



THE HONG KONG INSTITUTE OF SURVEYORS

5th July 2002

The Honourable Tung Chee Hwa
The Chief Executive of the
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the
People's Republic of China
Chief Executive's Office
5/F., Main Wing, Central Government Offices
Lower Albert Road
Hong Kong

Dear Mr Tung,

There are some rumours in the professional surveying sector that the Lands Department may implement a retrenchment scheme for the professional surveyor posts including Estate Surveyors and Land Surveyors.

This Institute is deeply concerned about these rumours, not only because some of our members and indeed the survey profession might be affected, but also more importantly is that the public interest might be undermined if such scheme were ill conceived or improperly implemented.

The purpose of my writing to you, besides to express our concern about these rumours, is to advance some of our views for your administration to consider when contemplating any plan concerning the employment of professional surveyors.

(a) Maintaining adequate level of staffing and quality of work

There should be an analysis and continuous monitoring of the workload situation with a view to identifying appropriate ranking and staffing level for carrying out the work to meet the timetable of the projects while maintaining an acceptable quality of service. We have no strong view against the policy of down-sizing or right-sizing providing such plan should not over stretch the existing staff, down grade the quality of service and impair the efficiency and effectiveness of the department concerned. We certainly do not want to see any mismatch or misuse of staff resource. In order to address all these issues and to allay the worry of the staff concerned a comprehensive human resource study of the grades concerned should be carried out before drawing up any staff plan in particular the need to cater for the future development of Hong Kong.



(b) Delay of land development and infrastructure works and loss of revenue

Inadequate staff resource and deficient quality of service may cause delay in land development and infrastructure works, incur loss of revenue due to claim for compensation, and even invite lengthy and costly litigation. Therefore it would be false economy just to realize some short term and even superficial saving without fully evaluating and being aware of the consequences which might be very costly to remedy later.

(c) A good employer

Several government principal officials had on different occasions appealed to business operators to avoid laying off employees as far as possible and if it is absolutely inevitable, they should consult their employees in order to resolve any problem in an amicable manner. The Hong Kong SAR Government having thus far been recognized as a good and responsible employer should endeavour to keep up with such exemplary attitude. Therefore when having to deal with any staff/workload matching situation the administration should, firstly, consider maintaining adequate level and quality of services; secondly, deploy staff to improve and expand services to the public; and thirdly, have a dialogue with staff concerned and work out a career plan for them well in advance.

As a professional surveying institute we are very concerned about maintaining adequate and quality surveying services in the various government departments in order to support the forthcoming major land and building development and infrastructure projects. We strongly believe that we professional surveyors have a role to play and can contribute, and indeed are committed, towards the building up of Hong Kong SAR as a world class city and dream home for everyone of us.

We would be very pleased to hear from you or your principal officials any plan regarding the employment situation of professional surveyors in the Lands Department and other departments and to discuss how to provide and maintain adequate level and quality surveying services. It is particularly enlightening to learn in your Inaugural Speech delivered on 1st July 2002 that you have resolved to act to the best of your abilities and to live up to the undertakings which you have given to the people of Hong Kong, that include creating more employment opportunities.

We sincerely wish you a successful second term as Chief Executive of the Hong Kong SAR.

Yours sincerely,

Hak Chan
President