

Annual Report for 2016/2017

1. Introduction

1.1 *The Council was elected on 7 June 2016 at the 37th Annual General Meeting (AGM). During the 2016/2017 term of office, 7 Council meetings were held to discuss and administer the affairs of our Association. The Council received many valuable feedback and suggestions on various civil service issues from our Members. We also sought advice from our Hon. Advisers, (Ir Prof. William KO Chan-gock, Ir Prof. LAU Ching-kwong and Ir Dr. Hon. LO Wai-kwok) on issues concerning the civil service and engineering profession.*

1.2 *The Council has been maintaining close communications with the Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) and the Works Directors. We also continued to maintain a regular dialogue with the Heads of Grade on issues such as staff resources, merger of civil engineer grades under management of the Director of Civil Engineering and Development and the Director of*



Water Supplies, incremental credit for experience (ICE), etc. The Council also actively communicated with the Non-Civil Service Contract Engineers / Assistant Engineers (NCSC E/AEs) and Civil Engineering Graduates (CEGs) whose major concern was undoubtedly their career prospects.

1.3 *The Council has been maintaining active participations, close communications and liaisons with other government engineers associations, the Hong Kong Institute of Environmental Protection Officers (HKIEPO), the Hong Kong Senior Government Officers Association (HKSGOA) and the Hong Kong Institution of Engineers (HKIE) concerning affairs affecting the interests of professionals in the civil service.*

1.4 *The Association congratulates the appointment of Ir LAM Sai-hung as the Director of Civil Engineering and Development. The Association is also delighted to see the appointment of Ir Albert CHENG Ting-ning as the Executive Director of the Construction Industry Council.*

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2. Civil Service Issues

2.1 *During the 2016/17 term of office, we actively participated in many major issues concerning the civil service. Salient points are mentioned in the following paragraphs:*

Staff Resources

2.2 *In order to maintain Hong Kong's competitiveness as a top-class metropolis through the successful implementation of the current and upcoming mega-scale infrastructure projects, the Association considers that the creation of Engineer grade posts in terms of ranks and numbers should be accorded with top priority and measures should be in place to retain and attract a group of high-caliber "new blood" in the Engineer grade.*

2.3 *Our fellow engineering colleagues have been tackling many difficulties brought by the change in political and social environment on implementation of public infrastructure projects. The progress/achievement of many public works projects in recent years are often at the expense of the colleagues working overtime and shouldering unprecedented working pressure than before. Therefore, we have been requesting the Administration to increase the number of engineers of various ranks to cope with the social demand and to create more Directorate Grade Engineer posts in order to steer and uphold the timely delivery of the public infrastructure projects in view of the increased complexity/controversy.*

2.4 *The Association also highlighted the importance of the measures including the creation of more permanent civil service E and AE posts to absorb all serving NCSC E/AEs and CEGs and creation of sufficient interim NCSC AE and E vacancies during the transition period at the meetings with the Grade Management. The Association also welcomes the Management to maintain the CEG-AE-E career path.*

Merger of civil engineer grades under management of the Director of Civil Engineering and Development and the Director of Water Supplies

2.5 *We share with the Grade Management's view that the proposed merger of the civil engineer grades under management of CEDD and WSD will bring positive effect on and benefit to the long-term development of our Grade in view of the buildup of a stronger team of civil engineers and the synergy effect on career development and professional training of our Grade members/colleagues.*

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2.6 *We are delighted to see that the Grade Management provided a very comprehensive perspective on the benefits and details of the merger with a view to addressing the concerns/opinion, including long-term benefits to the grade, career development, promotion prospects, posting arrangements, implementation programme and alignment of performance appraisal system. The Grade Management also fully consulted the staff side prior to the implementation of the merger. The Council will continue to communicate with the Grade Management proactively so as to safeguard the interest of our Grade in the course of the merger implementation.*

Incremental Credit for Experience (ICE)

2.7 *The Association remains concerned with the promulgation of CSB circular which makes “recruitment difficulty” a mandatory requirement when considering the granting of ICE; unlike previously HODs/HOGs were delegated with the authority to judge whether there were operational reasons (e.g. the specific requirement for a certain skill set/experience in an individual post) to do so. We consider that this circular has wrongly placed financial consideration as the overriding factor in its employment policy instead of the capability of the candidates. The Association will continue to pursue the matter.*

3. Contract Engineers and Assistant Engineers, including Assistant Civil Engineers (Graduate Training Scheme), and Civil Engineering Graduates (NCSC E/AEs & CEGs), including colleagues in the Geotechnical Discipline

3.1 *Over the years, the Association cares much about the continuous employment and career prospect of the NCSC E/AEs & CEGs and has continued to spend a considerable amount of time and effort on this issue. we have been pursuing actively the matter with the Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) and the Heads of Grade by raising the concerns of our Members on the arrangement of the recruitment exercises with a view to retaining a group of high caliber staff, who have been working with loyalty and good performance in the government for many years, to be the successors of our grade. We appreciate the Management shares the same view with us.*

3.2 *The annual civil service E recruitment exercises have been held since the lift of the civil service recruitment freeze in 2008 and the annual civil service AE recruitment exercises have been held since 2014. The Association welcomes the continuation of the civil service AE recruitment exercise as it*

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provides better employment opportunities to the NCSC AEs & CEGs. The Association congratulates the NCSC E/AEs & CEGs who have succeeded in entering the civil service. For those who have yet to be successful in the civil service recruitment exercises, the Association supports the creation of more permanent civil service E/AE posts and additional NCSC E posts or the extension of existing NCSC E contracts for securing the continuous employment and career prospect of NCSC E/AEs & CEGs within the government.

3.3 The Association has always advocating in-service recruitment among the serving NCSC E/AEs & CEGs for the civil service Engineer and Assistant Engineer recruitments. We consider that these important assets of the government, who have received much training and gained valuable experience in the works departments, should be retained for the succession of the Engineer grade. Though the current arrangement is not the ideal one being pursued by us, we hope that all our capable NCSC E/AEs & CEGs can ultimately be absorbed into the civil service and a clear career ladder can be re-established to attract high caliber engineering graduates in joining the civil service.

4. Government Young Engineers Sub-Committee (GYES)

4.1 Our GYES has not only coordinated among NCSC E/AEs & CEGs in raising concerns regarding their career prospects in the government but also has collaborated with other young engineers organizations in organizing activities for our Members and the well-being of the society.

4.2 In recent years, GYES has been proactively participating in events collaboratively organized with other young professional organizations. GYES, as one of the supporting organisations, attended the Young Construction Conference 2017 organized by the Construction Industry Council on 18 February 2017. The main objective of the Conference was to create a platform for the young members of the industry to share their vision on the industry and how it could be developed. At the Conference, Mr. Eric Ma, JP, Secretary for Development, encouraged the young professionals to join hands for building the future of Hong Kong. Mr. Ma also offered constructive views for the development of Hong Kong and our young engineers enjoyed the Conference. They also gained a valuable opportunity to meet and network with their counterparts working in the private sector and in other engineering disciplines.

4.3 GYES will continue to maintain collaboration with other young engineers and professional organizations and to organize activities so as to facilitate networking among young engineers in the public and private sectors,

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and the widening of horizons of our young members, to promote the sustainable development of the young engineers.

5. Collaboration with Other Government Engineers Associations and the Hong Kong Senior Government Officers Association (HKSGOA)

5.1 *The Association has been in the last few years working in collaboration with the nine other government engineers associations, HKIEPO and HKSGOA on issues of common interest. Our motto is “Unity is Power” and unity can lead to a good result. In the past years, the ten government engineers associations and HKIEPO met from time to time for exchanging views on government engineers’ concerns.*



5.2 *The 10 government engineers associations (including GCEA), HKIEPO and HKSGOA supported the Civil Service Engineers’ Team “CS8” comprising Ir WAI Chi-sing and 7 civil service engineers to run for the seats in the 2016 Election Committee Engineering Subsector Election. CS8 is a good demonstration of unity among the various engineer grades in the Government. CS8 has taken the golden opportunity to reflect government engineers’ concerns, including staff resources, promotion prospect and welfares issues, in meetings with all Chief Executive candidates.*

5.3 *In addition, three of our Council Members are also Council Members of the HKSGOA, which is one of the three Staff Side representatives in the Senior Civil Service Council. The Association continued to join as an Alliance Member of the HKSGOA in this term. We have been working closely with HKSGOA and other Alliance Members on issues concerning “Pay Trend Survey”, “Extending the Retirement Age of Civil Servants”, “Enhancement of welfare for colleagues joining after year 2000”, etc.*

5.4 *The Association will continue to maintain collaboration with other nine government engineers associations, HKIPEO and HKSGOA to safeguard the interest of our Members.*

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6. Liaison Office of Central People's Government in HKSAR

6.1 *We have been maintaining close liaison with the Education, Science and Technology Department of the Liaison Office of Central People's Government in HKSAR (中聯辦教育及科技部) on issues of common interest.*

6.2 *We will continue to explore opportunities to broaden our members' understandings of the latest infrastructure, political and economic developments in our Motherland and to maintain dialogues with our counterparts in the Mainland so as to enhance our collaboration with Mainland professional and academic bodies. To achieve this, we look forward to the continued assistance of the Liaison Office.*

7. Hong Kong Institution of Engineers (HKIE)

7.1 *Three of our Council Members, Ir Johnny CHAN Chi-ho, Ir Eva MAK Yee-wa and Ir Jenny YEUNG Fei, are also Council Members of the HKIE and they have been maintaining close communications with the other Civil Service EOM Council Members in the HKIE Council to exchange view on issues of common interest.*

8. Membership Drive

8.1 *Unity plays an important part in our fight for the benefits for our Members as well as for the civil service at large. It is encouraging to see that our membership has been growing. We hope that our Association will continue to grow. Once again, we appeal to Members to **encourage more fellow engineers to join our Association** so as to boost our representation.*

8.2 *Please contact our Hon. Secretary or your department's representative in Council for the membership application, and visit our Association's official website at <http://www.gcea.org.hk> regularly to keep updated on the latest activities of the Association, benefits of Members as well as issues of the Engineer grade.*

9. End-Piece

9.1 *I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your support and to thank the Council Members for their dedication and devotion to the affairs of the Association in the past year.*

9.2 *Finally, I look forward to receiving your unfailing support to the Association in the years ahead.*

By Order of the Council



*(Ir Eddie LEUNG Siu-kong)
Chairman
11 June 2017*