

Annual Report for 2006/07

1. Introduction

1.1 The Council was elected on 9 June 2006 at the 27th AGM. During the 2006/07 term, 6 council meetings were held to discuss and administer the affairs of our Association. There were also meetings and close liaison with other staff associations concerning affairs affecting the common interests of professionals in the civil service.

1.2 We received many valuable feedback and suggestions from members. We also exchanged views with our Hon. Adviser, the Hon. Ir Dr. Raymond Ho Chung-tai on issues concerning the engineering profession. The Council also met representatives of the Civil Engineering Graduates (CEGs) and NCSC Engineers/Assistant Engineers (NCSC E/AEs) whose major concern is their career prospects.

1.3 There is no question that there are still uncertainties around us. The Council has devoted much efforts to the controversial subjects of the pay level survey, pay trend survey and performance appraisal. We have also closely monitored and will continue to address the employment issues which are haunting our NCSC colleagues.

1.4 The economy of Hong Kong has improved but the morale of civil servants remains at a low level. We are of the view that it is of utmost importance to raise morale and maintain stability within the Civil Service and the Government should recognize that the preservation of these qualities is an essential pillar for delivering quality services to the public.

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1.5 We are proud of our Hon. Advisers Ir Dr. Raymond HO, who was awarded the Silver Bauhinia Star by Chief Executive, the Hon. Donald TSANG in October 2006, and Ir William KO, who was presented the Honorary Membership at the World Water Conference in Beijing in September 2006.

1.6 Last but not the least, the Association is also delighted to see the appointment of our respectable former members Ir MAK Chai-kwong and Ir WAI Chi-sing as Permanent Secretary for ETWB(Works) and Director of Highways respectively.

2. Civil Service Issues

Pay Level Survey (PLS)

2.1 The job brief/description for Engineer grade was finally presented to the staff side in January this year. Through the unfailing efforts of HKSGOA and other staff associations, and co-operations amongst members and department representatives, we managed to fight for the same goal in safeguarding the interest of all fellow engineers.

2.2 On behalf of the Association, I would like to convey our thanks to all Post Holders in alls works departments for a job that they had done perfectly well, resulting in the very comprehensive job briefs for SEs and Es pitched at a high level.

Pay Trend Survey (PTS)

2.3 As you are aware, the PTS, covering the period from 2 April 2006 to 1 April 2007, was conducted recently under an improved methodology. The improved methodology, which has been endorsed by the Chief Executive-in-Council in March this year, represents the outcome of months of extensive consultation with staff sides representatives.

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2.4 *The civil service pay scales on 1 April 2006 will serve as the basis for any pay adjustment in 2007-08. We are of the view that although the economy of Hong Kong has improved, civil servants are unable to benefit from it.*

Performance Appraisal

2.5 *In the last two years, we have written a couple of times to the management regarding the concerns of our members on the subject matter.*

2.6 *While both the Association and our members accept that there are good reasons in setting a quota for the outstanding performers for the obvious purpose of picking the high caliber candidates to move up the career ladder. We, in particular our members, are not convinced that there is a need to set arbitrary quotas for the other rankings, such as the 50% quota for the "Very Effective" ranking. At the request of our members, we will continue to maintain dialogue with the management to try to handle the issue.*

3. Meetings with Works Directors and the Hon. Adviser

3.1 *The Association seeks to maintain a regular dialogue with our Hon. Adviser the Hon. Ir Dr. Raymond HO, DCED and DWS on professional issues and grade management matters. The Council had met the Hon. Ir Dr. Raymond HO and DCED on various occasions to exchange views on Pay Level Survey, promotion prospect, performance appraisal, NCSC staff etc.*

3.2 *We have witnessed many changes in the civil service in last 12 months. The Association has been and will be addressing these issues at all levels. Salient points are mentioned in the following paragraph.*

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4. Civil Engineering Graduates (CEGs) and NCSC Engineers /Assistant Engineers (NCSCEs/AEs)

4.1 *The Council has spent a tremendous amount of time and efforts this year on this subject matter. Continuous employment is their major concern.*

4.2 *With the launch of the second voluntary retirement scheme and the recruitment freeze of permanent civil service posts a few years ago, NCSC E/AEs are the only available manpower source to take on the ever-increasing workload in the Works Departments. In fact, they have contributed a lot in up-keeping the civil engineering quality in the civil service.*

4.3 *The economic situation of Hong Kong has improved in the last couple of years and is forecast to be even better in the coming years. Many public works projects are in the pipeline, including the Hong Kong Zhuhai Macau Bridge, Express Rail Link, Central Kowloon Route, Kai Tak Development, Storm Water Tunnels etc. All these projects will demand additional manpower and should justify the creation of permanent posts, creation of additional NCSC engineer posts or extension of the existing NCSC Assistant Engineers contracts.*

4.4 *While we fully understand the constraints the management might have to face in considering our request above, we are of the view that a clear career path should be re-established for all young engineers within our hierarchy. This would no doubt provide the essential motivation to attract high caliber graduates to join the government and the engineering profession.*

4.5 *I am sure that under the capable leadership of our Hon. Adviser, Ir Dr. Raymond HO, and the understanding and support of the Permanent Secretary and Works Directors, the future of this group of engineers can be positively and timely concluded.*

5. Engineer Survey and Polling Survey

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5.1 *The Council conducted an Engineer Grade Satisfaction Level Survey among all Civil Engineers working in Government in January 2004. Three years have passed and the Council conducted the second Survey in January 2007 with a view to identify the major area of concerns from Engineers and to monitor if there are improvements over the years.*

5.2 *At the same time, we also conducted a polling survey with a view to broadly understand the polling pattern among the engineers in government during Election Committee (Engineering Sub-sector) Election on 10.12.2006. The results of the survey enable the Council to estimate the support and the reasons behind the selection with a view to determine the future way forward and strategy.*

5.3 *We had a meeting with Grade Management on 3 May 2007 to discuss and exchange views on the results of Engineer Grade Satisfaction Level Survey. A report on the findings and recommendations has been submitted to the management for consideration.*

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

6.1 *We have, in the past 12 months, maintained close liaison with the Social Work Department of Liaison Office of Central People's Government in HKSAR on issues of common interests. With their assistance, we had organized a visit to Beijing in April this year. We had the opportunity to see some of the construction related to the 2008 Olympic Game.*

6.2 *The Council will continue to maintain close liaison with our counterparts in the mainland so as to enhance our understanding of the political and administrative systems on the mainland, which will*

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eventually be beneficial for the future development of the Association's affairs in promoting collaboration and harmony between the unions and Administration.

7. HKIE Activities

*7.1 The Annual General Meeting of the HKIE has been scheduled for 21 June 2007 (Thursday). The election for the post of Elected Ordinary Members (EOM) for the 2007/08 session will also be held on the same day. The Council appeals to all members to **show your support** by attending the AGM and casting your vote.*

*7.2 Our Council Member, **Ir CHOI Chun-ming**, will run for the election for the post of EOM in partnership with **Ir Joseph MAK Yiu-wing** (Chief Structural Engineer of HD). The above-mentioned candidates participate actively in both the activities of the Association and the Institution. **Your council appeals to all members for your strong support.***

*7.3 **Your vote really matters.** We hope that our voice is constantly heard in the HKIE Council. The fact that several past Chairmen were successful in the past elections speaks volumes for the importance of your vote.*

8. Membership Drive

*8.1 As you can see from the previous cases, unity does play an important part in our fight for securing benefits for our members. However, the membership growth for last year is the lowest which we believe is mainly due to recruitment freeze. Once again, we appeal to members to **encourage more fellow engineers to join our Association** to boost our representative power. Please contact the Hon. Secretary at the st.ip@housingauthority.gov.hk or your department's representative in Council for membership application.*

9. End-Piece

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9.1 *Our Hon. Legal Adviser, Ms. Melissa PANG, was awarded the Medal of Honour last year. Her outstanding voluntary service to the community and in particular, her valuable contribution to the work of the Building Management Resource Centre, have demonstrated the highest quality of a professional – we are proud of Melissa’s achievement.*

9.2 *I will step down from the Chairmanship on 15 June 2007 and will hand over the reins to the new chairman. I like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your support and also wish to thank the Council members for their dedication and devotion to the affairs of the Association.*

9.3 *Finally, may I wish the incoming Council every success in the year ahead.*

Lastly, I look forward to seeing you all at the AGM on 15 June 2007 to make this a memorable event.

By Order of the Council

*(Ir Stephen CHU Kin-hong)
Chairman
1 May 2007*