

EVENTS WATCH

Getting smart with cities

The HKIS Annual Conference laid the foundations for an upgraded Hong Kong, writes **Ben O'Rourke**

Drawn by the headline topic "Development for a Smarter City", hundreds of professionals from a wide range of industries headed to the JW Marriott Hotel for the Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors (HKIS) Annual Conference 2015.

In the opening remarks of his welcoming speech, Vincent Ho Kui-yip, president of HKIS, stressed the importance surveyors play in the development of the city and beyond, and how the acceleration of "smart technologies" is advancing their field.

"In this year's Policy Address, the Hong Kong government declared Kowloon East as a pilot area for exploring the feasibility and practicality

of developing a 'smart city' and suggested that Hong Kong was well equipped to develop itself as a smart city," he said.

"In the field of surveying, professional recommendations can be provided on areas such as effective land use, project planning, and property and facility management; and can also assist the government in developing a policy for its smart city development scheme."

One of the major aims of the conference was to invite experts from various fields to exchange views and examine the problems and opportunities that may arise from the smart city challenge.

Many of the attendees were attracted by the list of high-profile speakers. Guest of honour was Development Secretary Paul Chan Mo-po, who emphasised the SAR government's backing for both its vision of smart city development and the HKIS for its far-reaching work.

Regarding the Kowloon East plan, Chan said: "The feasibility and practicality of several measures will be considered in the pilot area, including building a low-carbon community, more green buildings and creating a quality living environment."

Other speakers came from a wide range of sectors, including transport, technology, cultural development, green buildings, academia, and property development and management.

The government has suggested that Hong Kong is well equipped to develop itself as a smart city

VINCENT HO, PRESIDENT, HKIS

They included the government's director of planning Ling Kar-kan, who spoke about the fundamentals of smart city planning, while legislative councillor and former HKIS president Tony Tse Wai-chuen gave an overview of Hong Kong's part in the "Smart City Challenge", which is a global initiative.

Rebecca Chiu Lai-har, head of the department of urban planning and design at The University of Hong

Kong, questioned whether the city will be more liveable through smart technologies. Nicholas Brooke, chairman of the Harbourfront Commission, assessed the city's current "smart" status and what the priorities should be in the future.

Other speakers included Duncan Pescod, CEO of the West Kowloon Cultural District Authority; John Ng Cheuk-ye, chairman of the Hong Kong Green Building Council's Green Labelling Committee; David Tang Chi-fai, property director at MTRC; Matthew Smith, global head of marketing development of the internet of things at Cisco Systems; and past HKIS president Lau Ping-cheung.

In his closing remarks, Thomas Ho Kwok-kwan, HKIS vice-president and chairman of the annual conference organising committee, said the event enabled attendees to probe the various aspects of, and requirements for, developing a smart city, while enabling them to create more innovative strategies.



Over 300 guests attended the HKIS Annual Conference 2015 to discuss the implementation of HK's 'Smarter World City' scheme. Photos: HKIS



Thomas Ho



Paul Chan



Vincent Ho