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FROM THE EDITOR

In full swing celebrating the 20th Anniversary, our administrative office is working hard day and night on the programmes, the publications, the new office extension, Office Bearers on the commitments they have promised and Members busy at work.

The property market is picking up and whilst there are many factors affecting the value of properties, government policies on land, housing and planning etc. play an important role in investment decisions of corporations, companies, and individuals. One of the indicators on demand for land development in Hong Kong has been land sales and tenders from the Government. During the times of economic downturn when property values fall erratically, there were fiscal policies to restore market confidence and one of those was to freeze the Government land sales to restrict "supply".

When the market is recovering, it is right for Government to resume the land sale by the Application system. A list was drawn up and published in January this year, the Application List. So far there is no auction contemplated. Either there has not been any application or the price submitted by the applicants is considered below the level of value assessed by the Government to click the auction procedures. Through auction, which is a fair and effective means attaining a market price, where sufficient knowledge is known, market value is the price determined by the market force through the mechanism of supply and demand. So long as there is an application which is attached with a guaranteed price, the last bid in the auction will determine a price, the market price, the level of which is an indicator for the Government to fix the economic policy.

When the Financial Secretary said recently that the Government would not sell land cheap, it seems Government revenue is protected trying to achieve the maximum. We are sailing away from the mechanism of market force, supply and demand on the other hand; Government has 'set' the price when they wish to sell against the 'market' value at any point in time to cater for demand *laissez-faire*. One phenomenon can be that developers would 'speculate' and keep their flats waiting for a good price to sell and experience has told us that this 'unhealthy speculation' phenomenon and 'high values' policy may lead to a spiraling effect with bubbles burst at some time in the future overheated market, if it ever comes.

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ADVERTISING

For detailed information and advertising rates, please contact Miss Margaret Yung of HKIS at 2526 3679.

Widening Membership Base



Tony TSE
President

The question about expanding the Institute's membership base has been debated amongst members in the past few years. Whilst the resolution to allow direct membership was not passed at the General Meeting held in October 2003, the proposal for Technical Grade membership was approved. Through the efforts of the General Practice Division, the Institute signed a Reciprocity Agreement with the China Institute of Real Estate Appraisers (CIREA) in November 2003 and I expect it will be followed by reciprocity agreements of other divisions. All of these will converge into a big step towards membership growth.


The amendments to the Constitution and Bye-Laws in October 2003 have provided the constitutional foundation for Technical Associates (TAHKIS) and its associated Technical Trainees membership. Despite the fact that so far the General Council has only approved TechRICS membership as a qualification for TAHKIS membership, the expressed interest in joining as Technical Grade members has been very encouraging. We have already received over 100 applications within three months. By the end of this year, the TAHKIS will be represented in the General Council making direct contributions to the Institute's affairs. In the

coming months, there will be a lot of pressing work for the Divisional councils to address this new grade of membership. These may include the determination of more recognizable qualifications for technical members admission, the training requirements and schemes as well as the CPD programme for the Technical Grade Members.

Following the approval of the Board of Membership, the first batch of 24 Technical Associates were admitted recently. I would like to congratulate and welcome them in becoming members of the Institute and look forward to meeting them soon.

With the Reciprocity Agreement signed with CIREA, I must say fruitful negotiations for the Agreement with the Mainland counterparts did not happen overnight. Dating back three years ago in 2001 when the local economy was very gloomy, the General Practice Divisional Council believed that exploration of the Mainland market would be one of the ways out. After consultation and deliberation, it was determined to pursue further discussions with the China Institute of Real Estate Appraisers on reciprocal recognition of professional qualifications. Thereafter, much time and effort were consumed in negotiations and exchange of views on the terms of the

reciprocity agreement. Despite obtaining the support in principle from the Ministry of Construction in early 2002, the Reciprocal Agreement was only signed in November 2003 less than 2 months before the commencement of CEPA. Nonetheless, the signing of the Agreement is a groundbreaking agreement for professional bodies in Hong Kong and we owe a lot to those members who had contributed their time and efforts in achieving the result.

Judging from the large number of applications from our members for CIREA membership, it is apparent that the Agreement is well received by them. Nevertheless, there may still be some aspects in the Agreement such as experience requirements, which would warrant refinements to enable more of our members to meet with the criteria. To this end, I would urge the GP Divisional Council to build on this success and to pursue further negotiations with the Mainland counterparts to secure better terms for GP members. 

HKIS 20th Anniversary Conference on Public Private Partnerships, 29 May 2004 in the Marriott

Public Private Partnerships (PPP) is increasingly being adopted by the HKSAR Government in the procurement of public works and facilities. The HKIS is supportive of a strong partnership between the public and private sectors. Yet, PPP is relatively new and is still very much under-researched in the local arena. The PPP Conference will be the first of its kind in Hong Kong, with a view to building up a stronger professional knowledge with contributions from renowned overseas and local experts and also arousing the public awareness.

Mr. Frederick Ma, JP, Secretary for Financial

Services and The Treasury of the HKSAR Government has kindly agreed to be our Guest of Honour and will grace the conference with an opening speech. Keynote speakers include Sir Gordon Wu, Member of the Commission on Strategic Development of the Hong Kong SAR; Mr. Steven Page, Executive Director of the Department of Treasury and Finance, Government of South Australia; Dr. A. Scott Carson, Director of Canadian Council for PPP as well as a panel of international renowned professionals and practitioners.

The topics will include conceptual introduction and fundamentals; HKSAR

government policies; overseas project experience (Australia, UK and Canada); PPP in the local industry and growth potentials; PPP in Mainland China; the surveyors' role in PPP; contractors' perspective; legal and contractual framework; land management issues; value-for-money benchmark; risk management; facilities management; and life-cycle costing.

The one-day conference will be held on Saturday, 29 May 2004 in the JW Marriott Hotel, Queensway, Hong Kong. Watch out for further details and visit the HKIS homepage at www.hkis.org.hk or contact the Secretariat on 2526 3679.

President met surveying firms to find out more about their needs

To enhance understanding and communication with practitioners on market, industry, government and surveyors' training matters, the President has initiated a series of luncheon meetings with surveying firms. The Office Bearers and Divisional Chairmen were also present at these meetings.

The President met with representatives from QS firms on 13 February. Companies represented included Davis Langdon & Seah (Messrs. Joseph Lee and Kenneth Poon); Levett & Bailey (Messrs. Albert Cheung and Chan Choi Hing); Widnell (Messrs. Kim Berry and Wong Chung Fat) and WT Partnership (Mr. Chan Yiu Chung).

One of the prime areas touched upon was when surveyors could operate in the Mainland as an independent legal entity and to practise quantity surveying. It is apparent that the profession is asking for a level playing field.

On 25 March, a similar luncheon meeting took place with BS firms. Participating companies included David C. Lee Surveyors Ltd. (Messrs. James Law and Vincent Ho), DTZ Debenham Tie Leung Project Services Limited (Mr. Mark Li), Prudential Surveyors International Ltd. (Mr. Denis Wong); Samson Wong & Associates Property Consultancy Ltd. (Mr. Samson Wong) and Vigers Hong Kong Ltd. (Mr. Kenny Suen).

Again, the issue of surveyors practising in the Mainland China was raised. Apart from this, member firms also asked for greater cross-division fertilization, activities that would allow members to get-to-know each other, sharing of knowledge and experience would be of great value.

Members also pointed out that the surveyor's professional edge would be best promoted if more assertive marketing of the profession as a whole is done. The President pledged his support and asked member firms' support in providing case studies and illustrations to be used in future promotions of the HKIS; it works better if people could look at tangibles and start visualizing the range of professional services that the surveyor could offer.

Club and Association Boxes - Hong Kong Jockey Club

With unrivalled views and all the excitement of premier-class racing, both Happy Valley Stand and Shatin Grandstand represent two of the finest racetracks in the world.

HKIS members may now enjoy these ideal venues for business entertaining and leisure. The Club & Association Box offers the ultimate

in exclusivity: table reservation for 2 persons up to 30 persons; spectacular views; latest in betting technology; buffet with unlimited pouring of house beer, soft drinks and orange juice throughout the event. Catering packages start from HK\$280 to HK\$298 without any service charge; admission badge for non-jockey club members is HK\$50. The HKJC will offer

complimentary Badge Coupons to the Box users for any table reservations of 6 persons or above. Box users may use the Coupons to redeem their complimentary badges on their next visit.

Reservations are open 2 weeks prior to each race meeting. Any queries, please call Angel at the Secretariat on 2526 3679.

Public to be consulted on West Kowloon Cultural District Development Proposal

In line with what the HKIS has proposed earlier on, we welcome the Government's announcement on 19 March that the public will be consulted on proposals received for the development of the West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD).

"The public consultation will help ensure that the proposal eventually selected for the development of the WKCD will be better received by the public and have greater public ownership," Chief Secretary for the Administration Donald Tsang, who chairs the project's Steering Committee, said.

"After careful consideration, we agree that, without undermining the integrity of the assessment exercise, there is scope for involving the public further so that their views can also be taken into

account in the selection of a preferred proposal," he said.

The Government intends to conduct public consultation by way of an exhibition of the proposals received. All proposals that have satisfied the mandatory requirements will be exhibited. This is likely to take place early 2005.

Exhibits prepared by the proponents showing details of the technical aspects of their proposals and the proposed arrangements regarding operation, maintenance and management of the arts and cultural facilities will be displayed. Since commercially sensitive information is involved, only the key elements regarding the financial aspects will be released.

Public forums will also be held during the exhibition period to solicit views from the public on the different proposals. Comments will be collected and compiled, and they will be taken into consideration in the process of negotiation and selection of the preferred proposal.

Members may like to refer to the SURVEYORS TIMES March 2004 issue for a summary of the comments submitted by HKIS to the Housing, Planning and Lands Bureau. For a full copy of the comments, please view the HKIS website: www.hkis.org.hk. For the Government's full press release, please view www.hplb.gov.hk/wkcd/eng/news.htm. For the Government's Progress Report on Development of the West Kowloon Cultural District, please view www.hpld.gov.hk/wkcd/eng/doc/haplw1125cb1-1353-le.pdf

20th Anniversary of the Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors

26 April 2004 marks the twentieth anniversary of the Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors and by the time this newsletter reaches you, a cocktail reception for the 20th Anniversary of the Institute will be in full swing with our honoured guests and members. The cocktail reception is also being held in conjunction with the opening of the Surveyors Learning Centre, which houses extended meeting and lecture room facilities, also on the 8th Floor of Jardine House. Look out for a report of the event in next month's issue.

SURVEYORS JOURNAL to become an international refereed journal

The Editorial Board consisting of distinguished members from the academia had a meeting on 8 March to discuss a revamp of the journal of the Institute "The Hong Kong Surveyor". It is targeted at publishing an international refereed journal ultimately and is seeking to appoint an Honorary Editor-in-Chief. The Instructions to Authors will be published and uploaded onto

the Institute's home-page as soon as possible.

Meanwhile, the Editorial Board welcomes editorial submissions on professional practice papers and academic papers for its forthcoming issue to be published in June 2004. Interested members please email to editor@hkis.org.hk or contact Linda at the Secretariat on 2526 3679.

SURVEYORS TIMES - the new look

The HKIS Editorial Board reported very positive feedback from members on the new publication size and layout, in a meeting held on 12 March 2004, the Editorial Board further resolved to seek editorial and advertising support for the newsletter. Members who might have any idea or opinion, please send them to the Hon. Editor Bernard Chan at editor@hkis.org.hk

HKIS News (Legislation)

LegCo Bills

Bills that are related to the profession and have been presented to the Legislative Council for scrutiny include the Town Planning (Amendment) Bill 2003, Land Titles Bill, Landlord and Tenant (Consolidation) (Amendment) Bill 2003, Buildings (Amendment) Bill 2003. The Administration has acceded to amendments to the Town Planning (Amendment) Bill 2003 by retaining the current

two months of plan publication period. It is also likely to introduce a two-stage representation consideration process instead of the original one-stage process in order to provide more time and opportunity for the public to make their deputation and representation to the Town Planning Board.

HKIS News (Mainland)

CIREA and HKIS Reciprocity Training and Assessment in Shenzhen 26-28 March 2004

Further to the Reciprocity Agreement signed between the General Practice Division of the HKIS and the CIREA (China Institute of Real Estate Appraisers) in November 2003, the first Training and Assessment took place in Shenzhen from 26 to 28 March 2004.

During the three-day session, professionals from both parties delivered talks on a wide variety of subject matters. The contents covered by the HKIS included: land management system and policy; statutory valuation relating to resumption, rent control, rating, stamp duty and estate duty; market studies and evaluation of development; acquisition, disposal and management of property; professional ethics and anti-corruption regulatory measures. Whereas Mainland professionals talked on the Mainland real estate market; risks, regulations

and government infrastructure; title registration and mortgage regulations; valuation techniques and standards; land management and town planning.

The session came to a close on 28 March and was marked by a closing ceremony officiated by representatives from Guangzhou, Shenzhen and Hong Kong. At the ceremony, Dr. Cai Qiang, Secretary General and Executive Vice-president of CIREA and Mr. Tony Tse, President of the HKIS pledged for further cooperation and agreed that the reciprocal assessment had been to mutual satisfaction.

There were over 200 participants, about 100 were from the HKIS and the rest were CIREA members from over 20 provinces and cities throughout the country. Participants in the assessment were

sanguine that this assessment would bring about very positive impacts, bearing the experience and practice into each country, thereby furthering potential growth in both markets. This session had undoubtedly led to a better understanding between the two organizations and the profession as a whole.

The HKIS President thanked all participants and said that fulfilling the assessment was only the beginning of a long road towards the ultimate growth of the surveying profession in the motherland. He also encouraged fellow surveyors to grasp opportunities as they come and play a part in the welling up of the Mainland market.

HKIS members who passed the assessment test would be qualified to become a member of the CIREA and to practise in the Mainland.

HKIS planning a Joint Seminar with Shanghai Real Estate Appraisers Association (SREAA)

Subsequent to the Memorandum of Understanding signed between HKIS and SREAA in October 2003 and the President's visit to the SREAA in January 2004, efforts have started in organising a joint-seminar scheduled for September 2004 in Shanghai.

The theme will be “城市房屋拆遷評估”(City housing demolition and resettlement valuation). The seminar, to be followed by a visit to various institutes pertaining to the real estate industry within the Shanghai Municipality, hopes to attract over 200 participants throughout the country.

Trade Development Council CEPA Business Centre in the Mainland

Starting end March 2004, the Hong Kong Trade Development Council has set up 3 physical CEPA Business Services Centres in Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou which provide information on Hong Kong companies, an enquiry service for doing business with Hong Kong companies, business matching and

advisory services for Mainland companies. A business matching centre is also set up in Shanghai with a toll-free CEPA business enquiry hotline (800-6322-6685). Members are encouraged to make use of these free services offered by the TDC.

Joint Professional Centre offers Mainland Orientation Programme

A Mainland orientation programme for Hong Kong professionals will be launched from March to July 2004 where lectures will be given at the JPC with experienced speakers from both the Mainland and Hong Kong. Those who wish to equip and prepare themselves better for working

in the Mainland or for involvement in Mainland related work are encouraged to participate in the programme which will cover both generic topics as well as industry specific subjects. For details, please see www.hkprofessionals.org.

China Infrastructure News Website

The HKTDC's China Infrastructure News website (www.chinainfra.tdctrade.com) has been revamped to furnish Hong Kong infrastructure, real estate and construction companies with latest information on the Mainland's projects. This website provides market intelligence on real estate, infrastructure construction at a click.

HKIS Liaison Officers in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Shenzhen

As an initiative to build up and strengthen the fraternity of individual surveyors who may be working in or visiting the Mainland, four liaison points have been set up in the cities of Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Shenzhen. These fellow surveyors are:

Beijing - Mr. Vincent Luk

Shanghai - Mr. William Chan

Guangzhou - Mr. Pheme Yuen

Shenzhen - Mr. Escode Yuen

The idea is to foster a network of individual surveyors present in the Mainland, resulting in a platform that would facilitate the HKIS in pursuing its more formal presence in the Mainland eventually. Members wishing to get in touch with them please contact secgen@hkis.org.hk.

HKIS News (International)

HKIS presence in the RICS International Governing Council

The HKIS nominee in the RICS International Governing Council alternates between the President, Mr. Tony Tse and Chairman of the Board of Professional Development, Professor Barnabas Chung for a term of office at the discretion of the HKIS.

The RICS International Governing Council Representative from Asia and the Middle East is the HKIS immediate past President, Mr. Kenneth Chan whose term of office ends in 2007.

There are a total of 67 positions in the RICS International Governing Council.

Proposed reciprocal visit to ISM and SISV in July 2004

To reciprocate the visits by the ISM (Institute of Surveyors, Malaysia) and SISV (Singapore Institute of Surveyors and Valuers) last year, the Institute is looking at paying a visit to them in the coming summer. The objectives of the visit would be to strengthen ties with them and possible reciprocity agreement with ISM.

Notices

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE FOLLOWING WHO WERE ELECTED AS HKIS MEMBERS ON 27 FEBRUARY 2004**FELLOWS (3)****BS DIVISION**

WONG LOI FAT ALEX

QS DIVISIONBROWN, TIMOTHY CHARLES
CHEUNG KA FU**MEMBERS (126)****BS DIVISION**FUNG WAI KIN
HUI CHAK KING
HUI KWOK WAI BENSON
LAU CHEUK KIT PAUL
LUI SUK PING
TONG CHAI LOK
WU HON CHEUNG ARTHUR**GP DIVISION**CHAN HO KI CLAUDIA
CHAN HO YIN
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LEUNG CHI MING
LEUNG HON MAN
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LUI WAI YUEN
LUI WING YAN
MOK WING YIN
NG WAI LING
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PONG TUNG LUI
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TANG MEI YAN
TCHAO SHUK MAN ROSA
TUEN CHUN SINGWONG HO FAI
WONG KIN YIP
WONG WAI NGA
YAU KIT CHI
YEUNG YUEN FONG**LS DIVISION**

CHAN KWAN HO

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YUNG YUEN SANG**QS DIVISION**CHIU KWOK FAI CARSON
YEUNG HEE MING**RESIGNATIONS (7)**JAMESON, ALAN
CHAN PO HA
LAM SUI KAN
TAM SIU TAK
WEST, RUSSELL JAMES
WOOD, MICHAEL
YIU SZE MAN JULIA

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WONG KA KEUNG
WONG KWOK KUEN
YUNG YUEN SANG**QS DIVISION**CHIU KWOK FAI CARSON
YEUNG HEE MING**RESIGNATIONS (7)**JAMESON, ALAN
CHAN PO HA
LAM SUI KAN
TAM SIU TAK
WEST, RUSSELL JAMES
WOOD, MICHAEL
YIU SZE MAN JULIA

Chairman's message



Raymond Chan

Chairman

In this issue, we have a few events to report.

Visit by the Association of Building Engineers (ABE), UK

The President, the Hon. Secretary and the CEO of the ABE visited Hong Kong between 10-11 March 2004. They visited our HKIS office on 11 March 2004. Our council members together with Professor Barnabas Chung held a discussion session with them to exchange the latest information and ideas on the development of the profession in the UK and Hong and Kong respectively. It is

worth mentioning that ABE accept applications from BS members of HKIS for direct access to their membership. If you would like to become a Building Engineer, you can obtain further information from building.engineers@abe.org.uk. We also organized a joint CPD seminar with them on 10 March 2004. The seminar was attended by more than 100 members of HKIS and ABE.

Discussion Forum on Building Management and Maintenance held on 12 March 2004

A discussion forum on the above topic was jointly organized by the BSD and the Property & Facility Management Forum of HKIS. This discussion forum was held in response to the

Consultation Paper on Building Management and Maintenance issued by the Housing, Planning and Lands Bureau.

This forum was aimed at an open discussion on related issues and in order to formulate an appropriate response to the consultation paper in the name of HKIS.

The forum was attended by more than 50 members. Most of them were members of the GP and BS divisions. We have discussed the need of the society, restraints, social impact and feasibility of various options. We want to have feasible measures to achieve the best achievable aims. After discussing and collecting ideas from members, we are now preparing a formal response to the Bureau.

Chairman's message



YU Kam Hung

Chairman

The GPD Council has continued to be very busy in a number of issues. We would like to highlight some of the progress:

Business Valuation (Convenor: Mr. KK Chiu)

We shall have our own Business Valuation Standard to govern our Members in practicing business valuation. In addition, as requested by the SFC, we shall try to form a Business Valuation Forum with RICS, HK Society of Accountants and HK Society of Financial Analysts. Our Legco Representative, Hon. PC Lau arranged a

meeting between the four Institutes and Mr. Tony Miller (TM), Permanent Secretary of SFC, on 3 March to discuss issues related to the Business Valuation Forum. TM was supportive of the forum and explicitly stated that the government would welcome any feasible solutions proposed by its members in upgrading the standard of the valuation profession.

Education & APC (Convenor: Mr. Simon Wang)

Change of APC format as follows:

(a) GPD Council agreed to endorse the following:

- that a candidate who passes the written examination will be entitled to four, rather than the previous three attempts at the oral assessment
 - that the written examination will include a "compulsory" BASIC valuation question
- (b) While the former initiative aims to provide more chances for GP candidates to enter our profession, the second initiative will help to maintain an appropriate standard of GP surveyor.
- (c) GPD Council also suggested that guidelines should be provided to assessors in order that more positive and

standardized questions are asked during oral assessments.

Government Practice & Local Affairs (Convenor: Mr. CK Lau)

Identification of research project:

- (a) The designated research topic relates to the proposed Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau bridge and its affect on the SAR property market
- (b) The objectives of undertaking this research project are:
 - To generate publicity for HKIS
 - To raise the profile of GPD Council
 - To increase public awareness of the GP profession
 - To provide insights which benefit the industry and the society as a whole
- (c) The budget allocated to undertake the project was \$80,000.

Valuation Practice (Convenor: Mr. Charles Chan)

Formulation of a List of Valuers for HKSE and SFC Listing Valuation. The following requirements for a Valuer's inclusion in the list have been suggested as follows:-

- (a) practicing in a firm carrying out business in Hong Kong;
- (b) corporate member of HKIS (GPD);
- (c) RPS(GP) member;
- (d) three years post qualification experience;
- (e) at least two years post qualification Hong Kong experience in valuations related to circulars/prospectuses of listed companies;
- (f) not committed any offences in the past three years that may render the integrity and honesty of a member in doubt in the past three years;
- (g) not subject to any disciplinary action by the HKIS in the past three years.

The procedures to be set are:

- (a) *Formulation*
Letters are to be sent to all GP members to invite application for enrolment on the

list. A vetting panel will be established to vet all applications. Successful applications will be enrolled to the list.

- (b) *Maintenance*
The list will be revised annually. New applications will be processed annually, for example in June every year
- (c) *Delisting*
Upon receipt of any complaint against a member on the list or knowledge of any incident that may lead to believe a member may not meet the listing requirements anymore, the vetting panel may decide upon whether a member should be delisted with immediately. A member may also apply for voluntary delisting at any time.
- (d) *Vetting Panel*
To nominate and establish a vetting panel comprising six numbers. Any decision of the panel shall be made by meetings of the panel attended by at least three members.
- (e) *Appeal*
Any appeal against the decision of the Vetting Panel shall be decided by the Appeal Panel, which is nominated and established by the GPD Council.


CIREA Working Group (Chairman: Mr. Alex Lam)

- (a) The first reciprocal recognition examination will be held on 28 March (Sunday), following a two-day lecture on 26 and 27 March (Friday-Saturday) in Shenzhen.
- (b) We have so far received 150 applications from CIREA and 90 applications from HKIS who wish to sit the examination in Shenzhen. However, it was mentioned that CIREA would limit their number of applicants to 100. The deadline for submitting applications was 8 March.
- (c) The vetting panel will vet all applications and only qualified members will be allowed to sit for the examination.

Surveyors Registration Board (GPD Representatives: Mr. Kenneth Pang and Mr. William Wan)

Discussions have been conducted on Route of Registration (under SRB) by examination:

- (a) If SRB is obligated to provide examination for the assessment of qualification for registration, what kind of applicant is qualified to sit for the examination?
- (b) Members queried if the provision of such an examination would contradict the WTO rules and affect the progress of reciprocity recognition.
- (c) The examination would well serve its purpose as an extra barrier for entry.
- (d) It would be hard to implement reciprocity recognition on absolutely equal terms, not even in western countries such as UK or Canada.
- (e) It was agreed that the two GPD representatives would further solicit opinions from other divisions and put forward recommendations at a later stage.

We emphasise "Communications, Concerns and Commitments". If you have any comments/suggestions on our work, please contact us. By considering your opinions and needs, we hope our members will be able to derive a deep sense of belonging at the Institute. 



Land Surveying Division

Towards a New Era of Land Tenure in the New Territories - One day Conference on 24 June



LAM Li Wah
Chairman

As part of the 20th Anniversary celebration of the HKIS, the Land Surveying Division is organising a seminar on the benefits flowing from the adoption of the Demarcation District Survey of 1904. About 100 years ago, the Demarcation District Survey of the New Territories was completed. Whilst primarily intended as a preliminary survey for land owner identification and tax collection, the expanded follow up survey has never been done. Although the plane table survey was the best way of producing a graphical record in 1904, by modern methods it appears clumsy and inaccurate. As Land

Surveyors we appreciate the work done by the Indian Surveyors in very adverse conditions and receiving no help and a lot of hindrance from local people who obviously would not welcome the start of a new tax regime, when we now find bunds undisturbed it makes us appreciate the work done to see even with modern methods how well we agree with the old surveys. However despite its strengths and its weaknesses the DD survey is the primary evidence of land boundaries in the NT and has by default become the legal definition of land boundary.

This seminar will include local and international speakers who will give us details of the history of the NT land dealings and how a similar transforming of old boundaries to a new system has been done elsewhere. This will include speakers from users of land, those who put

value on land and use it to benefit society, and surveyors like us who have to deal with problems found in the DD survey and use of registered areas. By discussion groups at each session we will hope to define a new method to forge ahead for Land tenure in the NT to meet modern requirements.

The one day conference is co-organized by the Lands Department and the Hong Kong Polytechnic University. It is scheduled on 24 June 2004 and all are welcome. Please mark your diaries now. Conference and registration details will be sent shortly. ☐

Quantity Surveying Division

Chairman's message



Gilbert KWOK
Chairman

With the strong support and help from the QS Divisional Council members, the business of the Division is now running smoothly. If not because I have to produce another report, I might not have noticed that another month has passed since the last newsletter.

I wish to report to QS members the following matters:-

Conditions of Contract

The HKIA General Council has been discussing the latest draft. The QS Division

is now liaising closely with the HKIA in order to try to make sure that further comments from HKIA will be incorporated in the revised draft of the Conditions of Contract. While the construction industry is waiting anxiously for the new family of standard forms, I believe if things need to be done properly but take time, we should wait.

Reciprocity with CECA

Our Vice-Chairman Sam Cheng and Senior Vice President TT Cheung had a meeting with CECA on 3 March 2004 at the offices of CECA in Beijing. On CECA's side, CECA's secretary Ma Gui Guzi and CECA's vice secretary Lau Ai attended the meeting. A number of issues about the reciprocity arrangement were discussed. It is hoped that the reciprocity agreement will be signed in June this year.

The Institute of Surveyors, Malaysia ("ISM")

There will be an official visit by the Institute to ISM later this year, possibly in July 2004. Before the meeting, on behalf of the QS Division, Evelyn Kwok, a Divisional Council Member, would study the possibility and feasibility of a reciprocity agreement with ISM.

Experience Sharing Workshop on CEPA Implementation

There will be a workshop on 20 or 22 April 2004 organised by HKTDC, HKGCC and CPS. Sam Cheng, our Vice-Chairman has been nominated to speak at the workshop to share his valuable Mainland experience with the audience.

Annual Conference on “PPP”

The Chairmen of the Conference Preparation Committee are our Immediate Past Chairman Francis Leung and Hon. Secretary Paul Ho. They have successfully invited the Secretary for Financial Services, Fredrick Ma to be the keynote speaker. Other prominent figures in this area have been invited to speak at the conference. The conference has been fixed to take place on Saturday, 29 May 2004 at J W Marriott Hotel. All members are encouraged to attend the conference.

SMM 4

Notwithstanding his busy schedule, our Vice-Chairman Sam Cheng is trying his best to make sure that the new SMM4 is to be officially launched later this year. Further information will be provided.

Mediation Seminar

The Dispute Resolution Committee, chaired by our QS Divisional Council Member H F Leung, has successfully organised a mediation course, which was held between 12 and 14 March 2004. It is hoped that more mediators will be trained to meet the demand for mediators to resolve construction disputes in Hong Kong and in the Mainland.

Technical Grade

Our Immediate Past Chairman Francis Leung is responsible for liaising with various Sub-Committees of the Division to try to work out as soon as possible admission criteria and other issues about the technical grade.

CPD Events

The Chairman of the Division’s CPD Sub-Committee is Sunny Chan. He and other Sub-Committee members have been trying their best to arrange as many CPD events as possible so that members can meet their CPD requirements. When this newsletter has reached you, there should have been a successful CPD event presented by Christopher Tung of Mallesons on delay claims.

Other than myself, please note that other Office Bearers of the Divisional Council are as follows:-

Sam Cheng	Vice Chairman
Paul Ho	Hon. Secretary
Daniel Ho	Hon. Treasurer
Francis Leung	Immediate Past Chairman

News Flash



Tony WAN
Chairman

The Junior Organization of HKIS and Young Members Committee of the Hong Kong Institution of Engineers were invited to be the honorary guests and speakers of the BRESS X LSGISS Seminar 2004 held at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University on 25 February 2004 with the theme **“From Land to Building - How do professionals cooperate?”** which was jointly organised by students of the Building and Real Estate Students’ Society (BRESS) and Land Surveying and Geo-Informatics Students’ Society (LSGISS) of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University.

During the seminar representatives from each division explained their role in the construction process and how they work with other professionals. Following the seminar our members chatted with the students on career prospects, surveyors’ duties and experiences sharing etc.

The following guests and speakers at the seminar were:-

Speakers

Tony Wan (GP)
Lesly Lam (LS)
Y.C Chan (LS)
George Cheung (BS)
Sunny Chan (QS)

Guests

Jo Lau (BS)
Nathan Lee (BS)
Kenny Chan (LS)
Henry Leung (LS)
Victor Lau (QS)
Karen Kong (QS)
Emily Ling (GP)
Martin Leung (GP)
Sheldon Ip (GP)
Danny Cheung (GP)

Junior Organization

In celebration of the 20th Birthday of the HKIS, JO organised the 20th Anniversary Cup in February 2004, the results are as follows:

Badminton (Whole) : Champion : City University
Basketball (Whole) : Champion : Poly University
Football (Whole) : Champion : Poly University
(Detailed report on page 15.)

An award presentation will be held at the 20th Anniversary Cocktail Party on 26 April 2004.

We wish the HKIS a Happy 20th Birthday!

In the coming months JO will organise a series of CPD, PQSL and Social events, please browse the JO web site www.hkis.org.hk/jo for details.

We welcome any suggestions/comments/ideas from you and any member wishing to join JO. Please contact our JO Chairman, Tony Wan at email tony.wan@ap.joneslanglasalle.com

Property and Facility Management Forum



Michael PRICE
Chairman

First of all our apologies for the delay in following up on our members' forum held on 11 December 2003. It was an exciting, fruitful evening attended by over 90 members. A great turnout so close to the holiday. Our thanks to Kai Shing Management Limited and Jimmy Wong in particular, who hosted the evening.

The General Council had previously approved the formation of the forum to deal with issues such as Property Management, Facility Management, Corporate Real Estate, on 20 November 2003. Members attending overwhelmingly supported both the idea of a separate group within the HKIS dealing with Property and Facility Management issues, and the need for a separate focussed APC, distinct from the current arrangements. We are actually looking closely to adopting a changed model for APC, based on the RICS - competency approach, as we need to adopt to the changing real estate environment and higher expectations of clients, and applicants, which the current arrangements do not fully deliver.

A copy of the questionnaire circulated that night, was shown, and an analysis of the answers of members, which we will follow, in moving forward.

It must be said though that some members, but a minority, echoed worries about the possible 'destruction' of the General Practice Division. Our view, as borne out by the majority of members attending, is that there is clearly a need for change and the quicker the better. It is a fact of life that the current divisional structure has not met the

needs of members operating in these areas. In essence that is why the RICS moved to a more specialist faculty basis. We would emphasise that it is our intention to move to formation of a separate division, as part of our aims. A clear strategic plan for the future, but in consultation with all stakeholders, within the Institute.

Over the coming months, the forum committee will be working on the following areas. The convenor of each focus group is named and contact details given. We need your help. Volunteer, join and help this initiative move forward - contact the convenor of the focus group of your choice now.



Focus Group	Convenor
CPD	Gary Yeung - Shui On (Tel.: 2879 1803) (e-mail: garymk@shuion.com.hk)
APC	WL Mak - EastPoint (Tel.: 2291 5870) (e-mail: wl.mak@eastpointhk.com)
Divisional Formation FM Asia Conference November 2004	Angel Kam - FPD Savills (Tel.: 2534 1678) (e-mail: akam@fpdsavills.com.hk)
Building Management Ordinance	Dick Kwok - FPD Savills (Tel.: 2534 1777) (e-mail: dkwok@fpdsavills.com.hk) Daniel Hui - The Salvation Army (Tel.: 2783 2250) (e-mail: daniel_hui@hkt.salvationarm.org)
Asset Management / Corporate Real Estate	To be advised.
Housing Management Registration	Michael Price - Swire Properties (Tel.: 2844 4915) (e-mail: michaelprice@swireproperties.com)
Technical Grade (This will be an important area going forward)	Kenny Chan - CityU (e-mail: bskhchan@cityu.edu.hk)

We have also been working steadily over the last few months, if unspectacularly, on the following:

- Discussions with the Home Affairs Department on amendments to the Building Management Ordinance, led by Dick Kwok.
- Working with the Building Surveying Division on the Government's consultation paper on Building Maintenance. A joint forum to gauge members' views was held on 12 March 2004.
- The Chairman made a recent visit to the UK to discuss with RICS on their competency methods of APC.
- We will be holding a members evening in the newly expanded HKIS facilities, probably in April 2004, to discuss progress, and gain feedback from members.
- The Chairman and Angel Kam have joined the advisory board of the International FM Asia Conference to be held in Hong Kong in November 2004.

It's your forum, get involved. We need surveyors committed to the future of the institute, in the areas of Property Management, Facility Management, Asset Management and Corporate Real Estate.



Analysis on Property and Facility Forum

Attendees: 89

Questionnaires received: 66

1. Do you support the formation of a Cross Divisional Forum to deal with Facility Management, Asset Management, Property Management, and Corporate Real Estate issues within the HKIS?

Yes (64) No (2)

2. Which do you support for the proposed formation of the forum council?

Election (47)

Appointment of the members (20)

3. Who should elect the proposed forum council?

(a) HKIS members working in the Facility Management, Asset Management, Property Management and Corporate Real Estate field. (43)

(b) All HKIS members. (21)

(c) Divisions to appoint their members to the forum council. The current method for HKIS committees. (5)

4. Do you agree with the future set up of a separate specific Assessment of Professional Competence (APC) for the forum, based on Facility Management, Property Management, Asset Management, Corporate Real Estate practices.

Yes (55) No (11)

5. Do you agree that membership of the forum council should be broad with specific limitation on numbers from different areas, e.g. Academic, Government?

Yes (59) No (3) No comment (4)

6. If we are to be successful, we all need to work together. Can you assist in the formation and running of this new forum?

Yes (52) No (7) No comment (7)

- Education / CPD (24)
- APC (15)
- Business matters (19)
- Any other area (13)
- No comment (24)

Updated on January 12, 2004

Institutional and Divisional Activities

Stanley Dragon Boat Competition 2004

Here comes our most exciting social event every year! The Stanley Dragon Boat Races is scheduled on 22 June 2004 (Tuesday). We are now recruiting more people to join this year's event. You don't need to be an experienced paddler for the race. We will provide pre-race training courses. Members and students are all welcome. You may also check out last year's photos at the JO web site. If you are interested, please contact Victor Lau at victorlau@hkis.org.hk

Institutional and Divisional Activities

"Project E"



Reported by David CHAN
HKIS Representative of Project E Working Group

On 6 May 2003, the Coalition of Professional Services 「香港專業聯盟」 (consisting of 10 professional Institutes in Hong Kong as corporate members) called for members' action and set up the "Coalition of Professional Services Atypical Pneumonia Charitable Trust" 「香港專業聯盟非典型肺炎慈善基金」.

As one of the action items, the Coalition proposed to:-

"repairing, and if necessary, replacing parts or the whole of the down pipes and related components in the drainage system of Block E, Amoy Gardens to show support, solidarity and to provide a demonstration to all owners and occupants of building units in Hong Kong."

Known as "Project E", the assignment was led by Mr. C.Y. Leung (1995-96 HKIS President) as the Chairman of the Coalition, LEGCO members Mr. Chan Kam-lam and Mr. P.C. Lau (1996-97 HKIS President).

Members of the working group were mobilized from HKIA, HKIE, HKIS, Law Society and Association of Accountants.

HKIS representatives in the working group were building surveyors Benson Wong, Wilfred Wong and David Chan. For this particular assignment, the surveyors were posted as the leader of the action group. We carried out the survey and diagnosis; formulation of the enhancement proposal; writing up of the Report; implementation of the Contract and other main co-ordination aspects. Obviously, other working group members from HKIA and HKIE also took part in the finalization of the enhancement proposal and meeting with the owners' representatives and residents. Representative from the Law Society rendered substantial input on the legal aspects of the DMC and contractual implications; and members from the Association of Accountants watched over the expenditure of the Contract Works.

After the open tender exercise in October and November, the design-and-build contract was confirmed in early December 2003. For administrative and operational reasons, the consultancy firm led by Mr. Eddie Lee (HKIS BSD 1988-89 Chairman) was appointed as the Project Administrator of the Contract.

Mock up works for 2 flats were completed in early January 2004 in order to identify any practical problem which may exist. After the Chinese New Year Holiday, the Coalition launched the Works Commencement Ceremony on 4 February 2004.



Before



After

With the partnering input from all the concerned parties, the required works (242 units out of 264 units) were all completed by mid March 2004 which was some 2 weeks ahead of the original programme. By the time of writing this message, the Coalition has scheduled a formal Works Completion Ceremony on 3 April 2004.

The HKIS BSD has also arranged an "Experience Sharing Seminar" on 16 April 2004 so that HKIS Working Group members of the Project E could share with members the unique experience arising from this special mission. ☺

Joint Control Survey for the Hong Kong - Shenzhen Western Corridor



Reported by Maris LO

The Hong Kong-Shenzhen Western Corridor is a dual three-lane expressway spanning Deep Bay on elevated structures, linking the road networks in Hong Kong via the Deep Bay Link at Ngau Hom Shek and in Shenzhen at Shekou. This corridor linking Hong Kong and the adjacent Shenzhen in China's mainland would help the overall economic development of Hong Kong and the Pearl River Delta (PRD) in China's mainland. The five-km-long corridor, in addition to the current three road links, is expected to be completed in 2005 and to bring

a net economic benefit of 175 billion Hong Kong dollars (22.4 billion US dollars) in the years to 2020.

We were honoured to have Mr. WONG Chung-hang, who is the Chief Land Surveyor in-charge of the Survey Division of Highways Department of HKSAR and the Vice-President of our Institute, to present to us the seminar of this project in respect of Joint Control Survey conducted by both the Survey Division and the Shenzhen Geotechnical Investigation and Surveying Institute. This seminar

attracted more than 70 members from different divisions. We would like to thank Mr. Wong for delivering an informative and interesting talk. ☺



Institutional and Divisional Activities

Pre-Qualification Structured Learning (PQSLs) Series Event Report

Cladding System in Hong Kong




Reported by Jeremy CHOW

Nowadays, cladding is a major investment in both the construction and the long-term success of the building. Cladding system is not just a barrier to the external environment; it is crucial to the image and the perception of a building. A good cladding design with excellent performance is essential; or it will cause large expenditure in future maintenance. With an aim to enhance our member's knowledge in this technology, we invited Mr. Norman Lin and his partner of Chevalier (Aluminium Engineering) Hong Kong Ltd., one of the leading contractors for curtain walling, metal cladding, glass walls, and aluminium windows, to share with us different

types of cladding systems commonly used in Hong Kong on 21 February 2004.

Cladding system always gives people a sense of simplicity and regularity; some people even simply think that a cladding system is just an assembly of glass, metal and sealant. Cladding, apart from its appearance, functions as an external enclosure to protect the building from weather and to achieve pressure-equalization between the outdoor and indoor environment; its construction is not only an assembly of several components but an advanced technology which involves sophisticated calculation. Cladding system can be classified into curtain wall system, window wall, glass wall and metal claddings; and different systems can further be sub-categorized according to their installation method. For example, curtain wall system may

exist in form of Unitized Curtain Walls System and Stick Curtain Walls System.

Besides focusing on the installation method, advantages, disadvantages and limitations of the use of different cladding systems, Mr. Norman Lin emphasized that the timing of awarding a cladding sub-contractor is vital to the success of a project. Lastly, the speaker furnished us with some idea in sustainable cladding design and used some examples to illustrate the possibility of incorporating renewable technologies into the 'skin' of the buildings. 

HKIS 20th Anniversary Cup

Reported by Kenny CHAN

As young as the Institute, our next-generation surveyors displayed the dynamic and energetic side of the profession.

In line with the HKIS 20th Anniversary, the Junior Organization hosted the 20th Anniversary Cup sports competition in February 2004. Surveying students from the 3 universities (University of Hong Kong (HKU), City University of Hong Kong (CityU) and Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU)) and the JO team fought hard all the way to Cup glory under the shining sun at the weekends. Despite the grueling schedule, all players showed no signs of relenting.

At one side of the basketball court, we saw HKU and CityU players jumping high for the rebound at the final seconds of the match. On the soccer pitch, we found the JO team and PolyU lining up for the penalty shootouts after the 1-1 draw game. When the camera moved back to the badminton courts, the players were discussing the secret strategy against the strong opponents behind the net.

The gold medals went to the winners, but the medals of friendship were distributed to everyone. Off the field, we could see the participants sharing the exciting matches, painful assignments or interesting job experiences with each other, making new friends and exchanging contacts. None of us went home with empty hands, but all full of happy memories.

HKIS 20th Anniversary Cup Champion: PolyU

Basketball	Soccer	Badminton	Champion	1st runner-up
Semi-finals: -JO vs PolyU 22 : 30 -HKU vs CityU 12 : 30	Semi-finals: -CityU vs HKU 2 : 1 -PolyU vs JO 1 : 1 (Penalty 4 : 3)	Men's Single	余廣華 (CityU)	陳國章 (HKU)
Finals: -PolyU vs CityU 29:26	Finals: -PolyU vs CityU 2 : 2 (Penalty 3 : 1)	Women's Singles	羅貝雯 (HKU)	Lee Sze Man (JO)
Team Champion: PolyU	Team Champion: PolyU	Men's Doubles	姚偉文 · 胡振岳 (CityU)	Sunny Chan, Lesly Lam, Andy Chan (JO)
1st runner-up: CityU	1st runner-up: CityU	Women's Doubles	李明慧 · 鄧詠君 (HKU)	蔡玉華 · Joyce (CityU)
		Mixed Doubles	余廣華 · 梁麗霞 (CityU)	Kelvin Ng, Lee Sze Man (JO)
		Team	CityU	HKU

Institutional and Divisional Activities

CPD events organised by the Junior Organization

Media Relation made Easy



Guest Speaker: Ms Janice LUI (呂婉瑩)
Finance Editor and Producer
of FM 104 Metro Finance
(新城財經台)

Date: 14 April 2004

Prior to joining Metro Finance, Ms Lui was the Assistant Business Editor of ATV and worked for the Hong Kong Economic Journal, Ming Pao Daily and Forbes Zinbenjia. She trained participants from Bentley DDB Needham Public Relations, Carlsberg, GE Capital, Government Flying Service etc. She is also a lecturer of Marketing & Strategic Planning at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University.

Janice shared with us her sights into media relation and during the talk showed us:

1. What should you do when you receive phone calls from reporters?
2. General **DO'S & Don'ts** for different media.
3. Why does your message never get a single media placement?
4. Tips to increase media exposure.

Long-Term Housing Market Outlook in Hong Kong



Guest Speaker: Mr. Derek Cheung (張一鳴)
FCCA, HKSA, Head of HK &
China property Research, HSBC
Securities (Asia) Ltd

Date: 15 April 2004

Before joining HSBC, Mr. Cheung worked in Donald, Lufkin & Jenrette, Salomon Smith Barney & Citibank. He was highly ranked in various professional polls (Asiamoney and Institutional Investors) in 2002 and 2003 including No. 3 country analyst for HK and No. 2 property analyst for the Asian region by all US institutional investors.

Being the most bearish analyst for many years, Derek discussed the key factors causing him to turn long-term bullish on Hong Kong property market since 2002, which have since become market consensus and are still valid. Derek also discussed why he might turn cautious again when many people are excited about the current robust housing market recovery.

Rating - The Process



Guest Speaker: Mr. Simon Lynch BSc (Hons)
MRICS, MHKIS, the Head of
Professional Services at
Cushman & Wakefield

Date: 22 April 2004

Mr. Simon Lynch has advised most of the major ratepayers in Hong Kong from developers, general property classes to special assets on rating and government rent matters. He has over 12 years experience as a General Practice Surveyor principally in rating, rental and capital valuations.

The CPD seminar outlined the process of a typical rating assignment, from identifying who is responsible for liability, identifying the tenement and what is to be included within it and the valuation approaches. Relevant case law and opportunities as practitioners were also highlighted.

BRESS X LSGISS Seminar 2004



Reported by Carol Kwok
year 2 GP Student, HKPU

The Building and Real Estate Students' Society (BRESS) and Land Surveying & Geoinformatics Students' Society (LSGISS) jointly organized **BRESS X LSGISS Seminar 2004** held on 25 February at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University. The seminar theme was **"From Land to Building - How do the building professionals cooperate?"** The 10 representatives of the Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors and Young Members Committee of the Hong Kong Institution of Engineers were invited to be our guests and

speakers for the seminar with approximately 120 participants.

The seminar was divided into two parts. In the first part, individual presentations by the guest speakers regarding the roles of each professional in the development process. Afterward students mingled with guests to share their experiences and current market practice. It provided an opportunity for the students to chat with the surveyors from different fields during the sharing session, which broadened our scope of surveyors' duties as well as enhance our understanding on future career path and the surveying industry.



Feedback from the participating students:


Building Surveying Division: "After the seminar, I gained more understanding of the construction process. In particular, the sharing session was enjoyable. It gave me a chance to network and talk to the surveyors".

General Practice Division: "For me, as a Year 1 student, this seminar allowed me to learn more about the surveying industry and how different surveyors cooperate in a project".

Institutional and Divisional Activities

Land Surveying Division: "It was an exciting seminar and the atmosphere was good, and I have enhanced my knowledge and learnt something beyond my course".



Quantity Surveying Division: "A full house of students really enjoyed the seminar presented by surveyors and had a better understanding of the different streams of surveying fields. It is a good start to our future career, which broadened my view of the surveying profession. It was also a meaningful time when we could get so close to the professional surveyors in the HKIS. Thanks to the guests for sharing their valuable experience with us. We really enjoyed the time!" 



East and West

- HKPU Building Surveying Berlin Study Tour 2003



Reported by Gally Cheung
BS Student of HKPU

Overseas study tour is one of the fabulous events for the year 2 students of the Department of Building and Real Estate of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University. The Building Surveying Study Tour 2003, undertaken by the graduating class of BSc (Hons) in Building Surveying (2001-2004), was scheduled between 26 May and 1 June 2003. Berlin, the capital of Germany was the destination.

About The Tour

Despite the outbreak of SARS, the study tour was still successfully held. Credit must be given to our tour supervisors, Professor Barnabas Chung, Mr. Kak-keung Lo, Mr. Wai-kei Kong and all of our organizing committee members.

The first perception that comes to your mind about Berlin, is perhaps, the Berlin Wall. After visiting Berlin through this study tour, our students gained an insight of this fascinating



city. Since the reunification of the East and West Berlin in 1989, the unified Berlin has become the largest and one of the most highlighted construction sites in Europe. During the tour, students were divided into six groups and each group was responsible for the respective study areas including Architecture, Development Control, Urban Renewal, Historical Building Preservation, Environmental Science and Construction Technology. In addition to these professional study areas, it was also our objectives to allow our students to explore their own study interest as well as understand and experience the German culture. In particular, students visited projects including the Reichstag (The New German Parliament), the Jewish Museum, the Potsdamer Platz and the German Historical Museum.

About The Presentation

Returning to Hong Kong was just the beginning of our project. On 9 January 2004, seven months after the tour, a study tour presentation was held at Chiang Chen Studio Theatre. We were delighted to have invited our mentors and professors and students



from the department to be our guests. It was also our pleasure to have, Mr. Raymond Chan, the chairperson of the BS Division of HKIS and Mr. Peter Bay Wong of the Housing Department to give the opening speech and conclusion remarks in the presentation. Their comments were invaluable and extremely encouraging. All of us had an enjoyable night.



The future

We must deliver our thanks to the department for giving us this great learning opportunity to understand the "East and West", our practice and others. We sincerely wish our study tour would be beneficial to all the participants and the local industry.

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Location Based Services - The Next GIS Evolution



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Wireless information services have evolved rapidly over the past few years. The development of the wireless communication protocols, as well as the introduction of 3G technologies such as EDGE and HSCSD which are having higher capacity for data transfer, are all giving rise to the applications of the location finding techniques, which are referred as “Location Based Services”, reported by *“The Economist”*.

What is Location Based Service?

Location Based Service (LBS) is basically an integration of GIS, positioning techniques and wireless communications. It has the capability to find the geographical location of the mobile device and to provide specific, targeted information to users based on each specific user’s location information at any time. These functions may include seeking for the location-specific information of something nearby (i.e. a point of interest) and to find the nearest path (i.e. route-guidance / direction finding information) for reaching such specific location. LBS are not new to most foreign countries and have been developed for a few years. The first generation of LBS has been deployed in Europe, USA, Japan, Australia and throughout Asia.

Components of LBS

A LBS System comprises of Mobile Positioning System, Mobile Telephone System and of course Location Based Services Application. The first component is for determining the location of the mobile device. The function of the second

component is to deliver services to users and acts as service gateway to connect the positioning system with wireless network and the LSB application. The last component consists of an application server as well as a spatial database. These components communicate with each other via Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) and using the Wireless Markup Language (WML), which is similar to HTML, but is designed for the efficient delivery of data across limited bandwidth mobile telephone network. On the other hand, the Gateway Mobile Location Centre (GMLC) is the gateway connecting the positioning components of the mobile telephone network and LBS applications (i.e. to deliver location information to application). As shown in Figure 1, the application server handles user interface functions and communicates with the spatial database. These components form a network using wireless communication standards (e.g. SMS and GPRS, etc.) to transfer service requests and information between a mobile user and a service facility.

Positioning Techniques

The position of a handset (Figure 2 refers) can be determined by means of Database Based, Network Based or Handset Based Positioning. The location determined by Database Based positioning, such as Cell of Origin (COO) and Time Advance, use the network base station cell area to identify the location of the handset. This technique is fast and cheap, but with limited accuracy. Network Based positioning, which is fast and accurate, includes Time of Arrival (TOA) and Angle of Arrival (AOA), rely on various means of triangulation of the signals to find the location. Finally, the location determined by Handset Based Positioning techniques include Enhanced Observed Time Difference (E-OTD) [packet switching capabilities], GPS, or Assisted GPS (A-GPS). This technique is fast and very accurate. Other than GPS, all the above methods make use of the wireless telecommunication systems.

Of course, GPS is considered to be a first-choice solution as it offers accurate positioning and affordable cost. However, GPS does have limitations due to the strong attenuation of the satellite signals by buildings, foliage, etc. Therefore, GPS does not operate well (or at all) in dense urban canyon’ areas or inside buildings. This can be overcome by using the wireless assisted GPS technique, for example SnapTrack, which aims to tell the GPS receiver where to look for satellites and what the signal looks like. This makes the GPS receiver more sensitive and allows integration of the signal for several seconds in indoor areas. This technique is basically designed with telecommunications



Figure 1: Components of LBS

and is used in wireless cell phones (as most cell phones function indoors) to aid in the location of the phone user.



Figure 2: LBS via PDA

Spatial Database

Apart from wireless data transfer methodologies and positioning techniques, another essential component is the spatial database. The LBS database can be an internally hosted platform that is controlled by the network provider or externally hosted platform that is developed and managed by an independent third party.

In general, LBS does not include many complex spatial analyses and usually needs to provide geometric functions such as distance, direction and area computation, etc. Although the intensity or quality of database needed is dependent on the type of service to be provided to the user, the completeness and accuracy of the database content will directly influence the quality of the LBS. Hence, the database must include all the appropriate features such as roads and points of interest for a certain service area, and must be updated and rich to be able to cater to various demands of LBS. The provided information may simply be text (e.g. an address, turn-by-turn direction, etc.), images (e.g. real time traffic condition), or map images (e.g. area of interest, path finding, etc.), and maybe expressed in term of travel time or cost.


Privacy

Wireless location privacy protection is another important issue arisen for LBS users. LBS users, whose mobile devices have position-

determination capability, may be known whenever they make a call. Hence, the users' everyday 'tracks' can be recorded and analyzed unless safeguards are introduced. It is necessary for telecommunications carriers to understand how important customer's location privacy is. Furthermore, such location information should not be forwarded to advertisers or other service providers unless authorized by the user. This can be done by designing handsets which may allow users to turn on, and turn off, the positioning function when they want to, or introducing ordinance for this purpose.

Conclusions

The restricted display capability of mobile device, the speed of wireless data

transmission, and the use of different wireless protocols and WML (there are more than 30 such languages), are all challenges faced by the LBS developers. However, it seems that both the market demands, the available technology, as well as the launching of 3G telecommunication will lead the users to gain access to a wide variety of map information via LBS more easily. It is sure that, as reported by *Dr. Jinling Wang (UNSW)*, LBS will be the future of GIS and will play a major role in the provision of mobile services in the coming future. 

Features

樓市全面復甦，抑或小陽春再現？



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世邦魏理仕
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踏入二零零四年，樓市迅速反彈。市場氣氛持續改善，成交量不斷上升，置業者似乎對樓市已恢復信心。新盤銷情轉旺，發展商陸續撤回各項優惠條款，或將開售價輕微上調。二手市場方面，亦不時傳出業主反價、甚至封盤等消息，及出現買家追價等個別例子。整體市場瀰漫著樂觀氣氛，乃自九七年樓市出現高峯期以來所僅見。

事實上無論以成交宗數以及樓宇價格指數計算，確實錄得明顯改善。根據世邦魏理仕住宅物業價格指數顯示，一、二月樓價升幅分別為2.2%及6.1%（見附圖一）；而成交量亦錄得7.9%及15.8%增幅（見附圖二）。

縱觀各項相關數據，市場行為及各界對後市之樂觀估計等因數皆屬正面條件，難免令市場人士對後市有所憧憬。究竟目前樓市乃處於小陽春局面，或確實為另一輪升浪的開始，遂成為近期物業投資市場之最熱門話題。筆者嘗試就探討零四年初樓市反彈之成因，作出有限度分析，並試圖從投資角度，探索未來三季市場之走勢。

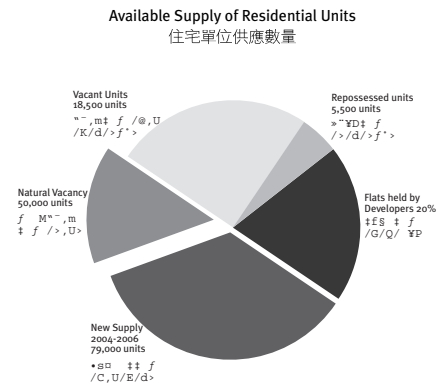
自亞洲金融風暴以來，整體樓價續年拾級而下，市場信心蕩然無存。縱使有確實需要的所謂用家，亦礙於看淡後市，而轉為租住單位。再作壁上觀，購買力因無法消化而續年累積；再配合其他因素，隨時爆發而將大市推高，此乃支持近期升市之誘因之一。其二，近期整體經濟表現確實出現喘定、甚或好轉跡象；加上中央政府為本港引入多項帶動內部消費措施，明顯將市況進一步暢旺。第三，各項涉及經濟與民生等統計數據，均顯示有輕微好轉趨勢，這表示最惡劣的環境或已成過去。第四，銀行借貸息率長期低企，再加上有不少投資者，於外匯及股票市場有所斬獲，轉而進軍地產市場以圖獲利。

上述各點，確實可為樓市帶來正面訊息。但端視乎近期市況之暢旺程度，在部份行內人士眼中、包括筆者在內，似乎經已偏離正軌。對實際市況，有過度反映之嫌。

筆者認為無論從供求數量、經濟角度以及政治環境等條件衡量，皆難以找出支持目前樓價急升之理據。

根據政府於二零零三年八月初發表之統計數字，預計未來三年內，將有大概七萬九千個住宅單位推出市場。假設市場吸納量與過去三年相若，即平均每年為二萬五千個單位，政府估計住宅樓宇供過於求之現象，將於二零零六年底結束。然而，該預測數字並未包括各發展商手上之貨尾單位，銀主持有物業以及空置單位。世邦魏理仕估計，假如將上述物業納入統計範圍，撇除自然空置率百分之四點九計算，可供推出市場之單位數目將會額外增加十一萬三千個，令總供應量大大提高至十四萬三千

附圖三



Source: Rating and Valuation Department; CB Richard Ellis Global Research & Consulting
資料來源：差餉物業估價署，世邦魏理仕環球 研究及諮詢部

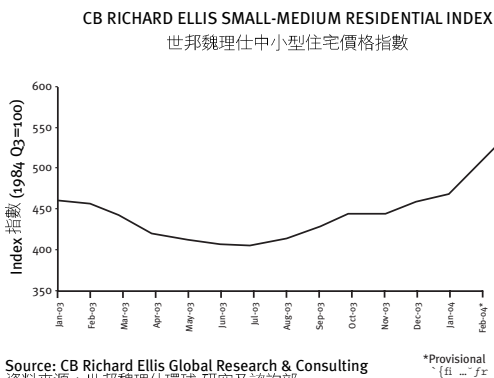
個。若以過往三年的平均吸納量計算，市場將需要約五年零九個月時間才把此供應量全數消化。（見附圖三）

經濟方面，筆者同意各行業經已渡過最艱難的時間，復甦在望。但謹記目前之處境，只處於谷底回升之起步點。自由行等措施只帶旺零售行業，對一般中產階層並無即時的直接裨益。事實上，大部份公司仍然處於凍薪階段，甚至有個別行業仍以減薪手段降低成本，以圖渡過目前困境。

展望二零零四年的政治環境，無論外圍以及本土，皆充斥著不穩定因素。近者，有三月份的臺灣總統選舉、五月份之菲律賓大選、九月份之香港特別行政區立法會選舉；較後者有十一月份的美國大選等。現在全球正處於經濟一體化模式，各個選舉結果不但直接影響當地政經狀況，對各個經濟實體，實有牽一髮而動全身之影響。對掌握後市方面，更添難度。

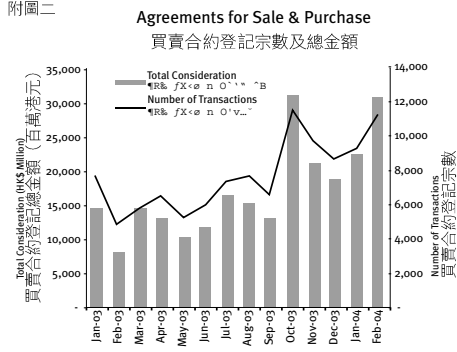
總括以上觀點，二零零四年之政治經濟環境，仍然存在多項變數；再加上新落成以及囤積單位數量依然龐大，各項客觀因數皆無法支持樓價於短期內進一步急升。若單純以投資角度而言，其吸引力已不復當年。

附圖一



Source: CB Richard Ellis Global Research & Consulting
資料來源：世邦魏理仕環球 研究及諮詢部

附圖二



Source: Land Registry, CB Richard Ellis Global Research & Consulting
資料來源：土地註冊署，世邦魏理仕環球 研究及諮詢部

Features

Housing Market - Is It Overheating?



Ronald Y F CHEUNG

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Director of Midland Surveyors Limited

Introduction

The most popular question on everyone's lips today is "Is the housing market overheating?" Some say speculation is rife, even out of hand. Some say otherwise and, judging from the loan affordability ratio, that it still has a long way to go before reaching the 1997 level.

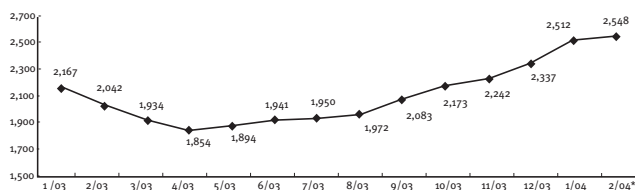
Which one is correct?

The following are some characteristics of the current housing market.

Price Increase

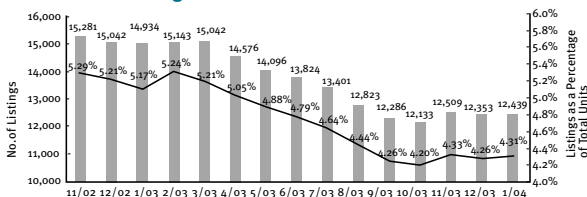
We concentrate on the small-to-medium sized flats as it is a more representative market. From Chart 1 below, the average price of these flats has risen from a low of HK\$1,854 per sq. ft. in April 2003 to HK\$2,548 per sq. ft. in February 2004, a staggering 37.4%. January 2004 recorded the highest monthly increase, at 6%.

Chart 1 Home Price Trend from 2003 to Date



*Provisional Figures
Source: Midland Realty's Research Department

Chart 3 Movement of the Midland Realty Home Resale Listing Index



N.B.: The index is based on information from 100 residential estates' listings in the secondary market, excluding the pending units. A total of 288,739 units are in these residential estates.

Source: Midland Realty's Research Department

Confirmor Activities in Secondary Residential Sales

The number of confirmor-related transactions is widely regarded as an indicator of speculation activities. In a frenzied market, it is not unusual to see a property undergoing several confirmor agreements before a transaction is finally completed. Chart 2 below shows confirmor activities in secondary residential sales since 1997.

From the above chart it can be seen that despite an increase over the past six months, reaching 142 cases in February 2004, secondary sales with confirmor agreements represent only a very low ratio (2.4%) of total transactions and, most importantly, a small amount compared with a record high of 1,835 confirmor registrations in May 1997. During the peak in 1997, confirmor activities amounted to over 10% of total secondary market sales.

Resale Listing

Contrary to most expectations, the housing market has not been flooded by a massive amount of offers to sell (listings). From Chart 3

below, of 100 residential estates under survey, the listing percentage has only gone up slightly from November 2003 to January 2004, from 4.28% to 4.33%.

In fact most listings have come from lower-end flats. 56.8% of the total listing are from flats under HK\$2 million. Those above HK\$5 million amounted to 14.7% only. These are shown in Chart 4 below.

However, with demand on the rise and expectation of higher prices, more home owners will likely be tempted to offer their flats for sale, hoping to cash in a profit.

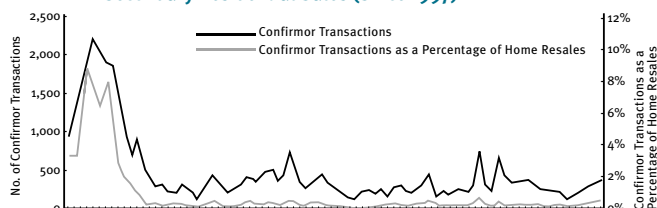
Trade in Ratio

That brings up another feature of the current market. From our records in January 2004 homeowners having offloaded their flats have only a 30% intention to buy again. This relatively low trade in ratio falls drastically short of that in 1997.

Conclusion

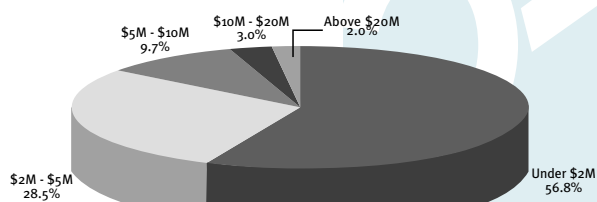
From our transaction records in recent months, only about 30% of flat buyers are not end-users, meaning that the housing market is still driven by owner-occupiers. In addition, at a low confirmor activities rate (only 2.4%) in February 2004, it can reasonably be said that the secondary housing market is not experiencing any unhealthy growth.

Chart 2 Confirmor Activity as a Percentage of Secondary Residential Sales (Since 1997)



Source: Midland Realty's Research Department

Chart 4 Overview of Residential Property Listings by Price Points



Source: Midland Realty's Research Department

Features

Examining the real impact of HOS on private housing markets in Hong Kong



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Abstract

Public housing has always carried the tag of being a social stigma for its design, management and social background of the tenants. In a small city such as Hong Kong where almost half of the population lives in public/subsidized housing, things are quite different. It has become very difficult to develop a private housing community in this city without a subsidized housing project nearby. Nevertheless, property market blossomed in the decade before 1997. After the crash of the property market, an easy scapegoat for the collapse of the market was the overproduction of public housing projects. The question to this issue becomes therefore whether public housing really dragged the price level of the neighbouring private housing market. If so, is the negative effect of substance, or purely mental? In this paper, we try to piece together this puzzle by a two-level statistical analysis.

Introduction

“NIMBY” (not in my backyard) is a term that is used in opposition to all “perceived” undesirable effects that are brought about mostly by government action and policies. Typical examples of government action that elicits the NIMBY response are medical centers for highly contagious or social diseases or the mentally retarded that are built next to housing communities. The negative effects of such facilities are mainly “perceived” effects that have no experimental or empirical proof. However, the psychological effects and the repercussions on the market and society are usually large enough for political groups to raise concerns. It is difficult to define a “comfortable” distance for residents in a certain housing community to accept the existence of “less desirable neighbors”. In fact, except for total non-existence, it is the degree of “visibility” that matters in the research of such

effects. This degree of visibility becomes more acute when we study the effects in a compact and highly developed metropolitan city such as Hong Kong. In this dense city, it is interesting to note that even though public housing estates are neighbors to a number of middle/high class residential communities, there was a dramatic price upsurge in the market during the 1990s.

Review of Literature-public/subsidized housing and neighborhood

Public housing has been infamously associated with ghettos almost all around the world¹. There are many reasons for this connection, not the least relating to the social and economic status of the households in public housing. Freeman and Botein (2002) outline four major effects of public/subsidized housing: the effect on property values in neighboring private housing communities; racial transition; the increased concentration of poverty, or the negative conglomeration effect; and an increased crime rate. Because this paper looks at the effect on property values, we will concentrate on that aspect.

Santiago et al. (2001) provide an interesting view on this issue. From their statistical analysis of a dispersed subsidized housing program in Denver, they conclude that “... *there may, however, be a maximum threshold of poor or subsidized households beyond which this negative impact is triggered, irrespective of the distance or characteristics of DHA housing or occupants*” (pp. 83-84).

From a different perspective, MaRous (1996) provides an interesting non-statistical analysis by examining the market effects (in terms of changes in price levels in the neighborhood) that were brought about by four low-income family housing developments in Chicago. He comes to the conclusion that there was no dampening effect, and that his results such results coincide with those of a regression-based study by Cummings and Landis (1993). MaRous stresses that good community planning, good design, natural and manmade buffering of sites, and a good property management approach are the main reasons for

the neutral effects despite public opinion to the contrary.

Methodology and Data

The statistical analysis will be carried out at two levels. At the macro level, we want to know whether the production of HOS units poses a threat to the private housing market in Hong Kong as a whole. We can come to this conclusion if the statistical test shows that the supply of HOS units does have a significant but negative correlation with private housing prices and transaction volume. At the micro level we will narrow our focus to examine whether individual private housing developments perceive neighboring HOS projects to be stigmas.

At the macro level, the housing price index and housing transaction volume are taken as the two dependent variables in the test. Along with other major economic variables, the supply of HOS is taken as the independent variable for the examination of its effect.

At the micro level, four popular private housing developments are chosen, two of which have neighboring HOS projects. Individual property transactions for the past 12 years are recorded for these four developments. A standard dummy variable that represents the existence of a neighboring HOS project is inserted to test the possible negative effect. The next section explains the testing process in detail.

The Results

Macro Level

Due to limitation of space in this newsletter, only the final results will be elaborated here. In the first stage of a two-stage analysis at this level, we carry out a simple Pearson Correlation test to ascertain whether the supply of HOS units has a strong and negative correlation with the private housing private index and transaction volume in Hong Kong. We choose the years 1985-1996 as the test period because after 1997, as the government faced more criticism of its public housing policy it

sporadically suspended the selling of HOS units as well as the development of the projects. Hence, the pre-1997 data seem to represent a more natural market environment in which the two supply channels interacted.

Correlation Analysis of Changes in Transaction Volume, Property Prices, Supply of HOS, Supply of Private Units, and Stock Market Performance 1984-1999

Correlations

		VOL	HOS	PRICE	STOCK
VOL	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	1.000 .58	-.013 .53	.217 .103 58	-.001 .996 58
HOS	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	-.013 .927 53	1.000 .53	.167 .231 53	-.234 .091 53
PRICE	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.217 .103 58	.167 .231 53	1.000 .58	.501** .000 58
STOCK	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	-.001 .996 58	.234 .091 53	.501** .000 58	1.000 .58

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The Pearson Correlation coefficients show that both the supply of HOS units and public rental units per year during the test period had very little correlation with private housing market activities and price movements. If there was any relative significant correlation, it was positive (between HOS unit supply and private housing transaction volume) rather than negative.

As a result, we move on to the second step of the two-stage model.

To further examine the effect of public housing on the private housing market, a time-series econometric model is used. This is based on a similar analysis by Phang and Wong (1997), in which a private residential price index and other variables, such as gross domestic product, interest rate, supply of private completed residential units, and dummy variables (representing different government policies implemented), are regressed. Our model includes both the actual supply of HOS units and significant government policies regarding the HOS project as independent variables.

Based on a Stepwise model, our result becomes:

$$PPI_t = 205.999 + (12.94) T + (-9.393) NIR + (3.697) GDP + (-3.808) CPI + (-39.781) L_{92} + (-45.14) L_{95} + (9.765) S_{95} + (52.895) S_{98} + (-100.025) L_{97}$$

Where:

- 1) Nominal interest rate (NIR) - measured by the quarterly average of prime lending rates.
- 2) Gross domestic product (GDP) - the economic growth measured by the quarterly gross domestic product at constant 1990 market prices.
- 3) Consumer price index (CPI) - measured quarterly and using 1990 as the base year, e.g. 1990 = 100.
- 4) L₉₂ - the long term effect of the government policy in 1992 when 7,469 units in 24 blocks of HOS projects were put on the market at a 45 percent discount, the largest discount in 10 years.
- 5) L₉₅ - the long term effect of the government policy in 1995 when the government relaxed a number of measures so that the pre-selling of private housing units became much easier and more affordable.
- 6) S₉₅ - the short term effect of the 1995 policy above.
- 7) L₉₇ - the long term effect of the government policy in 1997 when the Chief Executive announced new initiatives to help make units more affordable, including the 85,000 per year housing unit production target.
- 8) S₉₈ - the short term effect of the 1998 policy to suspend land sales program from June 1998 to end of March 1999.

The coefficient of determination (R²) is 0.989, which indicates that the model fits the data well and that the PPI has a high degree of correlation with the independent variables. It is obvious from this that the actual supply of HOS units had no direct correlation with market price movements in the private housing sector. As in other mature economies, major macro economic indicators determine to a significant extent the movement of private housing prices. We now turn to the micro level analysis.

Micro Level

At this level of analysis, we look at four popular private housing developments in Hong Kong, two in Kowloon and two on Hong Kong Island. The reason for this micro analysis is to examine

whether and how individual HOS project depressed the property values of neighboring private housing development. Out of the four private housing developments, two had HOS neighbors and the other two did not. The latter two will serve as a basis for comparison.

The time series are obtained from transaction data between 1992 and 2002, during which time the housing market in Hong Kong experienced both tremendous growth and rapid depreciation. A total of 5,845 transaction data items are recorded for the analysis; the distribution among the four private housing developments is as follows.

- 3163 transaction records from Kornhill, a private housing development on the Eastern side of Hong Kong island with a neighboring HOS project
- 1600 transaction records from Lei King Wan, a private housing development on the Eastern side of Hong Kong island without a neighboring HOS project
- 549 transaction records from Telford Garden, a private housing development on the Eastern side of Kowloon with a neighboring HOS project
- 533 transaction records from Laguna City, a private housing development on the Eastern side of Kowloon without a neighboring HOS project

These four developments are similar (in pairs) in terms of location and proximity to mass transit railway stations.

The data from the four developments are merged, and the common variables, PRICE_AREA, SITE, FLOOR, VIEW, TIME, and HOS are selected for the analysis. The variable PRICE_AREA is the transaction price over the gross area of the unit. The variable TIME is an index running from 1 to 132, representing transaction dates from March 1992 to February 2003. The variables SITE, VIEW, and HOS are categorical variables. The DISTANCE variable is the direct map-distance between the particular development and the neighboring HOS.

The micro analysis shows that the existence of a HOS project nearby will exert a negative effect on the price achievable in nearby private housing developments. However, the effect seems to be more psychological than physical.

This is because there is a lack of evidence that the blocks in the private housing development that are nearer to the neighboring HOS project are cheaper than those further away. Hence, the distance between the individual units (or blocks) from the neighboring HOS site is not significant in determining the transaction price.

Conclusion

What we have observed here is that residents in the private housing community feel the unease of having a subsidized housing project

as a neighbor, but they cannot actually quantify the extent of the negative effect. One can therefore draw the conclusion from the above analysis that public housing in Hong Kong does post as a stigma to the neighbouring private housing market by its very existence, although the production of such government-subsidized flats does not have a significant negative relationship with housing price movements. The magnitude of the negative effect however is not correlated to the distance to and visibility of such public housing project. This stigmatic effect

therefore is irrational and is more psychological than physical.

Note:

'An exception can be found in Singapore where public housing is comparable to private housing in terms of living environment and quality.

The author informs that this paper is still in draft form and is subject to refinement.

Features

The Importance of Maintaining Adequate Records for Prolongation Claims



Peter INGRAM
Brian E. Rawling & Associates

The maintenance of adequate records, particularly those relating to performance and cost, is an essential ingredient for supporting and proving financial claims in the construction industry. It is, therefore, surprising that contractors often under-estimate the importance of such records and fail to maintain adequate or sometimes any contemporary records.

Recording project-related costs is of prime importance for achieving a successful outcome to any financial claim. It is therefore imperative that construction companies have comprehensive cost accounting systems in place, which enable the allocation of project related costs to particular projects and cost codes. Such cost codes should be comprehensive with adequate descriptions that relate to each cost heading, type of work and possibly location, therefore enabling specific information to be extracted both simply and quickly.

Recurrent Site Costs

If the cost accounting system is set up properly at the outset of each contract then it should be a simple task to allocate and input costs to

correct cost codes. On most construction sites, this task is usually carried out by the accounts department. As the system is only going to be as good as the person entering the data it makes sense for the accountancy staff to have some understanding of the potential use of such data, whether it be for financial monitoring or claims preparation.

Once it has been established that a contractor has entitlements to extensions of time and to recover its associated additional costs, then the additional costs associated with the particular activities affected by those delaying events, or prolongation costs, need to be identified.

Extensions of time are often granted retrospectively towards the end or after completion of a project, hence, this is invariably the time when contractors begin to formulate their prolongation costs. Unfortunately, it is at this time when the less organised contractors often realise that their cost accountancy systems are not set up for costs to be readily identified and abstracted.

Examples of Prolongation Costs

What costs need to be extracted when preparing a prolongation claim?

The general rule is to identify those costs which are recurrent (i.e. costs which are time related) and which can be identified as being related to

ongoing activities or commitments which are, or have been, prolonged as a consequence of a delaying event or events.

Recurrent Site Costs

Examples of recurrent site costs are as follows:-

1. Site staff (including salaries, medical costs, accommodation/welfare, MPF contributions and the like);
2. Site offices (hire, depreciation, rent, rates and the like);
3. Maintenance of site offices (welfare, upkeep, repairs and the like);
4. Office equipment & stationery (photocopiers, computers, printers, stationery and the like);
5. Utilities (water and electricity used for non-production related purposes and the like);
6. Communications (telephone, fax, mobile phones, walkie-talkies and the like);
7. Site transport (hire, fuel, insurance, maintenance, depreciation, tunnel fees and the like);
8. General purpose plant (hire, fuel, insurance, maintenance, depreciation, transportation and the like);
9. Scaffolding (hire and maintenance);

10. Maintenance of site facilities (roads, hoardings, wheel washing and the like);
11. Attendant labour;
12. Rubbish removal;
13. Security;
14. Insurances;
15. Bonds;
16. Offsite office overheads.

The recurrent site costs listed above should also be allocated to the appropriate time period, to ensure that such costs can be correctly and easily identified on a daily, weekly or monthly basis.

There may be further costs, which are considered to be time-related depending upon to the method by which such works were certified and paid.

Site Staff

Site staff costs ought to be readily identifiable, with salaries based on payroll sheets and/or by standing instructions to the relevant employees' bank accounts. These amounts are usually 'net', therefore, any other costs incurred that are associated with the employment of staff, such as bonus accruals, accommodation allowances, MPF pension contributions, medical fees, travel allowances and personal expenses connected with a particular site should also be accounted for.

If staff are engaged on a number of different sites then the accounting system should allocate the appropriate cost for the time spent by the relevant staff on each site.

A possible area of contention in the assessment of prolonged site staff costs is whether the site staff included in the prolongation assessment can be proved to have been working in connection with the delayed activity or activities. Ideally, all site staff should fill out time sheets, recording the appropriate location or particular type of work that is being undertaken by that staff member. However, whilst this is good practice, particularly when the project is recognised to generate claims, my experience is that generally, such procedures are not followed and, when they are, record keeping itself can be subjective and complicated.

For example, consider the on site operations of a contractor's site engineer. He or she may work in several different locations and on different activities in any one day. Unless the engineer can be specific as to the time spent at each location or on each activity, the details on his or her time sheet will not be an accurate record of his or her day's work. Clearly to prepare such detailed records would take time (and money!).

There are other factors, which exacerbate the situation:-

- should the site engineer record time expended in minutes or be expected to round minutes up or down to the nearest quarter hour, half hour or hour?
- should the site engineer be required to have his or her time sheets agreed and signed by the resident engineer each day? For such agreement to be accurate, a member of the resident engineer's staff would have to 'shadow' the site engineer!

Whilst maintaining records of the works carried out by staff may allow particular personnel to be allocated to particular activities, in reality an element of common sense ought to be applied together with a level of reasonableness about the extent and details of the records which are to be kept.

Offsite Overheads

Contractors have an entitlement to recover additional offsite overheads in circumstances where the site works have been prolonged as a consequence of delays which are excusable and give rise to an entitlement to additional payment. However, contractors often do not keep adequate records to enable the actual cost of offsite overheads to be allocated to the various projects, which are being undertaken at any one time.

In such circumstances, contractors often apportion their offsite overhead costs proportionally using one of the recognised formulae (e.g. Emden or Eichleay). However, whilst this may appear to be a suitable way of allocating cost for assessment purposes, in reality it may not be a true reflection of the offsite overheads incurred in respect of a particular site.

Nevertheless, provided that the formula is used fairly and reasonably and all the requirements of a formula claim are addressed, these methods have judicial support.

There are then divisional charges to consider. The head offices of overseas contractors will also normally have costs to pass down to each regional/country branch office, which will then in turn be subsequently passed down as head office overheads to its current contracts.

The Reality of the Situation

The majority of contractors' staff who are responsible for the keeping of records, particularly those relating to costs, are often primarily concerned with the short term running of a project and, consequently, the records they maintain tend to be the "best possible in the time available". This is frequently the case in the construction industry, and often leads to difficulties when the information recorded during the course of the works is required to be utilised for claims or other purposes at a later date.

Conclusion

If site cost accounting systems are set up properly at the outset of each project many of the problems often identified at a later date during the assessment of actual costs incurred relevant to specific events can be avoided. Similarly, if accurate and consistent cost records are kept throughout the running of a construction contract it should be possible to easily identify and abstract them at a later date. However, if poor records are maintained during the initial stages of construction, or up until problems are first encountered, such poor records may adversely affect the abstraction of detailed records kept at that point. It may prove difficult to justify that work was delayed or labour efficiency was reduced due to inconsistencies in record keeping.

It is, therefore, of paramount importance that adequate records be maintained from the outset of a construction contract particularly if delays and claims are likely to occur. Comprehensive records will ensure that adequate information is available to enable financial claims to be formulated and properly supported.

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Settlement of Disputes - The Contract Administrator's Decision



John B MOLLOY

LLB (Hons), BSc (Hons), FHKIS, FRICS,
FInstCES, MCI Arb, MAE, RPS (QS)
Managing Director, James R Knowles (Hong
Kong) Limited

Most settlement of dispute clauses follows the same procedure. If a matter has arisen that can not be settled by ordinary negotiation between the Contractor (or very occasionally the Employer) and the Contract Administrator then either the Contractor or the Employer may request that the Contract Administrator give a decision in writing on the matter pursuant to the clause applicable to the settlement of disputes. The clause will set out a time limit (often 90 days) for the Contract Administrator to make his decision.

If the Contractor or Employer does not accept the decision of the Contract Administrator, or if the Contract Administrator does not give a decision, then normally either party has the right to refer the dispute to arbitration (in the absence of any provision for mediation), provided the notice of arbitration is served within a further time period, which is often 90 days.

In the January 2004 issue of this magazine I wrote an article that considered the consequences of either the Employer or the Contractor failing to serve notice of arbitration within the prescribed time limit.

A further topic of interest in this area relates to the time limit within which the Contract Administrator must make his decision and in particular whether a Contract Administrator's purported decision given outside the time limit is still valid, i.e. whether he still has the power to give such decision once the deadline for him to make a decision under the settlement of disputes clause has expired.

At first sight the answer to this would appear straightforward. Once the time for giving the decision has expired the Contract Administrator has no power to make a decision, and consequentially any decision made would be invalid.

But investigation reveals that surprisingly this may not always be the case.

The first relevant case is **Monmouthshire County Council v Costelloe & Kemple Ltd** (1965) 5 BLR 83, which examined the procedures in Clause 66 of the ICE Conditions of Contract (4th Edition). This clause is very similar to the standard Hong Kong Government GCC Clause 86 (but without the mediation provisions).

The case is reported in the Building Law Reports and the editors of the reports gave a useful summary of the application of the Clause 66. I have extracted the relevant passages from this summary and emphasized the important points:

"Once a request has been made [to the engineer] the engineer has three months to make his decision. He cannot extend that period except with the agreement of both the contracting parties. If he lets the period expire, agreement will again be required to avoid the consequences of his failure to reach his decision within the requisite time.

If the engineer decides within the period of three months, then either party, if dissatisfied, has a further period of three months (calculated from receiving the notice of the decision) in which to require the matter to be referred to arbitration. If that period of three months expires, then the party affected can no longer exercise his rights to require an arbitrator to be appointed.

If the engineer fails to give his decision within the first period of three months, then either

party (and not only the party who made the initial reference) may require the dispute to be referred to arbitration but only if notice of arbitration is given within a further period of three months (i.e. within six months from the request for a decision). Otherwise this dispute cannot be referred to arbitration.

So far so good for the situation where the Contract Administrator simply does not make a decision at all. But what happens if the Contract Administrator does make a decision, but does so outside the time limit.

The case of **ECC Quarries Ltd v Merriman Ltd** (1988) 45 BLR 90 appears relevant to this situation. This was again a case on Clause 66 of the ICE Conditions of Contract.

In this case, the Contractor referred a dispute to the Engineer for his decision on 19 February 1986 under Clause 66. The Engineer failed to give his decision within the three months period under the clause, i.e. by 19 May 1986. However subsequently on 31 July 1986 the Engineer wrote to the Contractor giving his decision in respect of the dispute.

The Contractor was not happy with the decision and served a notice of arbitration on 2 April 1987.

The Court held that the Contractor's notice of arbitration was invalid because it was not served within the 90-day period from either the Contract Administrator's decision or his failure to make a decision.

Judge John Davies QC held:

"By the terms of the clause the Decision of the Engineer is to be final and binding upon employer and contractor unless either shall require that the matter be referred to arbitration within three months of being notified of it. ...

If the contractor had had any doubt regarding

the true status of the letter he still had until 19 August to refer the matter to arbitration on the ground that the Engineer had failed to give his Decision within three months of being requested to do so. Alternatively he had three months in which to do so on the assumption that it was a valid Decision."

The second alternative point is of interest here because it suggests that the decision of the Engineer on 31 July 1996 was a valid decision notwithstanding the fact that it was issued outside the 90 days three month period.

In arriving at this conclusion it appears that the Court considered that Clause 66 did not state that the Engineer had to make his

decision within three months, merely that if he did not do so then either party could refer the matter to arbitration within a further three month period. However if the Engineer subsequently made a decision then that would be a valid decision and the three-month period would run from the date of such decision.

There is a caveat to this point however. The court made it clear that a decision of the Engineer made after the expiry of the three-month period would only be valid, if at that time neither party had already issued a notice of arbitration. If a notice of arbitration had been issued the decision would be void and of no effect because the Engineer would have been rendered *functus officio* as from the time

that arbitration notice was served.

The conclusion, it would seem, is that if a Contract Administrator fails to make a decision within the time period set out in the settlement of disputes clause, but then subsequently does make a decision in writing, the decision will be invalid if a notice of arbitration has already been issued, but if no notice of arbitration has been issued then it appears that the Contract Administrator's decision may be valid. In such a case if either of the parties do not accept the decision then the period of time within which the matter may be referred to arbitration commences from upon the receipt of the Contract Administrator's decision. ☐

Meeting Point

James Kenneth Pong

- A Respectful Pedagogue and Mentor, A Maestro in Professionalism



Interviewed by Stephen LI
JO Committee Member

I firmly believe in the apothegm that success is not solely pertinent to geniuses but rather, to a large extent, to those who work hard to develop their flairs and potentials. Recently in a casual occasion, I met James Kenneth Pong, who is an experienced building surveyor, a "half-qualified" general practice surveyor (a follower of the famous valuers and land economists Mr. Clive Darlow and Mr. Martin Newell at the City University of London), an Authorized Person, a professional pedagogue and a barrister. Above all, he is pursuing an MSc (Urban Planning) with double majors in Transport Planning and Environmental Planning and he is now the Head of the Central Prosecution Section of the Environmental Protection Department. "With the increasing demand for a more comprehensive professional service from clients, there will be a trend for professionals to be multi-skilled and surveyors should be prepared to extend their orthodox purview of expertise," James said.

A Respectful Pedagogue and Mentor

A number of young and very good quality chartered/qualified building surveyors were once supervised by James in their professional training. "Those who can bear his stern training could normally pass their APC, diary and professional interview in their first go," commented by one of James' previous colleagues.



James Pong

Holding a Postgraduate Certificate in Education from the University of Hong Kong, he invariably under various time slots was a lecturer and/or visiting lecturer at the Morrison Hill Technical Institute, the Hong Kong Management Association, the Polytechnic University and SPACE of the University of Hong Kong. Before I commenced my scrawl of this article, I had interviewed some of James' friends and his previous students who are now directors and managers of large surveying firms or prestigious property management company and a banker as well - since James has taught the law of banking before - incredible! Below are some of their accounts.

"James was a strict boss in inculcating trainee surveyors as his subordinates," said Mr. Daniel Tsang, who is now a Director of David C Lee Surveyors Ltd. "While James was my supervisor in 1995 and 1996, he required us to memorize the contents of some important guidelines, codes of practice and practice notes for AP&RSE, land cases on 'rate & range' clause and 'DD & H' clause, the general principle on contract and tort and the various clauses of the standard form of Building Contract. He sometimes even required us to recite them in front of him during lunch hours!"

"Furthermore, he could inspire and enlighten us when we, as his assistants, watched how he handled a project or solved problems at work by employing his strong analytical mind and his rich knowledge in various domains to reach solutions that could attain a fair balance among constructional, budget, legal and commercial constraints."

Jack Fung, who is now a Bank Manager of Standard Chartered Bank, was once a student of James. "James could give very vivid accounts, often with daily examples, on the various concepts on property mortgage and company law during his lectures. His presentation skill was so inspiring and lively that the concepts he taught were instilled to

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the students subconsciously. Besides, he encouraged discussions and exchange of opinions between himself and the audience," recalled Jack.

"Under the strong influence and inspiration of James through his lectures at the Morrison Hill Technical Institute, I decided to choose Building Surveying as my career!" said Harvey Yip, who is now a chartered/qualified building surveyor and a project manager of BNP Paribas. "James has set the lively example of a very professional building surveyor and an authorized person inside the hearts of all the students in my class and he could inspire most of the graduates in our batch to join the building surveying profession. It was a turning point because prior to that year, most of the graduates joined the quantity surveying profession."

"James is really a genuine educator who is proficient in arousing his students with interest on the subject he taught. He only gave us the clear directions and framework and posed questions for us to answer. In seeking the answers, just like filling in the bits and pieces in a jig-saw puzzle, we could learn a lot," Harvey added.

"While he was my tutor in 1992-1994, he always taught me about the professional ethics on the "Dos & Don'ts" for surveyors. He always encouraged us to brush up both our spoken and written English and to maintain an analytical and creative mind. He always reminded us not to slavishly apply our knowledge when the assumptions or site conditions warrant a modification," said Lawrence But who is a classmate of Harvey and is now working at Hong Yip Service Co Ltd. Upon completion of his Summary of Experience, Lawrence will soon be another qualified building surveyor.

"James' teaching was very impressive, in particular when he taught me the Landlord and Tenant (Consolidation) Ordinance Cap 7 and the related legal issues. Besides, I always seek his valuable advice whenever I have any real estate or legal problems at work. He is persistently very helpful by furnishing me replies without any hesitation. He is really my lifetime mentor", said Kelvin



Ng, who is member of the JO as well as a probationer ripped to become a qualified General Practice Surveyor soon.

A Knowledge Hunter

James strives hard to dismantle all the compartment walls of each profession relating to the construction industry. "Qualified as a building surveyor was just my start," James said. He recalled the days when he was studying building surveying at the Hong Kong Polytechnic. "I was reading the textbooks which the structural engineering students were using," James said. During my interview with him, he could tell me a lot about the various codes of structural design such as CP 110, BS8110, CP 111, BS5628, CP 112, BS5268 and BS5950 etc.

"I met James when I was working at the Buildings Ordinance Office (now the Buildings Department) in 1987. He was a trainee building surveyor at that time. He was very self-confident and seemed to be a godfather among the trainee surveyors. They always like inquiring him about the building ordinance, its related regulations, building contracts and other legal issues," recalled Alkin Kwong, who is presently a Director and General Manager of Hong Yip Service Company Ltd.

After graduation at the Hong Kong Polytechnic and gaining a few years working experience, James went to UK to further his studies in 1988. Later he finished his bachelor of science in Building Surveying and started working in London. He successfully fulfilled all the RICS's requirements on professional diary, APC and professional interview in his first attempt in one go in London. The passing rate for the first attempt for the London examination centre for that year was less than 8%!

With an aim to be qualified as a General Practice Surveyor as well, James decided to do a part-time master degree on property investment at the City University in London (though at the completion of the course, he realized that the RICS Rules did prohibit any person to be qualified in more than one

division). James believed that if he could undergo a formal academic training on portfolio management and finance, economics and property valuation, he could view any property development in a more holistic approach. Finished with his studies and equipped with those tools, he came back to Hong Kong and took up his first job as a residential property negotiator. His good interpersonal skill and rich professional knowledge made him a very successful property agent. Later he even turned to become an investment agent. At the time of writing this article, he is still a part-time lecturer teaching investment and property valuation for an MSc (Real Estate) course.



"My dream to become a lawyer stems from my indebtedness to my Scottish law lecturer Mr. John White at the

Hong Kong Polytechnic who imparts me with all the interesting concepts on the law of contract," James recalled. His interest in law did not fade in those years. In 1994, he went back to UK to do his legal studies at the College of Law in London. "Most of the lecturers there, in particular my 'tort lecturer' Ms Alison Baigent, are my great enlighteners in law. So are my classmates most of whom are top graduates from Oxford or Cambridge. All of them help me to foster a sound legal sense which is of cardinal importance for my legal career later on." James managed to pass 17 law papers and completed his law degree in virtually 14 months!

Tough Life of a Barrister


"It was tough to practice as a barrister - very long working hours. I could seldom leave my chamber earlier than 9:00 p.m. in the evening" James commented. "An analogy of conducting a court trial is just like taking a whole-day examination. You have to memorize the facts of the case and to do thorough legal research on all the legal points before you enter the courtroom. Above all, you have to be very attentive and alert in the court especially during the examinations-in-chief, the cross-

examinations and the re-examinations of the witnesses."

Tired of having long and irregular working hours, James decided to join the Environmental Protection Department as an in-house counsel. Bequeathed with sound fundamentals of environmental science and legal concepts, James was able to pick up the environmental law within a very short period of time. "Environmental science and environmental law are very vast subjects and I have learned a lot about them since I had joined the Environmental Protection Department. To this I am most grateful to all my colleagues in the Department who have nurtured me," James said. The Central Prosecution Section of EPD was established on the day when James joined the EPD as the Head of that Section. Under James' regime, the failure rate of the EPD prosecution plummeted to a hitherto 6% and all surveyors should be very proud to know that the EPD Prosecution Policy was actually drafted by a building surveyor!

Encouragement to Junior Surveyors

All seems very successful to James, but do you know that he was the candidate who failed three times in his RICS Final Examinations? "In order to navigate round that hurdle, I decided to go abroad to do a degree in Building Surveying," James said. Alkin Kwong commented, "Though he was the cream of the class, he was very arrogant in accepting the gospel I strived hard to reach his heart. He only relied on his knowledge and his talent. By failing him in the examinations three times, I think God has dis-armoured him completely so that he would know that God is omnipotent to whom he should rely upon. Upon his conversion as a Christian, he was gifted by Him for more than he could ever think of getting."

"All of the above, Stephen, you so call them 'successes', were not accomplished by myself, but God. Without Him, everything would have been fallen onto the ground. I am just an ordinary person doing my job in an ordinary way. However, one tautology to all junior surveyors is that: there is no royal road to learning. Do not feel despair when you occasionally tumble in your career life. Arise with your face up, and continue with your long and winding road," James concluded. 

Calendar of Events - April and May 2004

Current Topics in Real Estate Finance & Investment Seminar

3 Apr 2004
HKIS
Hong Kong, China

Long-Term Housing Market Outlook in Hong Kong

7 Apr 2004
HKIS JO
Hong Kong, China

International Real Estate Finance and Investment Seminar

9 Apr 2004
HKIS
Hong Kong, China

Media Relation Made Easy

14 Apr 2004
HKIS JO
Hong Kong, China

PROJECT E - Drainage Improvement Works at Amoy Garden Block E

16 Apr 2004
HKIS BS
Hong Kong, China

How Confident is Hong Kong about the Property Market

16 Apr 2004
HKIS JO
Hong Kong, China

Pre-Qualification Structured Learning (PQSLs) Series-Review of Construction Law Cases in 2003

17 Apr 2004
HKIS JO
Hong Kong, China

8th PAQS Congress/ 18th ICEC Congress and 4th World Congress 2004

17-22 Apr 2004
PAQS/ICEC
Cape Town, South Africa

Rating-The Process

22 Apr 2004
HKIS JO
Hong Kong, China

Cable Supported Bridges and Associated Monitoring System

22 Apr 2004
HKIS LS
Hong Kong, China

WOBO - Annual Governor's Meeting

22 Apr 2004
WOBO
Tokyo, Japan

Pre-Qualification Structured Learning (PQSLs) Series-Diagnosis for typical building defects in HK

24 Apr 2004
HKIS JO
Hong Kong, China

Site Visit: Development in Precast Technology - Fu Tei

24 Apr 2004
HKIS JO
Hong Kong, China

HKIS 20th Anniversary Cocktail Reception and opening of Surveyors Learning Centre

26 Apr 2004
HKIS
Hong Kong, China

普通話專業用語 - 為兩 "C" 作好準備

29 Apr 2004
HKIS GP
Hong Kong, China

Business Valuation - A Brief Perspective

5 May 2004
HKIS GP
Hong Kong, China

Enhancement of Construction Value Management Professionalism for the New Generation-PSDAS

6 May 2004
HKIS
Hong Kong, China

Pre-Qualification Structured Learning (PQSLs) Series-Understanding of E&M Drawings and Measurement

8 May 2004
HKIS JO
Hong Kong, China

The Planning Control of West Kowloon Cultural District Development

12 May 2004
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What leads property prices in Hong Kong?

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19 May 2004
HKIS JO
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FIG Working Week and XXVII General Assembly

22-27 May 2004
FIG
Athens, Greece

HKIS 20th Anniversary Conference: "Public, Private, Partnerships"


29 May 2004
HKIS
Hong Kong, China

examinations and the re-examinations of the witnesses."

Tired of having long and irregular working hours, James decided to join the Environmental Protection Department as an in-house counsel. Bequeathed with sound fundamentals of environmental science and legal concepts, James was able to pick up the environmental law within a very short period of time. "Environmental science and environmental law are very vast subjects and I have learned a lot about them since I had joined the Environmental Protection Department. To this I am most grateful to all my colleagues in the Department who have nurtured me," James said. The Central Prosecution Section of EPD was established on the day when James joined the EPD as the Head of that Section. Under James' regime, the failure rate of the EPD prosecution plummeted to a hitherto 6% and all surveyors should be very proud to know that the EPD Prosecution Policy was actually drafted by a building surveyor!

Encouragement to Junior Surveyors

All seems very successful to James, but do you know that he was the candidate who failed three times in his RICS Final Examinations? "In order to navigate round that hurdle, I decided to go abroad to do a degree in Building Surveying," James said. Alkin Kwong commented, "Though he was the cream of the class, he was very arrogant in accepting the gospel I strived hard to reach his heart. He only relied on his knowledge and his talent. By failing him in the examinations three times, I think God has dis-armoured him completely so that he would know that God is omnipotent to whom he should rely upon. Upon his conversion as a Christian, he was gifted by Him for more than he could ever think of getting."

"All of the above, Stephen, you so call them 'successes', were not accomplished by myself, but God. Without Him, everything would have been fallen onto the ground. I am just an ordinary person doing my job in an ordinary way. However, one tautology to all junior surveyors is that: there is no royal road to learning. Do not feel despair when you occasionally tumble in your career life. Arise with your face up, and continue with your long and winding road," James concluded. 

Calendar of Events - April and May 2004

Current Topics in Real Estate Finance & Investment Seminar

3 Apr 2004
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Long-Term Housing Market Outlook in Hong Kong

7 Apr 2004
HKIS JO
Hong Kong, China

International Real Estate Finance and Investment Seminar

9 Apr 2004
HKIS
Hong Kong, China

Media Relation Made Easy

14 Apr 2004
HKIS JO
Hong Kong, China

PROJECT E - Drainage Improvement Works at Amoy Garden Block E

16 Apr 2004
HKIS BS
Hong Kong, China

How Confident is Hong Kong about the Property Market

16 Apr 2004
HKIS JO
Hong Kong, China

Pre-Qualification Structured Learning (PQSLs) Series-Review of Construction Law Cases in 2003

17 Apr 2004
HKIS JO
Hong Kong, China

8th PAQS Congress/ 18th ICEC Congress and 4th World Congress 2004

17-22 Apr 2004
PAQS/ICEC
Cape Town, South Africa

Rating-The Process

22 Apr 2004
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Cable Supported Bridges and Associated Monitoring System

22 Apr 2004
HKIS LS
Hong Kong, China

WOBO - Annual Governor's Meeting

22 Apr 2004
WOBO
Tokyo, Japan

Pre-Qualification Structured Learning (PQSLs) Series-Diagnosis for typical building defects in HK

24 Apr 2004
HKIS JO
Hong Kong, China

Site Visit: Development in Precast Technology - Fu Tei

24 Apr 2004
HKIS JO
Hong Kong, China

HKIS 20th Anniversary Cocktail Reception and opening of Surveyors Learning Centre

26 Apr 2004
HKIS
Hong Kong, China

普通話專業用語 - 為兩 "C" 作好準備

29 Apr 2004
HKIS GP
Hong Kong, China

Business Valuation - A Brief Perspective

5 May 2004
HKIS GP
Hong Kong, China

Enhancement of Construction Value Management Professionalism for the New Generation-PSDAS

6 May 2004
HKIS
Hong Kong, China

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A snapshot of women in surveying

Mrs. Elizabeth Kok, Senior Manager of Swire Properties

Building Excitement for Shopping Arcade



Kelvin NG



Where did you obtain your degree in surveying? Why did you choose this profession?

I graduated from the Hong Kong Polytechnic which at that time was the only institution providing surveying training to Hong Kong people who would like to pursue their endeavour in the field.

How did you get started with the surveying career? What was your career path?

I didn't start my post-secondary education in surveying. I was studying Building Technology and Management in my first year and then transferred to the Surveying discipline in my second year. At that time, the general public didn't have much knowledge about this profession unlike today when the professionalism of Surveying is more widely recognized.

I joined Sun Hung Kai Properties when I graduated and stayed there for three years. Then I moved on to Hongkong Land to look after the residential portfolio at May Road and Tregunter Path up till the time when Hongkong Land sold all the high end residential properties. I then joined another high-end residential developer for a short period before joining my present employer Swire Properties where I have spent the rest of my career up till now.

How do you devise the promotion programme for your shopping arcades to meet with updated shoppers and tenants requirement?

First of all, we shouldn't just meet shoppers and tenants requirements. We should exceed their expectations. When we brainstorm on promotional programmes, we focus on how we can build excitement for our customers.

Can you share your memorable work experience and some interesting projects that you have been involved in recent years?

There are certainly a lot of memorable work experiences because I have witnessed and extensively been involved in the transformation of a portfolio to what it is to date. The excitement continues today and keeps me motivated in my job. Projects like demolition of a significant part of Cityplaza to make way for an office development whilst maintaining normal operation in the retail portion and later on to reunify the entire shopping centre are all interesting and challenging projects. To aptly describe the experience, the analogy "doing major operations but without killing the patient" would be most appropriate.

What are the essential personal skills for success in a career?

Commitment is the key attribute in my career.

What do you do in your spare time?

Being a mother of two children, I need to balance my time between family and work. Since I have spent most of my time in the office, I try to spend the rest of my spare time with my children.

Do you have any particular interest?

I am not a sporty person but I love doing handicraft work.