,000 already approved for the purchase of a derrick crane.

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1.12 Amendments to contents of intermediate trade tests for levellers, plasterers, tilers and bar benders

Members took note of Paper CIC/CTB/P/057/09. Regarding the suggestion of cancelling the test item of scaffold climbing in the intermediate trade test for the three trades of levellers, plasterers and tilers having referred to the Code of Practice for Bamboo Scaffolding Safety issued by the Labour Department, a Member pointed out that workers indeed had practical need to climb scaffolds in actual work environment. The Code of Practice only served to encourage workers to use safe access to and egress from the place of work. Therefore, it was proposed that the test item of scaffold climbing be retained in the test but workers would be reminded to note the proper practice.

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As regards the proposed amendment to the intermediate trade test contents for bar benders, a Member pointed out that nowadays workers were still required to use hand tools to bend bars on construction sites and thus it was not advisable to have a complete replacement of hand tools by machines. However, an addition of an assessment on the use of machines to bend

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bars might be considered. Meanwhile, concerning the proposal to cancel two assessment items so as to maintain the same assessment time with the addition of an assessment item of ‘erection of a simple beam structure’, Members opined that it was not advisable and made a counter-proposal to the CICTA to extend the test duration as appropriate to cater for the newly-added item.

1.13 Submission of assessment criteria for the Civil Trades Cooperative Training Scheme and assessing the cooperative training scheme submitted by Dragages Hong Kong – Nishimatsu Construction Joint Venture

Members took note of Paper CIC/CTB/P/058/09. Regarding the proposed administrative assessment criteria, Members expressed that the scope of the Scheme concerned should not be restricted to the training of civil workers. Applications might still be made for participating in the said Scheme as long as there were training needs in the industry where CICTA was unable to provide suitable venues or plant and equipment required. Meanwhile, for the proposed technical evaluation criteria, Members opined that the CICTA had to handle carefully the arrangement of inviting industry practitioners to participate in initial assessments because sensitive issues like peer competition or confidential commercial information might be involved.

As for the cooperative training scheme submitted by Dragages Hong Kong – Nishimatsu Construction Joint Venture, Members opined that the training proposal concerned satisfied the assessment criteria of the Scheme at large whereas the training contents were rather comprehensive. Members therefore accepted the application submitted by the Dragages Hong Kong – Nishimatsu Construction Joint Venture for the training of TBM operators as well as the related application for a subsidy of \$310,000 with a view to subsidizing 50% of the salary expenditure on training personnel and 10% of the materials / administrative costs.

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Since manpower demand in this area was expected to be

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strong, Members suggested that CICTA held a discussion with the joint venture concerned about the possible increase in the proposed operator training capacity and then made a report at the next meeting. In addition, a Member expressed that there should be a set of uniform standards for training on different trades for contractors to comply with to ensure that the skills of workers trained could reach a certain standard. In addition, a ceiling might also have to be set for the subsidy amount. As the cooperative training scheme was a new attempt, the CICTA would later consolidate its application assessment experience for evaluation of subsequent training proposals of a similar nature.

1.14 Summary Report of the 1st meeting of the Board of Studies on Construction Safety Courses for 2009

Members took note of and accepted Paper CIC/CTB/BOSSC/R/001/09.

1.15 Amendments to the clauses of the short-term tenancy of four outdoor training grounds

Members took note of Paper CIC/CTB/P/059/09 and agreed to the amendments made to the Gross Floor Area (GFA) clauses as stipulated in the short-term tenancy no. 1004 of Tuen Mun Training Ground, short-term tenancy no. KX2155 of Sheung Yuet Road Training Ground and short-term tenancy no. KX2156 of Wai Lok Street Training Ground. Members also accepted the inclusion of a special clause concerning tree tending and maintenance on leased areas in the three above said short-term tenancy agreements, short-term tenancy no. KX1369 of land underneath the flyover adjacent to Kowloon Bay Training Centre as well as short-term tenancy no. 1010 of Shatin Training Ground as requested by the Lands Department. Since the tenancy agreements concerned had to be signed by the Construction Industry Council and there was a need to save time, Members agreed that the amendments and new clauses on the tenancy agreements concerned be submitted to the Committee on Administration and Finance for consideration by circulation of papers so as to meet the Construction Industry

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Council meeting fixed for end of August.

1.16 Tentative date of next meeting

To be announced.

All to note

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:45 pm.

CITB Secretariat
August 2009