



# Surveying

news



Stephen Liu

## Message from the President

Kung Hei Fat Choy (Gong Xi Fa Cai) to all members. May I wish you a happy and prosperous year of the Snake.

It has been more than a month since I was elected as President of the Institute. I would like to update you with the latest events of the Institute.

### NEW OFFICE FOR HKIS

The General Council had accepted the recommendation of the working group to lease the 8th floor of Jardine House for an office space of 2,500 square feet.

A new working group headed by the Junior Vice-President, Mr. Kenneth Chan, will be responsible for the design and project management of the fitting-out of the new office. It is targeted that the new office will be ready for moving in by May this year.

### MAINLAND AND HONG KONG CONFERENCE ON CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT OF LARGE SCALE INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS HELD IN BEIJING

The conference was jointly organised by the Works Bureau of the Government of Hong Kong SAR and the PRC Ministry of Water Resources. HKIS was one of the co-organisers of the conference. A delegation of seven members led by the President and the Chairman of the QSD attended the conference on 14 and 15 December 2000. The conference was chaired by the Vice Minister, Mr Zhang Jiyao and the Secretary of Works, Mr S S Lee, and was well received by those who attended the conference.

Copies of the conference proceedings and papers are kept in the Institute's Library for members reference.

### JOINT PROFESSIONAL CENTRE - GRAND OPENING

On 8 January 2001, the formal opening of the Joint Professional Centre ("JPC"), located in The Centre, was officiated by the Honorable Donald Tsang, the Financial Secretary.

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SURVEYING is the newsletter of the HKIS. It is distributed to members, students and friends of the surveying profession free of charge. Anyone wishing to receive a copy may contact the office of the Institute.

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## EDITORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Surveying encourages article queries and submissions. Article submissions should include both hard (printed) copy and a diskette in Word format. Contributions should reach the Hon. Editor at the office of the Institute before the 10th of each month.

## Information & Contents

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## Advertising

All advertisements and small ads are welcome. SURVEYING is reaching over 5,400 readers. For detailed information and advertising rates, please contact Ms Margaret Yung of the Secretariat office at 2526 3679.

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Office Hours:  
Monday to Thursday 9:00am - 5:30pm  
Friday 9:00am - 5:00pm  
Saturday 9:30am - 12:30pm

Opening Ceremony of the  
Mainland and Hong Kong  
Conference on Construction  
Management of Large Scale  
Infrastructure Projects



Organisers and co-organisers of the Conference. (From left) Mr Stephen Liu, President, The Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors, Mr Tony Shum, Chairman, The Association of Consulting Engineers of Hong Kong, Mr Lee Shing See, Secretary for Works, Works Bureau, The Government of HKSAR,

Mr Zhang Jiyao (張基堯先生), Vice Minister, Ministry of Water Resources, PRC. Mr Jimmy Tse, President, The Hong Kong Construction Association, Ir Dr John Luk, President, The Hong Kong Institution of Engineers.

The JPC was jointly set up by ten professional bodies, with our own member the Hon. P.C. Lau as the Convenor. Each professional body, including HKIS, contributed \$50,000 for part of the setting up costs and the balance of the fund was provided by the various sponsors and the Hong Kong Productivity Council.

From now on, members can use the JPC for holding seminars, conferences, training courses, etc. The Centre Manager, the Hong Kong Productivity Council, offers a discount to HKIS members in renting the space and facilities. Please contact either our Institute or the JPC direct on details of the fees and courses organized by the Centre (see separate report on page 3 for further details on the Opening Ceremony of the JPC).

## STANDING COMMITTEES

The General Council endorsed the set up of seven committees for a term of two years commencing 1 January 2001 for specific functions and objectives:

### Committees

Information Technology

International

Mainland

Professional Practice and Fees

Property Management

Research

Town Planning/Sustainable Development/

Urban Renewal

### Chairman appointed

Mr Samson Wong

Mr T N Wong

Mr Francis Ng

Mr Albert Cheung

Mr S K Kwan

Mr Lawrence Poon

Mr David C Lee

Other Committees will be formed as and when they are necessary.

## OTHER EVENTS

As mentioned in my Presidential address in the AGM, one of my objectives this year is to maintain and further promote the image of "Professional Surveyors" in Hong Kong, Mainland China and overseas. Specific instructions have been given to the International and Mainland Committees to speed up the discussion on mutual recognition/accreditation, and do more liaison with and visits to various related government, professional and academic bodies. Locally, the Public Relations work will be handled jointly by the President, the Vice Presidents and the designated Spokesmen from the four Divisions. A media conference will be launched in

February to promote the Institute and to give the Institute's views on various building and property related matters.


In addition, a Task Force will be formed to revisit the need to update and streamline our existing Constitution and Byelaws to cope with the new requirements from members and the society.

I hope members can join forces together in building up a strong and professional image of Surveyors in Hong Kong, Mainland China and overseas.

I look forward to receiving your support. 

## OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE JOINT PROFESSIONAL CENTRE (專業聯合中心)

The Official Opening Ceremony of the Joint Professional Centre (JPC) was attended by more than 150 representatives from local professional bodies and government departments. The JPC was established to promote Hong Kong as a regional centre of professional services. Speaking at the opening ceremony, the Hon. P.C. Lau, Convenor of the JPC said, "The mission of the JPC is to create a collective synergy among local professionals to enhance Hong Kong's image as a professional services centre in the region". Mr. Lau also said, "The JPC will introduce a leading edge and efficient e-solutions and services to enhance service quality and competitiveness of local professionals. In addition, it will also promote collaboration between Hong Kong and Mainland professionals".

The JPC has an area of 830 sq.m. Its facilities include an auditorium, computer training rooms, multi-purpose training rooms, e-lounge, conference rooms and video conferencing facilities. From its soft opening to mid January 2001, HKIS has shown its support and have held a seminar, a press meeting, 2 annual meetings and a CPD in the Centre. 



Group photo of the officiating guests and representatives of the ten founding members of the JPC. HKIS President, Mr Stephen Liu (1st from the left in the back row), Hon. C Y Leung, Advocate of the JPC, Hon. Donald Tsang, Financial Secretary, Hon. P C Lau, Chairman of the Board of Directors, JPC (2nd to 4th from the left in the front row).



President, Mr. Stephen Liu (2nd from left) and Past President, Mr. Samson Wong (4th from left) congratulated Hon. P C Lau (3rd from left) at the Official Opening of the JPC.

HKIS members attended and celebrated the Official Opening Ceremony.





## 珠海市資產評估協會訪問本學會 (VISIT BY ZHUHAI APPRAISAL SOCIETY)

2001年1月9日，珠海市資產評估協會一行18人到訪香港，進行了為期一天對本學會及本港測量師行業的考察和訪問活動。訪港人員包括珠海市資產評估協會會長甘永峰先生及秘書長、副秘書長、珠海市國經局產權科科員及主要估價事務所、諮詢有限公司負責人等。本會由會長廖凌康先生及產業測量組主席謝偉銓先生與其他代表介紹本學會的結構、組織、運作及測量師的培訓、專業資歷的認可情況等，雙方於兩個多小時的會面作了熱烈及多方面的交流。



珠海市資產評估協會會長甘永峰先生(右)向廖凌康會長致送紀念品“珠海漁女”。



珠海市資產評估協會與香港測量師學會各代表作出多方面的交流。

## HKIS GOLF TOURNAMENT 2000/2001

Baldwin Ko, Tournament Organizer

This year's HKIS Golf Tournament 2000/2001 was held at Kau Sai Chau North Course on 19 January 2001. Kau Sai Chau North Course is a championship course of Par 73 with a total distance of 6,692 yards. This year we had 24 golfers competing in the Stableford Competition and only one lady who was brave enough to participate in this year's event.



At 10.30 am, most of the golfers were already at Kau Sai Chau. Our welcome hosts greeted them. I must take this opportunity to give my special thanks to our institutional staff - Mr Gordon Ng and Ms Lisa Ho. They were both terrific as our welcome hosts, giving their generous support to all of us in the morning.

After the registration procedures, golfers were at the driving range to perfect their swings and were ready for their first tee shot for Par 5 at Hole 1. The first team teed-off at 12.00 pm, and everyone seemed to be excited when the day finally begun. The weather was extremely beautiful and the sun was with us till the end of the day.

I had to mention, however, that some golfers were extremely disappointed with the golf course Marshall on that day. The Marshall was forcing every player to catch up with the team in front. After the first nine holes, some of our teams were warned by the Marshall to play off from the drop zone to hasten the game.

Nonetheless, the team behind us was way out of our sight and there was no need for such an arrangement. Under such circumstances, some of the players (like us) were reluctantly penalized with extra strokes, otherwise there would have been a "sudden death" play-off with this year's winner.

Although there were some mishaps with the Marshall arrangement, most golfers ended up with very tight scores. Nevertheless, after the game (a hard day's work), everyone was so relaxed and enjoyed a few rounds of beer and wine, especially those who played without a caddie.

This year there were 13 different prizes. The results were as follows:

	Stableford Scores	Name
1	Winner	Jonathan Li (39)
2	1st Runner-up	S C Liu (37)
3	2nd Runner-up	Peter Kok (33)
4	2nd lowest score	David Chan (18)
	<b>Longest Drive (Par 5)</b>	
5	Hole 8	Samson Wong (280 yards)
6	Hole 17	Andrew Kam (220 yards)
	<b>Nearest Pin (Par 3)</b>	
7	Hole 3	Thomas Choi
8	Hole 14	S C Liu
	<b>Gross Stroke Play</b>	
9	Winner	Thomas Choi (100)
10	1st Runner-up	Baldwin Ko (101)
11	Highest Stroke	Andrew Kam (136)
	<b>Putts</b>	
12	Lowest	Joseph Lee (30)
13	Highest	Kelvin Ng (43)

Let's give a round of applause to this year's runner-up - Mr S C Liu. He has been assigned with the honour to organize the next golf tournament event. S C has promised us a more exciting dinner function at our next golf competition.

So, any golfers who couldn't join us this year, should perhaps get ready for our next golf event. Last, but not least, we all hope to attract more lady participants in our future golf activities. As agreed by this year's honorable lady golfer, Cherrie Lai, she will be responsible for recruiting lady golfers for our next golf function.

Until then Kung Hei Fat Choy and best wishes. ❏

Participating golfers enjoying a meal after a hard day's work



The President with the runner-up, Mr S C Liu



The one and only lady player, Miss Cherrie Lai, receiving a prize from the President

The President, Mr Stephen Liu, presenting the trophy to the winner, Mr Jonathan Li



Mr Baldwin Ko, tournament organiser



## News from the Divisions

# Building Surveying Division

The various panels of the division have been busy. In January, we made a second visit to the International Finance Centre, after a successful first visit in December 2000. This was due to an overwhelming response to the event.

The Technical Advisory Panel was extremely busy in commenting on six draft PNAPs and other technical issues. The CPD panel will be organising a lunch meeting with the president of one of the world's most renowned architectural practice, Kohm Pederson Fox Associates PC, tentatively scheduled in April 2001.

The Social and Communication Panel had organised 2 football games, one in December 2000 and the other session will be in March or May 2001. Do watch out for details.

The other panels are starting to implement their annual plans, please contribute your knowledge, ideas or comments. The skills panel chairpersons are listed below for your reference:

### Skills Panels

Corporate Development Panel  
CPD Panel  
Facilities Management Panel  
Editorial Board  
Research & Technical Publication Panel  
Social Function & Communication Panel  
Technical Advisory Panel

### Chairman

Mr Raymond Chan  
Mr Gary Yeung  
Mr Philip Tse  
Mr Edgar Li  
Dr S M Lo  
Ms Catherine Yiu  
Mr C K Lau ❏



## UPGRADING FIRE SAFETY STANDARDS IN COMPOSITE AND DOMESTIC BUILDINGS

The Fire Safety (Buildings) Bill was proposed after a territory-wide building survey, conducted by the Fire Services Department in early 1998 and a public consultation exercise on a package of measures to improve fire safety in private buildings later in the same year.

According to the survey, the fire safety provision of many old private buildings especially composite (commercial/domestic) buildings was not up to current standards.

### IMPROVING FIRE SAFETY IN OLD BUILDINGS

Given the very unsatisfactory fire safety conditions in composite buildings, and in view of the high fire loading and heavy traffic of people in non-domestic parts of composite buildings, the Administration proposes to introduce new legislation to upgrade the minimum fire safety standards of these buildings.

The Administration has proposed a ten-year programme comprising two phases to require owners or occupiers of composite buildings to upgrade the fire service installations and fire safety construction in their buildings.

According to the programme, in the first six years, the Government will handle about 5,000 pre-1973 private buildings, while some 4,000 private buildings built between 1973 and 1987 will be covered in the remaining four years.

Upon completion of the improvement programme for composite buildings, the Government will then handle about 3,000 pre-1987 domestic buildings (above three storeys), with priority given to the pre-1973 buildings and making reference to similar fire safety requirements for the domestic parts of composite buildings.

### APPLICATION TO PUBLIC HOUSING

The new legislation will also apply to buildings sold by the Housing Authority under the Home Ownership Scheme or the Tenants Purchase Scheme as well as to public rental housing blocks.

### NEW FIRE SAFETY STANDARDS

The new fire safety standards for non-domestic or commercial parts of composite buildings are based on those stipulated under the Fire Safety (Commercial Premises) Ordinance which was enacted in 1997.

These include installation of sprinkler systems and improvements to fire safety construction in buildings. For domestic parts of composite buildings and for domestic buildings generally, taking into account the lower fire loading and fire risks normally associated with residential purposes, only the most essential items such as fire hydrant/hose reel systems are required.

### FIRE SAFETY IMPROVEMENT DIRECTION

Moreover, in line with the enforcement arrangements under the Fire Safety (Commercial Premises) Ordinance, the Fire Services

Department and the Buildings Department will be empowered to issue directions to require owners or occupiers of composite buildings and domestic buildings to improve fire safety measures of their buildings to the required standards.

### COMPLIANCE ORDER

The Bill also stipulates that the authorities may apply to a Magistrate Court for a compliance order directing an owner or occupier to comply with the requirements in a direction, if the latter fails to do so without a reasonable excuse.

### PROHIBITION ORDER

If an owner or occupier fails to comply with a direction or a compliance order, the authorities may apply to the District Court for a prohibition order prohibiting the occupation of the relevant building or part of the building.

### OFFENCE OF NON-COMPLIANCE

According to the Bill, failure to comply with requirements specified in a direction or compliance order shall be an offence punishable by a fine, whilst failure to comply with a prohibition order shall be punishable by a fine and by imprisonment.

### REGISTRATION IN THE LAND REGISTRY

In addition, under the proposed legislation, the enforcement authorities will be empowered to register in the Lands Registry a compliance order or a prohibition order issued by the Court against a building or such parts of it to which the order relates.

Such registration will disclose the fact of potential liability to any prospective property buyers who have made a land search. It will help provide an incentive for a building owner to comply with the outstanding Court Order so as to maintain the value of his property.

### INDEPENDENT ADVISORY BODIES

To ensure fair and impartial consideration of any alternative fire safety measures which may be proposed by building owners, the Government has proposed the setting up of independent advisory bodies whom the Director of Fire Services and the Director of Buildings may consult.

Membership of such bodies will include professionals from the building industry, representatives of institutions and academics.

### FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

In addition, to help alleviate possible cash flow problems that some building owners may encounter, the Administration is planning to extend the scope of the existing Fire Safety Improvement Loan Scheme and merge it with the Building Safety Improvement Loan Scheme, so that eligible owners affected by the Bill could have recourse to a non-means-tested loan.

The Fire Safety (Buildings) Bill was gazetted on 2 February 2001 and was introduced into the Legislative Council on 14 February 2001. ■

## GENERAL PRACTICE DIVISION

Tony Tse, Chairman

### KUNG HEI FAT CHOY!

On behalf of all Council members of the GP Division, I wish all our members and their families a prosperous Year of the Snake.

### 2000 ASSESSMENT OF PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE

The 2000 Assessment of Professional Competence (APC) of the General Practice Division was completed last December. Set out below is a brief report prepared by the co-ordinator, Mr. Rock Tsang.

#### (a) WRITTEN ASSESSMENT

7 questions were set with reference to the respective areas of training as listed on the APC Guide and Rules. The candidates were required to attempt 3 questions out of 7. The question on valuation was a compulsory question.

The answers of each candidate were assessed by three different assessors. Each assessor was responsible for one question. For those candidates who failed only one question, the failed answer would automatically be reviewed by another assessor (marking a different question) whose determination would be final. Therefore, for those who passed the assessment, there had been 3 assessors to support that the candidate was competent; for those who failed, there had been no less than two assessors to advise that he/she was not competent in one or more areas.

185 candidates (excluding 1 absentee) attempted the written assessment. 29 of them passed the assessment. Some statistics on the performance are shown on page 8.

#### (b) ORAL ASSESSMENT

45 candidates (excluding 1 absentee) attempted the oral assessment and 17 of them were referrals. Similar to previous years, the candidates were interviewed for approximately one hour by different panels. Each panel comprised 3 assessors. The candidates were required to present their selected project, and to answer questions on various issues including professional practice and ethics. Finally, 18 candidates passed the oral assessment. They would be eligible to apply for corporate membership of the Institute (congratulations).

#### (c) OBJECTIVES OF THE APC

Perhaps it is worth re-iterating the objectives of the APC scheme. The Institute, through the scheme, seeks to satisfy itself that **only** those whom it considers able to carry out **competently** the work of

a professionally qualified surveyor are admitted to corporate membership of the Institute. In fact, this is a duty that the Institute owes to its members, and to the public. There has never been some pre-set so called "quota" in the scheme. Professional standard is the only consideration in the assessment.

In response to the changing external environment, your council will soon set up a working group to review the existing APC scheme. The purpose is to improve the scheme and to ensure that it will enable the Institute to recruit only those who meet the expectations of the community as new members.

Upon announcement of the results, a few members have raised concerns about the low passing rate to me and have asked us to look into the reasons and ways for improvements. Recently, the Institute received a letter jointly signed by several major consultancy firms and developers urging the HKIS to review the APC scheme. Short and long term proposals were also put forward.

In early January 2001, the Council of the GP Division discussed the APC results and considered possible means to assist student surveyors in attending the assessment. The Divisional Council is now gathering comments from members on matters including the existing APC system and structure. Members will be advised of details in due course.

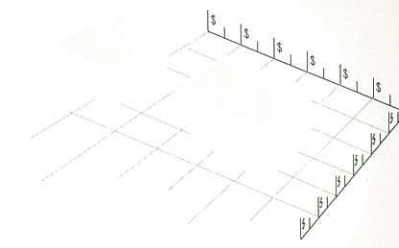
## The Hong Kong Surveyor Call for Contributions

The first issue of "The Hong Kong Surveyor" the journal of the Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors, is expected to be published in June 2001. We invite you to submit articles to us.

You may either send your articles by e-mail to the Hon Editor at [editor@hkis.org.hk](mailto:editor@hkis.org.hk). or let us have a hard copy of the article plus a diskette in Word format on or before 20 March 2001. Our address is Suite 510, Jardine House, Central, Hong Kong.

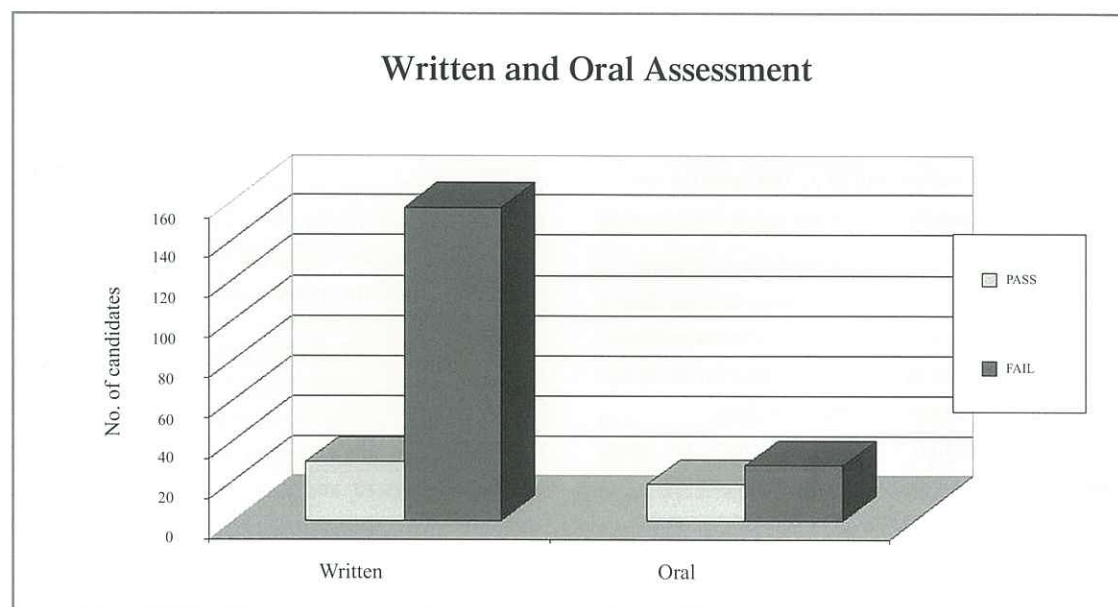
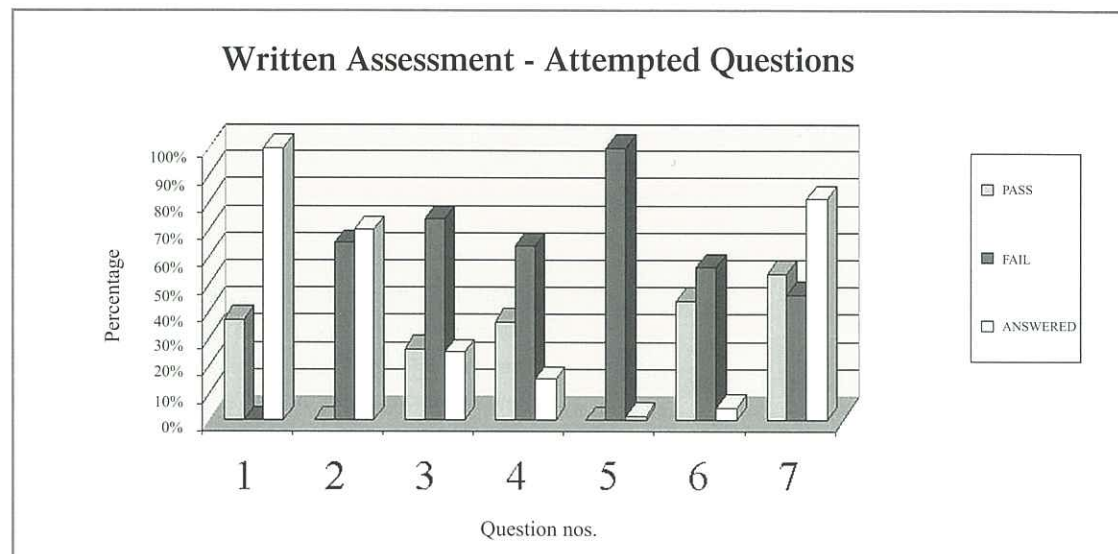
Your submissions should include a short description of yourselves in not more than 50 words and a colour photograph of yourselves.

Please note that the Editorial Board reserves its right to reject and edit any submissions.

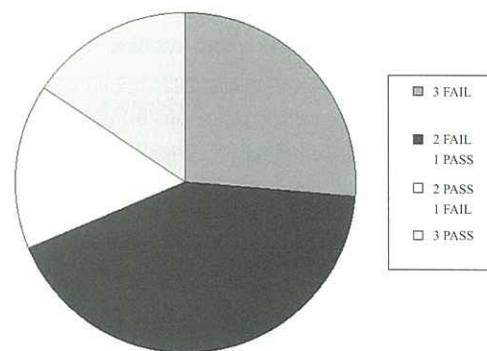




## GENERAL PRACTICE DIVISION APC 2000 STATISTICS



### Questions Status - Written Assessment



### VISIT OF VALUERS FROM THE MAINLAND

On 9 January 2001, a total of 18 delegates from 珠海市資產評估協會 paid a visit to the HKIS and they were received by our President, Mr. Stephen Liu and some senior members including Council members of the GP Division. At the meeting, information relating to the respective institutes was exchanged and there were also discussions on the education training and employment opportunity of surveyors in the Mainland. It is expected that there will be more contacts between the two organizations in future (see detailed report on page 4).

## LAND SURVEYING DIVISION

### THE 3RD ACROSS-THE-STRAIT GEOMATICS CONFERENCE

Conrad Tang

The 1st Across-the-Strait Geomatics Conference was held in 1992 in Szechuen, PRC, and the 2nd Conference in 1998 in Tainan, Taiwan. The 3rd Conference took place at the end of last year in Hong Kong SAR. It was successfully held on 11-14 December 2000 at the Sheraton Hotel, Tsimshatsui. This was a joint effort of the local land surveying and geomatics institutions including the Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors, the Hong Kong Institution of Engineering Surveyors and the Hong Kong Polytechnic University.

The theme of the conference was Geomatics and Sustainable Development. There was a good turnout with 227 participants from the Mainland, Taiwan, Macau and Hong Kong. 122 papers were presented in the conference, covering topics such as geodesy, geodynamics, engineering surveying, cadastral surveying, GPS, GIS, geomatics education and future development.

*Keynote speakers and board of conference directors (from right to left) Mr Chan Hak (HK), Mr Gary Cheong (Macau), Prof C L Yau (Taiwan), Mr C F Wang (PRC), Mr S C Leung (HK), Mr T N Wong (HK), Mr Stephen Liu (HK), Prof Y Q Chen (HK) and Mr Mannars Chan (HK).*



Are you among them?

### PART-TIME BSc (HONOURS) IN SURVEYING AND GEO-INFORMATICS OFFERED BY THE HONG KONG POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY

The Department of Land Surveying and Geo-Informatics of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, envisioning an increasing importance of continuous education in this digital era, has initiated a part-time BSc (Hons.) programme to meet the demand of the community, in addition to its popular MSc/PgD in Geomatics (with GIS and Surveying streams).

The primary aim of this part-time BSc (Hons.) in Surveying and Geo-Informatics is to provide an opportunity for serving technicians in this discipline to pursue continuous study in a part-time mode, with an ultimate goal of obtaining a degree qualification. Like the full-time BSc programme, the philosophy of this programme is to prepare the student to confidently assume the responsibilities of his future profession.

This programme will start to accept the first batch of students in the Academic Year 2001/2002. The basic entrance requirement is a Higher Diploma, Higher Certificate or equivalent qualifications. Applicants should preferably be engaged in employment for which knowledge of their specialisation is desirable.

The programme is credit-based. It is largely based on the existing full-time BSc programme. The structure is thus very similar to that of the existing full-time BSc programme. The subjects to be taken by students will be considered on an individual basis, depending on what he has studied.

For further information, please contact the Programme Leader whose contact details are as follows:

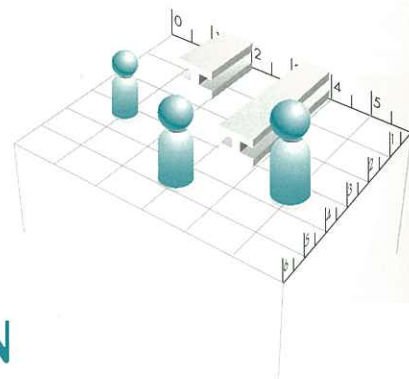
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## QUANTITY SURVEYING DIVISION

Nelson Cheng, Chairman

### QSD COUNCIL MEETING SCHEDULES

The QSD Council will meet on the 1st Monday of each month at the HKIS office.

### QSD SUB-COMMITTEES

Since the AGM, QSD council meetings have already been held in December 2000 and January 2001. The following sub-committees' chairmen have been appointed:

2001 Beijing Cost Conference	Dr Anita Liu
ACQS Liaison	Mr Thomas Tse
Conditions of Contract	Mr Daniel Ho
CPD	Mr Honby Chan
Education & Accreditation	Mr T T Cheung
International	Ms Ellen Lau
IT in Qsing	Mr Evelyn Kwok
Mainland sub-committee	Mr Jacob Lee
New Member Liaison	Ms Sandy Tang
Professional Services	Mr Nelson Cheng
SMM	Mr Peter Ho and Mr Sam Cheng

Members who are willing to assist in any of these sub-committees can contact the relevant Chairman.

This year, a new sub-committee called "New Members Liaison" has been formed. The aim of this sub-committee is to motivate more newly qualified members to participate and assist in the Institute's organised activities.

### MAINLAND AND HONG KONG CONFERENCE ON CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT OF LARGE-SCALE INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

The Conference was held on 14-15 December 2000 in Beijing. The Conference was organised by the Works Bureau and co-organised with HKIE and HKIS. The HKIS was represented by our President, Mr Stephen Liu, QSD Chairman, Mr Nelson Cheng, QSD Immediate Past Chairman, Mr T T Cheung, Mr Jacob Lam, Mr Sam Cheng and Mr Gilbert Kwok. The papers presented were mainly major civil engineering works in Hong Kong and the Mainland, including the Tsing Ma Bridge, etc. which were

high quality papers presented by the Consulting Engineers and the head of the Government Engineering Department.

### CPD

Our CPD Convenor, Mr Honby Chan, has planned to organize one CPD event every month starting from March. Site visits to major construction sites such as the Cyberport, Hong Kong Station etc. will be organised in addition to monthly events. Information will be available at our QSD website where registration forms can be downloaded. We welcome suggestions from members on the preferred topics of CPD. Please e-mail your suggestions to Mr Honby Chan at [hshchan@kcr.com](mailto:hshchan@kcr.com)

### APC 2000

The results of the APC 2000 were released before the Chinese New Year. 87 candidates passed the written examination and 73 candidates passed the interview. Those who failed in the interview will have to take the interview in 2001. The passing rate this year was around 15%.

### CHINA VISITS

The PRC sub-committee, headed by Mr Jacob Lam, will plan to visit the Department of Standard and Norm and tendering board in Guangzhou in early March. Our sub-committee Chairman, Jacob, was invited to attend the China Engineering Cost Association (CECA) annual celebration event on 12 January 2001. Jacob's goal will be to reinforce the HKIS's relationship with CECA and to promote and enhance the QS's professional image in the Mainland. Visits to major cities, especially in the west of Mainland China will be organised

### QSD WEBSITE

Our QSD website (<http://www.hkisqsd.com>) has been established since last December. A sub-committee headed by Mr Evelyn Kwok was formed to maintain the contents of the website. The website will serve as a faster communication link between members and the QSD Council. Suggestions can be sent to Evelyn at [ekwok@northcroft.com.hk](mailto:ekwok@northcroft.com.hk)

### "FUTURE OUTLOOK ON CONSTRUCTION IT" CONFERENCE

This Conference is a follow up of last year's Conference on Electronic Services Delivery and will be held in June this year. The Conference is co-organized by the Hong Kong Productivity Council (HKPC), the Hong Kong Institute of Architects (HKIA), the Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors. The conference will provide a chance for members to update their knowledge on the present and future development of information technology in the construction industry.

### 2001 BEIJING COST CONFERENCE UPDATE

The 2001 International Conference on Project Cost Management will be held in Beijing from 25 to 27 May 2001.

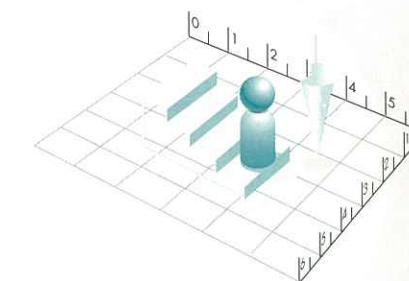
More information can be obtained from the website [www.srb.org.hk/2001\\_conf/](http://www.srb.org.hk/2001_conf/)

### PAQS SEMINAR UPDATE

The 5th PAQS (The Pacific Association of Quantity Surveyors) Seminar and Board Meeting will be held in Hong Kong on 22 and 23 of May 2001, prior to the conference. The ICEC Region IV Meeting will also be held at the same time. More information on the Beijing Conference and the PAQS Seminar can be obtained from the website [www.srb.org.hk/2001\\_conf/paqs.htm](http://www.srb.org.hk/2001_conf/paqs.htm)

## JUNIOR ORGANISATION

David Wan, Chairman



The 2000-2001 Junior Organisation Committee was formed at our Annual General Meeting held on 24 November 2000, which was then followed by our Annual Dinner. It has become our tradition to hold the AGM and Annual Dinner together to enable the old team and new team to gather together and enjoy a cheerful and informal evening after the formal proceedings. The following office bearers have been elected:

Chairman	:	David Wan (GP)
Vice-Chairman	:	Nathan Lee (BS)
Honorary Secretary	:	Sunny Chan (QS)
Honorary Treasurer	:	Sandy Tang (QS)

Our first Council Meeting was held on 15 January 2001. We will continue to host CPDs and social events for our young members. You are WANTED and we are looking forward to having you join us as our co-opted member. Please note down the following dates of our council meetings, which will be held in the HKIS Office at Suite 510, Jardine House.

Date	Time	Date	Time
20 Feb 2001	7:00pm	20 Mar 2001	7:00pm
17 Apr 2001	7:00pm	15 May 2001	7:00pm
19 Jun 2001	7:00pm	17 Jul 2001	7:00pm
21 Aug 2001	7:00pm	18 Sept 2001	7:00pm
16 Oct 2001	7:00pm	20 Nov 2001	7:00pm

For any enquiry, you can contact David Wan on Tel: 2846 5541 or e-mail to [david.wan@ap.joneslanglasalle.com](mailto:david.wan@ap.joneslanglasalle.com).

### AUCTION OF VEHICLE REGISTRATION MARKS

We surveyors are delighted to act as the auctioneers for the auction of vehicle registration marks held by the Transport Department. The charitable event is usually held on a Saturday. In appreciation of our participation, the Transport Department has been offering us an honorarium of HK\$1,096, since last October, for each auctioneer nominated by HKIS.

Members, who are interested, please complete the attached form with this newsletter and return it to the HKIS office. Places for auctioneers are limited and an early response can give you priority to participate in the event. We shall nominate volunteers on a first-come-first-served basis and previous experience will also be considered.

Please show your support and reply to our invitation soon.





## INSIDE LEGCO

Hon. Lau Ping-cheung, Legislative Councillor, representative of Architectural, Surveying and Planning Functional Constituency

One of the recent issues concerning the surveying profession is the proposed corporatisation of the Survey and Mapping Office (SMO) of the Lands Department for which the Administration started consultation last year and related legislation is scheduled to proceed sometime in 2001.

It is not an issue of job security for some 110 professional land surveyors working in SMO, but it is more about the role the Government should or should not play in the surveying profession.

As some members query the possible conflicting role of the proposed Survey and Mapping Corporation (SMC) as explained below, I intend to raise this question in the LegCo meeting on 10 February and request the Administration to explain its position.

Under the existing Land Survey Ordinance, the Director of Lands in his capacity as Land Survey Authority (LSA) relies on the public officers to discharge his responsibilities stipulated in the Ordinance. At present, SMO is an impartial public body, which has absolutely no commercial interest, although being the single biggest employer of professional land surveyors and keeping an archive of abundant land survey records.

After corporatisation, SMC will inevitably be profit-driven and will become a rival competitor to all land surveyors in the private sector. SMC will provide services to individuals or companies and

subsequently represent their interests. LSA's impartiality may be undermined as he continues to rely on SMC to discharge his duties, such as checking the survey works submitted by private surveyors.

Hence, it may be difficult, if not impossible, for LSA to ensure that SMC would abide by the same code of practice and the prevailing professional procedure when performing land survey tasks assigned by him. Besides, for any dispute involving clients of SMC, if a possible conflict of interest may arise, LSA should assign an independent land surveyor to handle the dispute.

In addition to the impartiality of LSA being put in doubt, some land surveyors worry that SMC's participation will upset the industry, as it would continue to employ the largest number of professional land surveyors and keep most of the land survey records. More important, its status will be regarded as "official" by the public, and eventually will place SMC at an advantageous position when competing in the open market.

Free market economy and minimum government intervention have been the key factors of Hong Kong's success. The Administration's proposal to corporatise SMO may be well intended but the objective result could be ill defined. We await from the Administration a convincing explanation, other than financial pretext, to the profession as well as to the public. ■

## Q&A IN THE LEGCO CHAMBER

### LEASE MODIFICATION AND LAND EXCHANGE APPLICATIONS

The following was a question made by the Hon. Albert Chan and a written reply by the Acting Secretary for Planning and Lands, Mr Patrick Lau Lai-chiu, in the Legislative Council on 20 December 2000.

#### QUESTION

Regarding applications made to the relevant authorities for assessment of regrant premium, will the Government inform this Council of the number of applications, during the period between June 1998 and March 1999, made by real estate developers for

assessment of regrant premium in respect of development projects, and the details of each application, including the area and location of the site, as well as the assessed premium.

#### REPLY

Between June 1998 and March 1999, 293 applications for lease modification and land exchange were made to the Lands Department, and agreement on premium was reached in 64 of these cases. The remaining 229 applications either continued to be processed beyond March 1999 or were unsuccessful within the above-mentioned period for various reasons (e.g. the proposed modifications were unacceptable to the Government or agreement on premium could not be reached or the applications were withdrawn).

### THE RESALE OF HOS, TPS AND SCHS FLATS

The following was a question made by the Hon. Lau Ping-cheung, and a written reply by the Secretary for Housing, Mr Dominic Wong, in the Legislative Council on 20 December 2000.

#### QUESTION

Regarding the re-sale of flats under the Home Ownership Scheme (HOS), Tenants Purchase Scheme (TPS) and Sandwich Class Housing Scheme (SCHS), will the Government inform this Council whether:

- It knows the respective numbers of HOS, TPS and SCHS flats which were sold back to the Hong Kong Housing Authority and Hong Kong Housing Society by their owners and are currently in stock and available for sale;
- It knows the respective numbers of HOS and SCHS flats put up for sale previously which are currently in stock and available for sale; and
- A mechanism is in place for co-ordinating the re-sale of the above HOS, TPS and SCHS flats in relation to their timing, order of priority and pricing; if so, of the details, if not, whether it will establish such a mechanism?

#### REPLY

The Housing Authority (HA) has about 500 Home Ownership Scheme (HOS) flats and four Tenants Purchase Scheme (TPS) flats which were sold back to the HA by their owners. The Housing Society has not bought back any Sandwich Class Housing Scheme (SCHS) flats.

There are 470 HOS flats and about 1,700 SCHS flats left over from previous sale exercises.

There is no established mechanism to co-ordinate the resale of HOS, TPS and SCHS flats. The objectives and target applicants of the three schemes are different, and the resale of flats under each scheme does not have a direct impact on the other schemes. A co-ordinating mechanism for flat resale is not considered necessary.

### ASSISTING PROFESSIONAL BODIES TO EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES IN MAINLAND

The following was a question made by the Hon. Lau Ping-cheung and a reply by the Secretary for Commerce and Industry, Mr CHAU Tak Hay, in the Legislative Council on 10 January 2001.

#### QUESTION

In the 2000 Policy Address, the Chief Executive pledged that "the SAR Government will make every effort to keep our local professionals well informed of developments in the opening up of the China market" upon China's entry into the World Trade Organization. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council whether it will consider asking the Beijing Office of the SAR Government to collect information on newly implemented economic policies and laws in the Mainland as well as related business information for expeditious transmission to the professional bodies concerned, and to provide one-stop support services to assist the professional bodies in exploring business opportunities in the Mainland; if not, of the ways to fulfil the Chief Executive's pledge?

#### REPLY

At present, the Government uses multiple channels to collect and disseminate information concerning the opening up of the Mainland market.

The Office of the HKSAR Government in Beijing (the Beijing Office), the Trade and Industry Department (TID) and the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC), regularly collect through different channels the latest information on business-related laws, regulations and administrative measures, as well as macro-economic and trade developments in the Mainland. In addition, HKTDC has designated staff to collect and analyse information on market developments in the Mainland, and to conduct research studies on specific topics.

As regards information dissemination, the existing channels include TID's Commercial Information Circular and its SME (Small and Medium Enterprises) Information Centre, HKTDC's Business Alert and its Business InfoCentre, as well as their websites which are hyperlinked to facilitate users in getting relevant information. Starting from April this year, the HKTDC will issue a biweekly on-line newsletter to provide the latest information on infrastructure projects in the Mainland to local infrastructural service providers and relevant professional bodies.

In addition, in order for Hong Kong to leverage on the opportunities arising out of China's accession to the World Trade Organisation, the Financial Secretary's inter-departmental group actively maintains a close dialogue with relevant authorities of the Central Government to



understand the detailed arrangements for and progress of market liberalisation in the Mainland. The Mainland/HKSAR Joint Commission on Commerce and Trade, set up by the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Co-operation of the Central Government and the Commerce and Industry Bureau of the HKSAR, holds regular meetings to exchange information and views on economic and trade issues of mutual concern. Relevant information will be passed to business and professional bodies through the bureaux and departments concerned in a timely manner.

As for support services, since different professional sectors have different requirements for their business operation and regulation, it is appropriate to let the concerned bureaux and departments take charge of supporting individual professional sectors with which they are familiar. The Mainland offices of the HKTDC also actively assist Hong Kong's professional sectors to explore business opportunities in the Mainland. In addition, the HKTDC has set up a Professional Services Advisory Committee through which the HKTDC solicits the views of the professional sectors on their needs and on HKTDC's promotional efforts.

Regarding the role of the Beijing Office, promoting economic and trade cooperation between the Mainland and Hong Kong has all along been one of its main tasks. The Beijing Office will continue to closely monitor the Mainland market, including the progress of liberalisation of professional sectors, and report swiftly the latest developments to relevant offices in the HKSAR Government. At the same time, the Beijing Office will continue to actively assist Hong Kong's professional sectors in exploring the Mainland market. For instance, the Beijing Office organised a seminar on Hong Kong's professional services in Xi'an last year to promote Hong Kong's professional services. Representatives from the Coalition of Professional Services and eight professional bodies were invited to participate in the event. The Beijing Office will continue to organise similar promotional activities and, in accordance with the requests and advice of relevant bureaux and departments, assist Hong Kong's professional sectors in their market development in the Mainland. ■

## GUIDELINES FOR "OTHER SPECIFIED USES (BUSINESS)" ZONE

The Town Planning Board announced on 19 January 2001, the introduction of a set of guidelines for development within "Other Specified Uses" annotated "Business" ("OU(Business)") zone.

The guidelines will apply to all the newly designated "OU (Business)" zones on the Outline Zoning Plans (OZPs) with immediate effect.

The new zoning will allow maximum flexibility in the use of existing industrial and industrial-office buildings as well as in the development of new buildings for both commercial and clean industrial uses.

The planning intention of the "OU(Business)" zone is primarily for general employment uses, and a mix of non-polluting industrial, office and other commercial uses will be permitted in new 'business' developments.

As it is not possible to phase out existing polluting and hazardous industrial uses all at once, it is necessary to ensure compatibility of the uses within the same building and in existing industrial areas until the whole area is transformed to cater for the non-polluting business uses.

Under the new zoning, industrial uses involving offensive trades will not be permitted, and only less fire hazard-prone office uses that do not involve direct provision of customer services and goods, will be permitted in existing industrial and industrial-office buildings to address the fire safety and environmental concerns.

Definitions of relevant terms used in the Notes for the "OU (Business)" zone are set out in the guidelines, which also explain in details the planning intention and the uses and developments that may be permitted within the zone.

In tandem with the promulgation of the guidelines, a number of industrial sites in Kowloon Bay and Tsing Yi are rezoned from "Industrial" to "OU(Business)" today. The zoning amendments are the initial steps of the Board to rezone industrial land at suitable locations to "Business" or other non-industrial uses to meet the changing economic needs of Hong Kong.

Amendments to other OZPs to take account of the findings of the "Area Assessments of Industrial Land in the Territory", undertaken by the Planning Department, will be made in due course.

The first largest of such amendments involved the rezoning of all sites under the "Industrial" zone in the Kowloon Bay area, totalling

22.06 hectares, to "Other Specified Uses" annotated "Business" zone which is intended for general employment uses including non-polluting industrial, office and other commercial uses.

## LAND REGISTRY TO SET UP CENTRAL REGISTRATION SYSTEM

The Land Registry intends to increase its efficiency by amalgamating nine district registration offices into one central registration office. The proposal, part of the Registry's plan to further improve its services, is contained in the Land Registration (Amendment) Bill 2000.

At present, the Land Registry maintains registration offices in nine districts, Urban and Island District Registries in its headquarters in the Queensway Government Offices and seven other New Territories Land Registries.

Each registration office is independent and maintains a separate set of records for its own district. Conveyancing solicitors are required to deliver documents to the respective registration offices for registration.

As nearly 96% of all law firms doing conveyancing work are located in the urban area, this arrangement is time-consuming and unnecessarily expensive for law firms and their customers. The change to a centralized registration system located in the Queensway Government Offices will bring convenience to the Land Registry's customers in the legal profession and improve the efficiency of the registration of property transactions without higher charges.

The costs in developing the new integrated computer system to replace the existing fragmented computer systems will be funded by the retained earnings of the Land

Registry Trading Fund. A fee increase is not anticipated.

The Bill also proposes to introduce a new service of colour imaging of plans and other new document management procedures to simplify registration procedures, reduce transaction times and lower operating costs for both law firms and the Land Registry.

The Bill was gazetted 22 December 2000 and introduced into the Legislative Council on 17 January 2001.

## RESIDENTIAL MORTGAGE SURVEY RESULTS FOR NOVEMBER 2000

The amount of gross new mortgage loans made during November 2000 was broadly the same as in the two previous months, after adjusting for special factors, according to the HKMA's monthly survey of residential mortgage lending.

The amount of gross new loans made in November increased by 7.2% to HK\$9.6 billion after increasing moderately by 4.2% in October, although this was mainly due to the continued reallocation of mortgage portfolios among authorised institutions rather than a pick-up in underlying demand. The average size of new loans increased to HK\$1.42 million from HK\$1.39 million in October.

New loans approved during the month declined by 28.0% to HK\$7.8 billion compared with a rise of 9.1% in October, with declines in approvals for transactions in both the primary and secondary markets. The share of new loans approved, accounted for by refinancing loans, rose further to 39.3% from 29.6%, but again this was distorted by the factor mentioned above. Loans approved during the month but not yet drawn decreased by 39.2% to HK\$4.6 billion from HK\$7.6 billion in October.

The average loan-to-value ratio of new loans approved increased to 62.4% from 61.4% in October. The average contractual life shortened to 204 months from 207 months in October. 99.1% of loans were related to owner-occupied properties.

On the pricing front, loans granted at below the best lending rate for the whole term of the mortgage accounted for 90.5% of new loans approved, compared with 90.8% in October. Loans granted at more than 2% below the best lending rate represented 60.6% of new loans approved, compared with 64.6%.

The amount of outstanding mortgage loans continued to grow, by 0.4% in November. The 3-month moving average growth rate (annualised) of outstanding loans decreased to 1.4% from 1.9% in the 3 months to October, but the 12-month growth rate increased to 1.3% from 0.8%.

The loan delinquency ratio (measured by the ratio of mortgage loans overdue for more than 3 months to total outstanding mortgage loans) remained unchanged at 1.31% in November.

Gross loans made for the purchase of properties in Mainland China decreased to HK\$45 million from HK\$79 million in October. The amount of outstanding loans decreased further by HK\$82 million to HK\$6.1 billion in November.

## CONSTRUCTION OUTPUT FOR THE THIRD QUARTER OF 2000

The gross value of construction work performed by main contractors decreased by 3.3% in nominal terms compared with a year earlier to \$30.2 billion in the third quarter of 2000, according to the preliminary results of the Quarterly Survey of Construction Output released by the Census and Statistics



Department on 28 December. After discounting price changes, the gross value of construction work performed by main contractors decreased by 2.1% in real terms over the same period.

The gross values of construction work in real terms are derived by deflating the nominal values with appropriate price indices to the 1990 price level.

Analysed by the type of construction work, the gross value of construction work performed at private sector sites totalled \$9.4 billion in nominal terms in the third quarter of 2000, representing a decrease of 11.9% compared with a year earlier. In real terms, it was down by 10.3%. The decline was mainly due to the progressive completion of several large residential building development projects, while construction work on new building projects remained slack.

On the other hand, the gross value of construction work performed at public sector sites increased by 1.1% in nominal terms over a year earlier to \$12.7 billion in the third quarter of 2000. In real terms, however, it was down by 1.4%. This was attributable to a further decline in the output at public sector building sites upon the slowing down of several public residential building projects. This more than offset the strong growth in public sector civil engineering output.

The gross value of construction work performed by contractors at locations other than construction sites was \$8.2 billion in nominal terms in the third quarter of 2000, representing an increase of 1.2% over a year earlier. After discounting the factor of a marked decline in the tender prices, it rose by 6.3% in real terms. Works at locations other than construction sites included minor new construction activities and renovation work at erected buildings and structures, and electrical and mechanical fitting works.

Analysed by end-use, residential building projects accounted for the largest proportion of the gross value of construction work performed at construction sites in the third quarter of 2000. The gross value of construction work performed for these projects was \$12.3 billion in nominal terms, representing a decrease of 14.1% compared with a year earlier.

Transport projects constituted the second largest category of construction site work. The gross value of construction work performed for these projects totalled \$3.5 billion in nominal terms, representing a surge of 49.9% over a year earlier.

Industrial, storage and service building projects represented the third largest category of construction site work. The gross value of construction work performed for these projects was \$2.7 billion in nominal terms, 12.1% more than in the third quarter of 1999.

On a seasonally adjusted basis, the gross value of construction work performed by main contractors increased by 2.2% in nominal terms in the third quarter of 2000 compared with the second quarter of 2000. In real terms, it increased by 4.0%.

Owing to the widespread sub-contracting practices in the construction industry, a construction establishment can be a main contractor for one contract and a sub-contractor for another contract at the same time. The gross value of construction work performed by main contractors covers only those projects in which the construction establishment takes the role of a main contractor, but not projects in which it takes only the role of a sub-contractor. However, the sub-contractors' contribution to projects should have been included in the gross value of construction work performed by main contractors for whom they worked.

More detailed statistics on construction output are given in the "Report on the

Quarterly Survey of Construction Output, 3rd Quarter 2000". The report is now on sale at \$10 per copy at the Government Publications Centre, Ground Floor, Low Block, Queensway Government Offices, or at the Census and Statistics Department Publications Unit, 19th floor, Wanchai Tower, 12 Harbour Road, Wan Chai. Regular subscription may also be arranged. Internet users may order the publication through the website of the Information Services Department ([http://www.info.gov.hk/isd/book\\_e.htm](http://www.info.gov.hk/isd/book_e.htm)).

### NEW STREET INDEX ON COMPACT DISC TO BE ON SALE

The Land Registry has produced its 33rd edition of the Index of Streets, House Numbers and Lots in Hong Kong, Kowloon and New Territories, on a single compact disc for convenient retrieval. The Street Index is published to facilitate land searches in urban area by correlating property addresses with the corresponding lot numbers.

The retrieval mode of the new edition has been enhanced to allow direct search from the compact disc and use of Chinese street names as the retrieval key. Prior downloading of the Street Index data to the hard disk is no longer required.

The new Street Index data has incorporated 535 amendments, 14 new streets and 326 new lots/sections/subsections. Its updated version will be produced annually.

The latest edition, at \$300 per set, will be available for sale at the Central Search Office of the Land Registry on 19th floor, Queensway Government Offices, 66 Queensway from 2 January 2001.

Members of the public who wish to purchase the Street Index are required to fill in an order form available at the information counter of the Central Search Office and the search offices of the eight New Territories

Land Registries. The form can also be obtained from the Land Registry's website <http://www.info.gov.hk/landreg> or by telephone request to the Street Index Unit at 2867 2816.

### DECEMBER AND YEAR 2000 LAND REGISTRATION STATISTICS RELEASED

The Land Registry released on 3 January 2001, the land registration statistics for last December and for the year 2000.

In December 2000, the Land Registry received for registration 4,994 sale and purchase agreements on residential and non-residential building units.

The figure represents a decrease of 21.3% and 25.6% from November 2000 and December 1999 respectively.

The total consideration of these agreements in December 2000 was \$18.7 billion, up 26.8% and 1.4% when compared with the previous month and December 1999 respectively.

The figures are contained in the monthly statistics by the Land Registry on deeds relating to property transactions received for registration in the Urban and New Territories Land Registries in December 2000.

These statistics generally relate to land transactions executed up to four weeks prior to their submission for registration, as there is usually a time lag between the execution of deeds and their lodgement for registration.

As for year 2000, a total of 85,744 sale and purchase agreements on building units, including both residential and non-residential properties, were received for registration, representing a decrease of 12.9% and 23.1% when compared with 1999 and 1998 respectively.

The total amount of consideration involved in these agreements was \$222.52 billion, down 13.3% against 1999 and 34.7% against 1998.

During 2000, 152,022 assignments of building units were lodged for registration, showing an increase of 7.9% and 12.6% when compared with 140,858 in 1999 and 134,994 in 1998 respectively.

The total amount of the consideration involved amounted to \$273.04 billion, showing a decrease of 9% and 21.6% when compared with 1999 and 1998 respectively.

The total amount secured under mortgages (other than building mortgages) was \$93.95 billion, showing a decrease of 0.8% against 1999 but an increase of 2% against 1998.

Searches of land records by members of the public during 2000 totalled 3,270,293, up 0.8% and 4.4% when compared with 1999 and 1998 respectively.

### BUILDING PLANS APPROVED IN NOVEMBER 2000

The Buildings Department approved 20 building plans in November - four on Hong Kong Island, nine in Kowloon and seven in the New Territories.

The approved plans covered nine for apartment and apartment/commercial developments, seven for factory and industrial developments, and four for community services developments.

In the same month, consent was given for works to start on 16 building projects, which will provide on completion 130,651 square metres of usable domestic floor area and 15,288 square metres of usable non-domestic floor area.

The department also issued 27 occupation permits - ten on Hong Kong Island, seven in Kowloon and ten in the New Territories.

Of the buildings certified for occupation, the usable floor areas for domestic and non-domestic uses were 72,623 square metres and 21,005 square metres respectively.

The declared cost of the new buildings completed in November totalled about \$2.500 billion.

In addition, seven demolition consents involving seven buildings and structures were issued.

The department received 1,407 complaints against unauthorised building works in November, and issued 200 removal orders on unauthorised works.

### BILL TO IMPROVE PUBLIC SAFETY OF KARAOKE ESTABLISHMENTS

A Bill, which seeks to improve fire and public safety of karaoke establishments through a statutory licensing system, has been proposed by the Administration.

According to the Karaoke Establishments Bill, which has been endorsed by the Chief Executive-in-Council, all establishments providing karaoke facilities, including those attached to restaurants or other licensed premises, will be brought under the control of a licensing scheme administered by a licensing authority.

These karaoke establishments will be required to obtain a licence or permit for their operations. However, bona fide restaurants will be exempted from the licence requirement.

A bona fide restaurant refers to one serving food and drinks as its main business, with the aggregate area of all karaoke cubicles not exceeding 30% of its total seating area, and the number of karaoke cubicles not exceeding its total seating area in square metres divided by 100.

For karaokes in restaurants or premises serving light refreshment, the Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene will act as the licensing authority. In all other cases, including karaoke establishments attached to hotels or clubs, the Secretary for Home Affairs will be the licensing authority.



The one-stop approach to focus the licensing responsibility on the same authority for the different activities within the premises should help streamline the licence processing procedures, rendering the licensing scheme more user-friendly to the karaoke operators.

It should also help minimise possible duplication of regulatory efforts by the Government.

In order to safeguard fire and public safety in karaoke establishments, the Bill also stipulates that an applicant for a karaoke licence will be required to meet prescribed fire safety, building safety, public safety and health requirements.

However, for existing karaoke establishments, a transitional period of 12 months will be granted to allow time for their compliance work. Another grace period of 12 months will be given if their licence applications made within the transitional period were then refused.

Penalties will be imposed for premises operating karaoke activities without a licence or permit.

The Bill was first introduced into the Legislative Council in March 2000. However, it lapsed at the end of the 1999/2000 legislative session, as the then Legislative Council did not have time to scrutinize it.

The Bill was gazetted on 12 January 2001 and introduced into the Legislative Council on 7 February 2001.

### SIX PRE-SALE CONSENTS ISSUED IN THE FOURTH QUARTER 2000

The Lands Department issued a total of six consents for the sale of residential units in uncompleted developments between October and December 2000. All of them were issued within the Department's performance target time limit.

These consents involved the sale of 4,447 residential units on Hong Kong Island, in Tseung Kwan O, Yuen Long and Tung Chung. The majority are estimated to be completed in 2001 or the first half of 2002.

As at 31 December 2000, a total of 19 applications were pending approval for pre-sale consents to sell 9,505 residential units located in various parts of the Special Administrative Region. There were six other applications in respect of non-residential developments pending approval.

Of the residential developments pending approval for pre-sale consents, ten are estimated to be completed in 2001, eight in 2002 and the remaining one in 2003.

Members of the public may obtain up-to-date information on consents to sell residential units in uncompleted developments issued for the last six months and cases pending approval by dialling the hotline 2147 5475 or visiting the Lands Department website at <http://www.info.gov.hk/landsd/>.

### GOVERNMENT DETERMINED TO TACKLE UBWS

"The Government is determined to remove the risks to public safety posed by unauthorised building works (UBWs) and illegal rooftop structures (IRS)", Head of the Task Force on building safety and preventive maintenance, Mrs Helen Yu Lai Ching-ping said on 8 January 2001. "Tackling UBWs is the third of our study and completes the task force's proposed strategy for building safety and timely maintenance. With this strategy, we will go to District Councils and other bodies for further consultation".

The task force has proposed a multi-prong approach, including enhancing assistance to property owners in need, stepping up enforcement action, modernising the Buildings Ordinance and maximising market forces to tackle the risks posed by the 800,000 UBWs including IRSs.

On enforcement, the Buildings Department should continue its "blitz" approach to launch major operations to clear UBWs. It will abort attempts at new or re-erections promptly. Vacated IRSs should also be cleared as soon as they are identified.

The Buildings Department aims to increase the number of buildings to be cleared of external UBWs from 500 and 600 to 900 and 1,000 in 2001 and 2002 respectively.

Together with other programmes such as the Coordinated Maintenance of Buildings Scheme, the operations can clear 150,000 to 300,000 UBWs in five to seven years.

The task force sees a need to rationalise and modernise the Buildings Ordinance for more effective enforcement and more efficient operations.

The Buildings Authority should devolve greater authority to building professionals and contractors.

Penalties should be updated for stronger deterrent. Other legislative measures proposed include:

- Creating a category for "minor works" and a register of "minor works contractors" for amenity features and signboards;
- Empowering building professionals and contractors to certify the safety of certain works;
- Empowering the Buildings Department to recover the cost for the removal of UBWs in common parts from individual owners apart from the owners' corporations;
- Enhancing Building Authority's powers to stop erection of UBWs immediately on site;
- Upgrading advisory letters to statutory warning notices registrable against the title with the Land Registry.

The Buildings Authority will further consult building professionals and contractors on

the precise definition, types and dimensions of "minor works" such as the size of signboards.

As for IRSs, Government should accord priority to clearing them from all single-staircase buildings to remove their risk as potential "fire-traps".

The Housing Department has agreed to assist in rehousing affected rooftop occupants. Enforcement action will be taken at the pace of rehousing. No one would be made homeless.

To underline the illegality of rooftop structures, the task force has proposed that rates should not be collected from new IRSs. Given their prompt removal, there is no need for a supply of water and electricity.

The task force has further proposed that the sale and letting of the IRSs should be banned.

It is also for consideration whether owners should be required, before transfer of title, to certify that their property carry "no unauthorised building works on external walls".

The task force has suggested merging the existing Building Safety Improvement Loan Fund and Fire Safety Improvement Loan Fund and to extend the ambit of the combined \$700 million fund to cover the removal of UBWs.

Government departments concerned are committed to helping property owners and owners' corporations take up their responsibilities. In this connection, the Buildings Department will provide technical advice and assistance to owners on building maintenance and removal of UBWs through the "one-stop" service provided by its Building Coordinators and enhanced by the pilot Coordinated Maintenance of Buildings Scheme.

It will also produce a comprehensive layman's guide to building safety and maintenance including removal of UBWs.

### INDOOR AIR QUALITY INFORMATION CENTRE OPENED

A spokesman for the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) said an Indoor Air Quality Information Centre was opened 11 January 2001.

The Information Centre is a new service by the EPD. It serves to provide information to the general public and the professionals on indoor air quality and its management as well as to display products and technologies that can help improve indoor air quality.

The Information Centre is located on the first floor of the Hong Kong Productivity Council Building, 78 Tat Chee Avenue, Kowloon Tong. A cyber centre has also been established on the Internet and can be reached at <http://www.iaq.gov.hk>.

At the centre, there are demonstration models about how offices, homes and public areas can achieve good indoor air quality through proper design and use of suitable materials for renovation, fittings and fixtures. There is also a comprehensive collection of information about indoor air quality and related matters.

The Information Centre is open to the public between 9 am and 5.30 pm from Mondays to Fridays and between 9 am and 1 pm on Saturdays. Guided tours can also be made available to group visits by appointment.

For enquiries, the public can call the indoor air quality hotline at 2788 6177, or fax their questions to 2788 6181, or e-mail to [enquiry@iaq.gov.hk](mailto:enquiry@iaq.gov.hk).



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HONG KONG AUSTRALIA PHILIPPINES





Gilbert Kwok, Honorary Editor

Beginning with this issue, we will report recent Court decisions which might be of interest to you. We will consider giving comments in future editions.

### JUDICIAL REVIEW

#### ***Ngo Kee Construction Co Ltd v The Hong Kong Housing Authority (Date of Judgment - 8 January 2001)***

On 24 August 2000, following the discovery in December 1999 of problems in the foundation of two residential blocks in a Shatin housing project and a report produced by a panel chaired by John Strickland, Zen Pacific Civil Contractors Limited ("Zen Pacific"), the foundation contractor concerned, was removed from the Housing Authority Lists of Large Diameter Bored Piling Contractors and Demolition Contractors.

Ngo Kee Construction Co Ltd ("Ngo Kee") who is a member of Wai Kee Holdings Ltd ("Wai Kee") (which also owns Zen Pacific) was also suspended from tendering for all Housing Authority projects for a period of 24 months. Such suspension would only be subject to review after completion of the 24 months period of suspension. Ngo Kee applied to the High Court by judicial review to quash the decision of the Housing Authority.

Each side was represented by three barristers and a firm of solicitors and the hearing lasted three days.

After hearing submissions from the parties, the Court dismissed Ngo Kee's application. Mr Justice Cheung considered that the decision of the Housing Authority was not subject to judicial review as it was a private commercial decision, not involving any element of fraud/corruption or bad faith. In reaching his decision, the Judge relied on a

long line of English and Hong Kong cases which held that matters relating to tendering required by a public body was not subject to public law.

The Court was of the view that even if the matter was subject to judicial review, Ngo Kee's application would still have to be refused as the Housing Authority was entitled to suspend entering into contracts with entities in whom it lacks trust and confidence.

Ngo Kee has made an application to appeal against the decision of Mr Justice Cheung. We will keep you posted.

#### ***Sha Lo Tung Development Co Ltd v The Chief Executive in Council (Date of Judgment - 9 January 2001)***

Sha Lo Tung is an isolated valley at the foot of the Pat Sin Leng range and Cloudy Hill range north of Tai Po. There are 68 species of dragonflies recorded in the area while there are 106 known species in Hong Kong.

After Sha Lo Tung Development Co Ltd (the "Developer") acquired the land concerned in 1979, it submitted proposals to and negotiated with the Government about redevelopment of the area.

On 24 January 1997, the Draft Sha Lo Tung Development Permission Area Plan (the "Draft SLTDPA Plan") was gazetted.

Although written objections were submitted by the Developer to the Town Planning Board (the "Board") under the Town Planning Ordinance (the "Ordinance"), the Chief Executive in Council approved the Draft SLTDPA Plan on 20 April 1999. The Approved SLTDPA Plan was gazetted on 30 April 1999.

On 10 May 1999, the Secretary for Planning, Environment and Lands issued a directive for the preparation of an Outline Zoning Plan under Section 3(1)(a) of the Ordinance to replace the SLTDPA Plan. Following submission of a rezoning request together

with the supporting environmental impact assessment to the Board, on 12 November 1999, the Board met to consider amongst other things the land use options for the Draft Outline Zoning Plan submitted by the Planning Department.

The Board then decided to request the Planning Department to study the outstanding issues and to propose further land use options.

On 14 December 1999, the Chief Executive in Council extended the effective period of the Approved SLTDPA Plan for an additional year up to 24 January 2001. The purpose of the extension was to enable the Board to consider objections and options put forward by the Developer on the development of Sha Lo Tung. The Developer, represented by three barristers and a firm of solicitors, challenged in the High Court such decision to extend the plan by judicial review.

Mr Justice Cheung considered that the decision to extend the plan in order to enable the Board to consider the options put forward by the Developer was lawful and rational. He therefore dismissed the Developer's judicial review application.

I understand the Developer is not prepared to appeal against Mr Justice Cheung's decision.

### APPOINTMENT OF ARBITRATOR

#### ***Chan Man Yiu and Tang Yuk Chun v Kiu Nam Investment Corporation Ltd and The China & South Sea Bank Ltd (Date of Judgment - 15 December 2000)***

On 13 October 1999, the parties in the proceedings agreed to refer a dispute which existed between them to arbitration. Hubert Woo, a barrister, was appointed arbitrator on 26 January 2000.

It later transpired that Mr Woo was a close friend of B W Choy who was the authorised

representative of the respondents. Mr Woo had represented Mr Choy in litigation on previous occasions and they had known each other for 25 years. The applicants did not know these facts at the time when Mr Woo was appointed as arbitrator.

On 16 October 2000, the applicants applied to the Court for a number of orders including an order that Mr Woo be removed and an order that the costs arising out of and incidental to the arbitration proceedings and the Court application incurred by the

applicants be paid by the respondents on an indemnity basis.

At the beginning of the hearing it was agreed between the parties that a new arbitrator be appointed to replace Mr Woo. The issue left to the Court to decide was whether the respondents were liable to the applicants' costs.

Mr Justice Burrell considered that Mr Woo should have declined the appointment from the outset. He went on to say that any suggestion that Mr Woo could have remained as the arbitrator was unrealistic.

The Judge ordered that the costs thrown away in the arbitration be to the applicants and most of the costs of the Court application shall be borne by the respondents. The Judge reduced the amount of costs awarded in favour of the applicants because, in his view, one of the orders sought by the applicants was unrealistic and the applicants had turned down an opportunity to settle the dispute on the removal of the arbitrator which might have saved costs. **S**

## INNOVATION in our living and working environment

HKIS CONFERENCE  
March 10, 2001

Out with the old, in with the new. Hong Kong enters the new era along with the rest of the world. People today are struggling to manage an ever-accelerating rate of change. With the advance of global electronic communication, our working, living and leisure environment requires "knowledge" to cope with new challenges. Beyond the physical "bricks and mortar" world of building, we are now actually living in the "bricks and clicks" reality.

For sustainable growth of Hong Kong, innovations in technology are the new scenarios for the economy. Cyberport, Science Park, Dream City, Wired Home, Data Centre and E-Tailing are all the new innovations to form our future scenarios. These will all revolutionize our working, living and leisure environment. This revolution is unprecedented in the history of Hong Kong. What we see today is only the tip of iceberg. It is the time for us to explore the real-world issues we face today, and are likely to face in the future.

The Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors, being one of the leading real estate and building professional institutions in the region, will host a conference, "Innovation in our living and working environment", in the new era to provide an opportunity for synergy among experts, professionals, executives and managers from the business and professional communities. Members are encouraged to participate and join hands to move forward with new technologies and innovations.

The conference will be held on Saturday, 10 March 2001 at the Ballroom (Level 3), JW Marriott Hotel, One Pacific Place, 88 Queensway, Hong Kong, 9.00 am to 5.00 pm. Places are limited. For reservation details, please contact the HKIS office at 2526 3679.







## THE CASE FOR THE APPLICATION OF THE CODE OF PRACTICE ON MEANS OF ESCAPE ON EXISTING BUILDINGS

Kenneth J K Chan, BSc(Leics), FRICS, FHKIS, FBEng, MCI Arb, CFM, F.PFM, RPS(BS), AP(S), DTZ Debenham Tie Leung Project Services Ltd

### INTRODUCTION

I read a recent Court of Final Appeal case (Final Appeal No. 16 of 1999, Mexon Holdings Ltd. and Silver Bay International Ltd.) in which Judge Litton of the court was led to comment that the Code [of Practice on Means of Escape (made under Building (Planning) Regulation 41(1))] provided guidance as to the exercise of discretion by the Building Authority under Section 16 of the [Buildings] Ordinance in dealing with approval of plans for new buildings. This was consistent with the Building (Planning) Regulations governing the planning and design of buildings before they were built. The Code seemed to have no application to internal partitioning works, which did not involve the structure of the building. Further, as exempted works, the works did not require the submission of plans for the Building Authority to approve. Hence, it was highly questionable whether the Code was engaged at all here.

In other words, the Code was meant for the planning and design of new buildings and did not apply to "exempted works".

The crunch of the problem was that a un-sub-divided floor in a commercial building was subsequently sub-divided for strata title sale. Due to the sub-division, the travel distance under an alleged dead-end situation was found to be in excess of 18 metres by 4 metres.

The parties were represented by both the legal and technical professions. The Judge commented that the contradicting opinions

of the technical experts were not conclusive. They should have resorted to the Building Authority to rule on the situation. The appeal was dismissed.

There are a number of interesting observations that I would like to make.

### THE APPLICATION OF THE BUILDINGS ORDINANCE AND REGULATIONS TO EXISTING BUILDINGS

The Objective of the Buildings Ordinance is to provide for the planning, design and construction of buildings and associated works. Buildings were sometimes altered and added to during their life span. The most notable ones were the fitting out of the buildings for the various intended occupancies. Many of the non-purpose built commercial/office buildings were not partitioned, and even if they were partitioned when completed, they were prone to changes. Section 41(3) of the Buildings Ordinance provided for the carrying out of building works not involving the structure of any building in any building without application to or approval from the Building Authority provided that nothing in that subsection shall permit any building works to be carried out in contravention of any regulation. That is to say, building works carried out in contravention of the Buildings Ordinance and Regulations shall no longer be considered exempted works under the above provisions. This was quite clear that there was no differentiation between new and existing buildings in respect of

compliance with the requirements of the Buildings Ordinance.

### THE APPLICATION OF THE CODE OF PRACTICE TO EXISTING BUILDINGS

The Code of Practice on Means of Escape was made under the Building (Planning) Regulation 41(1) in respect of the provision of adequate means of escape in case of fire. The Code prescribed certain requirements in respect of travel distance from a room to a protected staircase in the storey in which the room was situated. The travel distance for escape from the subject premises without partitioning could be totally acceptable when the same was originally built. However, the premises were sub-divided into a number of units. One of which was in such a location that a dead-end situation was created which might not have ever existed in a non-partitioned situation. The travel distance was exceeded by 4 metres over the allowable 18 metres. The internal partitioning for the purpose of selling the premises on the basis of strata title was considered exempted works thus approval or consent from the Building Authority was not required. This was on the assumption that the partitioning followed the requirements as laid out in the Code of Practice on Means of Escape. In case, the Code could not be strictly adhered to, the owner should seek approval from the Building Authority for such non-conformity.

It was, however, highly arguable that the Building Authority would ever accept this

non-conformity and have given approval for the same. No building plans of new buildings could have ever been approved on such basis.

It was argued that the Code would only apply to new buildings as the foreword to the Code stipulated that the same was for guidance and the Building Authority may accept as compliance if the same was being followed. It was unrealistic to imagine that the Code made under B(P)R 41(1) was only for the purpose of controlling the planning and design of new buildings. Existing buildings could be changed without having to abide by the same. This was totally wrong if it was the intention of the lawmaker.

Buildings were designed, constructed and occupied under the Buildings Ordinance. Changes made should also follow the requirements of the Buildings Ordinance. Works not affecting the structure of the building and not in contravention of the Ordinance and Regulations could be carried

out without the approval and consent of the Building Authority. When buildings were altered and added to affecting the structure or re-arranging the fundamentals, the approval and consent of the Building Authority would be needed before works were carried out.

It was totally wrong to say that the Planning Regulations, as the name implied, govern the planning of buildings, before they were built. Planning should not have its restrictive application to new buildings. One could plan for the renovation or refurbishment of existing buildings. It followed that the latter would have to comply with the regulations.

### CONCLUSION

It would be a total disaster if the Planning Regulations could only be applied to the planning of new buildings. Building works not affecting the structure of any building could then be carried out un-restrictedly. Means of escape could be changed putting

the safety of occupants of buildings at great risk. It was hoped that the Judges could correct this stand/comment at the appropriate occasion.

Furthermore, there was a total absence of a proper building control expert in the case to guide our learned judges in the trial of the case when complicated issues of the Buildings Ordinance were involved. This could be fulfilled by involving the Building Authority or building control experts in Hong Kong. The legal profession would have to be aware of the services of a group of experts when recommending for the Clients' appointment.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mr Kenneth Chan is a fellow member of the Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors, engaged in private practice with particular interest in Building Control. He is a member of the APSE Committee. ■

## CIVIL ENGINEERING MEASUREMENT DISPUTES REVISITED

John B Molloy, LLB(Hons), BSc(Hons), FHKIS, FRICS, FInstCES, MCI Arb, RPS(QS), James R Knowles (Hong Kong) Ltd

Of all the articles that I have written in the last few years, the one which seems to have provoked the most interest is the one published in the September Newsletter on Civil Engineering Measurement Disputes.

Since publication I have received a number of emails requesting further detail on various points, and in an excellent letter to the editor published in the November issue, Mr Vincent Wu drew attention to one area where he disagreed with my opinion.

Mr Wu's letter and the email I have received highlight the very reason why this is such a common area for disputes - because it is a grey area where opinions differ as to correct interpretation.

In my previous article I examined the situations where the provisions of GCC Clause 59(3) should be invoked to rectify 'items omitted or errors in description' in the Bills of Quantities, and I identified three specific types of errors.

The first two types of errors, i.e. where there is a specific item in the Standard Method of Measurement ("SMM") which is required for the works, but which has not been measured in the Bills of Quantities, and where there is a specific item in the SMM which is required for the works, but which has been measured differently or with a different description to that required by the SMM, seem to be generally agreed as areas where the Bills of

Quantities should be rectified in accordance with GCC Clause 59(3).

It is the third type of 'error', i.e. where works are required but there is no applicable item in the SMM nor are the works covered by an item coverage of another item, that seems to be the most controversial. In my opinion this type of error is an 'item omitted' requiring rectification pursuant to GCC Clause 59(3).

However, this is certainly not a view held by all, and Mr Wu for one considers that this is incorrect, and that GCC Clause 59(3) shall only operate for an omitted item if that item is required by the drawings, and required to be measured as an item by the SMM.



This is a view that I am aware is held by many engineers and quantity surveyors in the industry. However, it is a view to which I cannot ascribe, because I do not consider it correct to restrict measurement (and thus claims for items omitted) to those items included in the SMM.

The reason for this is that the SMM was not drafted with the intention that it would comprehensively cover all civil engineering works that required measurement. The SMM details the most common works, but it is the intention that where works are not covered by the SMM, the SMM should be amended by way of particular preambles to cover such works.

Consider, for example, a contract I am currently working upon. The works include slope protection works and in a particular area, gabion walls (walls formed of wire mesh baskets filled with rocks) are required. The SMM includes no item for such works, but I do not consider it can be correct (or even desirable) for such works not to be measured and the Contractor deemed to have allowed for the walls in his other rates. I say not desirable because if such was the case the engineer would not know where the walls were allowed for and would have no means of valuing them for interim payment purposes or for valuing any variations to them.

No, this can't be correct. GCC Clause 59(1) provides that the Bills of Quantities shall be prepared and measurements made in accordance with the procedures set down in the SMM. In this respect SMM Part II entitled General Principles, paragraph 4, provides that the Bills of Quantities are to contain all items, compounded in

accordance with paragraph 3, required to comprise the Works, and paragraph 3 provides inter alia, "where the Method of Measurement does not identify the work required it shall be amended as appropriate", i.e. by particular preambles.

There is therefore a duty on the draftsman of the Bills of Quantities to include items for all the works, and if the SMM does not provide a required item, such as, for example the gabion walls, there is a duty to amend the SMM accordingly.

If this is not done, then I consider that the contractor would have a valid claim for an item omitted for the gabion walls, on the basis that the draftsman of the Bills of Quantities breached GCC Clause 59(1) by not adding an item into the SMM for gabion walls and including their measurement in the Bills of Quantities.

This is of course an extreme example because the gabion walls are major items of work that could not conceivably be deemed to be covered by another item in the Bills of Quantities. However, I believe that the same principle must be adopted throughout, be the works concern a major element such as a gabion wall, or a minor element such as a stainless steel cover strip on a movement joint which could logically be allowed for in the item for the movement joint itself.

I consider therefore that the correct procedure to adopt when a contractor prices the Bills of Quantities is as follows:

1. The extent of the works to be priced for each item in the Bills of Quantities should be ascertained from the BQ description (which in the example

quoted by Mr Wu will be where the concrete in a concrete manhole is covered), the item coverage and general preambles.

2. The quality of such items of works should then be ascertained from the Specification.
3. The location and conditions under which such items of work are to be carried out should then be ascertained from the Drawings.
4. However if there is an item of work shown on the drawings which is not covered by paragraph 1 above, then in accordance with GCC Clause 5(2)(a) it is an item omitted to be rectified under GCC Clause 59(3).

In this way there is certainty for both the contractor and the engineer as to what to allow for, or what has been allowed, in each rate.

This is in my opinion the correct interpretation of the measurement rules of the GCC and the SMM, but I am sure that many will hold differing views. As long as this remains the case, civil engineering measurement will remain a fertile area for claims and disputes. ■



## ADVENTURE IN APPRECIATION - CHINESE LITERATURE

### "THE LOVE FOR LOTUS" 愛蓮說

Francis NG 吳恆廣

#### ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Of all the flowers on water and land, quite a lot are lovely. In the Jin Dynasty (晉朝), poet Tao Yuanmin (365-427 AD) was fond of Chrysanthemum only. From the Tan Dynasty (唐朝) onwards, most people loved Peony. As for me, I have great passion for Lotus. It never gets dirty though it rises from the mud underneath. It seems to be cleansed with clear water and never appears seductive.

Although the stalk is hollow, it is upright and straight. There is neither sprawling nor branching out. It emits a pleasant scent and stands upright with a clean appearance. One can only appreciate its beauty from a distance and should not profane it. I opine that Chrysanthemum is the recluse of all the flowers, and Peony is the flower of

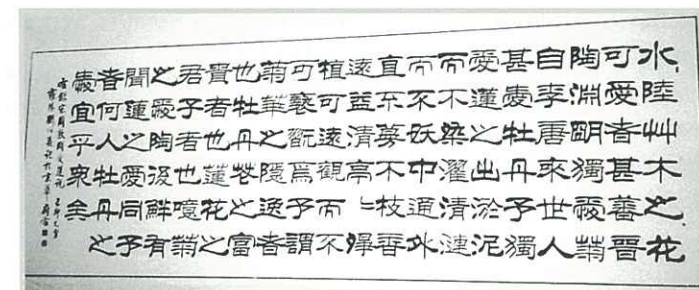
prosperity, whereas Lotus is the gentleman of them all. Since the time of Tao Yuanming, there have not been many people who are fond of Chrysanthemum. As for Lotus, I do not think any other persons love it more than me. Naturally there are a lot of Peony lovers.

Note: Zhou Dunyi (1017-1073 AD) was a philosopher and theorist in the Song Dynasty (宋朝). This essay is a reflection of his pursuit of virtue, uprightness, courteousness, modesty, cleanliness and tranquillity. ■

The "Coalition of Professionals" visited Beijing in late 2000. In an assembly room where a meeting was to be held, a massive scroll of Chinese calligraphy was hung on the wall which measured about 8 feet x 20 feet. We were most impressed by the calligraphic skill and above all, the prose by Zhou Dunyi (周敦頤). It brought back memories of our school days as we started to read it out again and again before the formal meeting. I had a quick shot of the scroll which is reprinted below:

#### 語體文譯文

水中及陸上的花卉，惹人喜愛的有很多。晉朝的陶淵明只喜歡菊花。從唐朝李姓皇帝執政後，世人非常喜歡牡丹。我卻只鍾情於蓮花。蓮花生長於污泥，但卻不受污染，被清澈的水沖洗過，潔淨而不妖冶。花梗貫通，外形筆直，不以延蔓方式生長，也沒有旁枝。香氣清逸，美麗潔淨地處於水中，只可保持距離欣賞，而不可以就近觸弄。我認為，菊是花卉中的隱士，牡丹是花卉中的富貴者，蓮則是花卉中的君子。喜愛菊花的人，自陶淵明以後便很少聽聞了。喜愛蓮花的人，像我一樣的，還有誰呢？至於牡丹花，自然很多人喜愛。



## Surveyor's Surf



Stephen Chung, Zeppelin Real Estate Analysis Ltd

This new column will introduce the following websites which we trust will be of interest to the surveying profession. These websites contain useful information on a wide spectrum of matters ranging from real estate / the building industry to new technologies. You may send your suggestion or comments to [stephenchung@zeppelin.com.hk](mailto:stephenchung@zeppelin.com.hk).

<http://verticals.yahoo.com/cities/>

This site enables you to get information of any city / municipality or make a comparison between 2 selected cities / municipalities in the USA. Information such as average family income, average home

price, percentage of college graduates is available. You can use a programme provided by the site to do an estimate of what you would need to earn in order to maintain a similar living standard when you move from one city to another. Pretty handy for getting to know more about the States.

<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/indexgeo.html>

This site gives you information on practically all the countries in the world e.g. population, GDP, land area, demographics, economy, trade, government system and so on. Useful for macro analyses.



<http://www.buzzsaw.com>

This site is geared for the building industry. Apart from material purchases and procurements, it also offers construction management tools and systems, some of which require a user subscription fee. The author has not tried out all of its numerous services. Readers involved in construction management may wish to visit the site in order to gauge perhaps what the future may hold especially when more activities get "on-line".

<http://s1.amazon.com/exec/varzea/ts/help/whats-a-zshop/>

If you want to sell things online via the internet but do not intend to spend a fortune on e-commerce or e-payment facilities, you may wish to consider setting up a "store" (Amazon.com calls it a "zshop") in Amazon. For a monthly fee of around US\$40, you may list up to 5,000 items for sale. You will need to pay a commission if a transaction is successful. You will need a USA bank account to register and/or to "accept" payments from your would-be purchasers. Registration is not too difficult but will take some time

(most websites will say something like "register in minutes" = beware! It may not be true) and payment by credit card is required. There are pre-set templates to help you with listing your items and setting up your "store", to which you can assign a unique name (provided no one else has done it first).

<http://knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu>

This site is related to the University of Pennsylvania's business school (Wharton) and offers business / economics articles and analyses. The service / subscription is free. You need to learn what is happening in the world's largest economy as Hong Kong depends on its well-being. It has a section on real estate.

<http://www.oanda.com/convert/classic>

This site helps you to convert currencies from one to another. You may choose the current exchange rate or any one in the past 2,000 days. The service is free. ☒



## MSc/PgD in Project Management Department of Building and Real Estate

### Programme Aim

This is a self-financed postgraduate programme by "guided" distance learning, which targets for construction professionals in Hong Kong and the Mainland China. The primary aim of this programme is to provide an opportunity for practising architects, construction managers, engineers, surveyors, technologists, and other related professionals to broaden and deepen their knowledge in project management, in the construction context.

### Entrance Requirements

Bachelor degree in construction related disciplines or equivalent\*, preferably with relevant working experience in project management. (\*Relevant professional qualifications will be considered as equivalent)

### Credits and Fees

Credits required for graduation: 30 for MSc award and 21 for PgD award.

The fee for each credit is at HK\$2,700 (current). (MSc: norm 3 years/PgD: norm 2 years)

### Application Period (2 February - 15 March 2001)

Please collect the application form at the Academic Secretariat Podium Office (near Chung Sze Yuen Building), The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hung Hom, Kowloon; and return the completed form on or before 15 March 2001. For inquiry, please call Miss Cecilia Lo at 2766 4367 (Department of Building and Real Estate) or at 2333 0600 (Academic Secretariat).

Website: <http://www.polyu.edu.hk/admission>

## Editor's Note

At the first meeting on 17 January 2001 the new Editorial Board decided to beef up the content of the newsletter gradually throughout this year.

Two new columns that may appear in the April issue are "Deals" and "Professional Moves". Members of the Institute are invited to provide details (in less than 50 words) of their recent major deals to Ms Margaret Yung at [editor@hkis.org.hk](mailto:editor@hkis.org.hk). For those who have been promoted or have changed their jobs since January 2001, they may wish to provide their new titles, company names, telephone and fax numbers to Ms Yung. We will consider including details of the first 5 major deals or particulars received by the office and details of the first 30 members who have provided their new personal particulars, in the April and May editions on a complimentary basis. We will review this service to members in April and will advise in the May issue whether we will continue with such arrangement.

Jim Yip of the new Editorial Board will report below a piece of good news.

Just when we are starting to worry about this year's pay-rise, a spate of good news comes in.

Hutchison Whampoa Properties Co led the pack in early December last year to announce a 3% increase. Cheung Kong, not to be outshone by his brother company, follow-suited with a similar increment but with strings - indexed-pay on performance.

Surprisingly, some other developers are reported to have made the same change: Henderson Land - 3%, Swire Properties - 3% and SHK - 3%.

The scene in the consultancy sector is equally encouraging. FPD Savills has just announced a 3% pay-rise, maintaining its three-year rising streak. Jones Lang Lasalle forked out a 2 - 3% sweetener. People in Levett & Bailey and Davis Langdon & Seah are anticipating pay-rises in the middle of this year.

"I am so relieved. Finally we have come out from the cold" said a staff member of New World Development who wishes to remain anonymous. She will have to plan how to spend her 2.5% increment this year.

After more than two years pay freeze, everyone is very pleased with the pay-rise and hopes this trend will continue. ☒

## 香港浸會大學持續進修學院



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- targets for people in the fields of building, engineering and real estate industries.
- consists of 8 taught courses and a project dissertation (For Master's students only) which are to be completed in two years on part-time basis.
- intensive workshops are taught by UniSA academic staff.

### Entry Requirement:

- For admission to the Master of Project Management, applicants should have a recognised undergraduate degree or professional qualification (eg. CIOB, HKIS, HKIE) in the field of construction and engineering. Applicants are normally expected to have work experience.
- For admission to the Graduate Diploma in Project Management, applicants should meet the requirements set out in A above OR hold a three-year diploma with five years of relevant work experience in addition to current employer recommendation. Upon satisfactory completion, Graduate Diploma students can apply to transfer to the Master of Project Management.

Graduates from the programme are eligible to apply for membership of the AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT (AIPM).

### Programme Information Session

Date : 31 March 2001 (Sat) Time : 2:30pm  
Venue : SCE 701, SCE Tower, Baptist University Road Campus, HKBU  
Speaker : Tony Y. F. Ma, Programme Director, UniSA

For enquiries and seat reservation, please call 2339 5429 / 2339 5407 or e-mail [crityeung@hkbu.edu.hk](mailto:crityeung@hkbu.edu.hk)

UniSA Web Site: [www.unisa.edu.au](http://www.unisa.edu.au)

Application Deadline : 9 April 2001

Programme Commencement : June 2001

Exempted Course at Non-local Courses Registry, Education and Manpower Bureau (Reference number: 410572/410573)  
It is a matter of discretion for individual employers to recognise any qualification to which this course may lead.

### HKBU-SCE General Offices

Leaflets are available at the following HKBU-SCE offices or can be downloaded from our web site.

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Kowloon Tong

**HKBU Town Centre**  
6/F., 8 Hart Avenue  
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**Tsimshatsui Learning Centre**  
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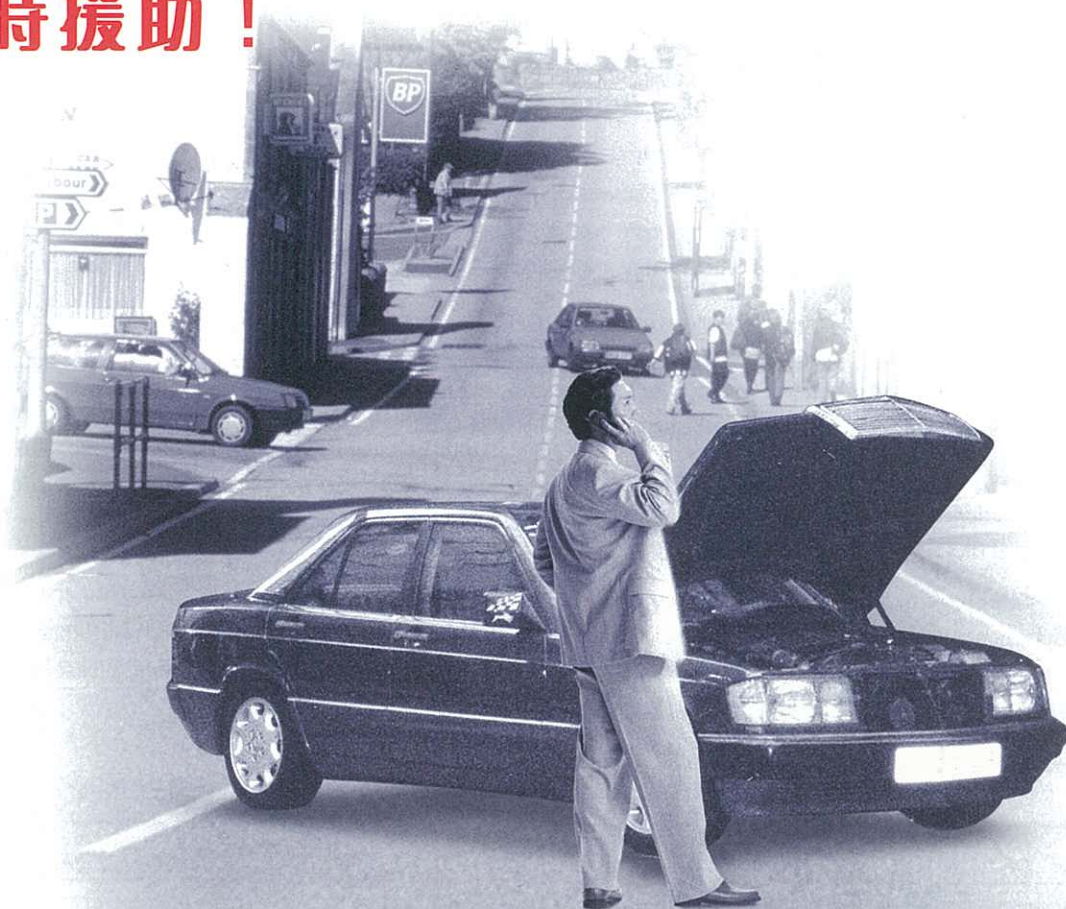
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