

**Annual Report for 2007/2008**

**1. Introduction**

*1.1 The Council was elected on 15 June 2007 at the 28<sup>th</sup> AGM. During the 2007/08 term of office, 6 Council meetings were held to discuss and administer the affairs of our Association. There were also meetings and liaison with other government staff associations concerning affairs affecting the common interests of professionals in the civil service.*

*1.2 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 Dr. the Hon. Raymond HO Chung-tai, Ir Prof. LAU Ching-kwong and Ir Prof William KO Chan-gock) on issues concerning the civil service and engineering profession. The Council also met representatives of the Civil Engineering Graduates (CEGs) and NCSC Engineers/Assistant Engineers, including Assistant Geotechnical Engineers (NCSC Es/AEs) whose major concern was undoubtedly their career prospects.*

*1.3 The Council maintained close communications with our Hon. Adviser, Ir Dr. the Hon. Raymond HO, PS for Dev (Works) and the Works Directors. The Council met them on various occasions to exchange views on Engineer Grade strength/establishment, promotion prospect, performance appraisal, NCSC staff, etc.*

*1.4 The Association was also delighted to see the appointment of our respectable former members Ir LAU Ka-keung and Ir MA Lee-tak as the DDS and DWS respectively.*

*1.5 Last but not the least, we were glad to note that our Hon. President, Ir CHING Kam-cheong had taken up the post of Deputy Commissioner in TD earlier this year.*

## 2. Civil Service Issues

2.1 *In the past year, we actively participated in many major issues concerning the civil service. Salient points are mentioned in the following paragraphs:*

### Additional Manpower and Promotion Prospect

2.2 *The political and social environment has changed drastically over the past few years on the Government's implementation of public infrastructure projects. There are up-surging aspirations from the public on harbour protection, environmental conservation, heritage preservations, participation in projects, etc. Engineering projects are now facing with more court challenges, petitions and objections/confrontations. With the above changes, Engineers nowadays need to spend much more effort on planning, design and re-design of public infrastructure projects.*

2.3 *The Association notes that the strength of Engineer Grade has not been increased to cope with above changes in complexity and controversy. We have written to the Administration to request an urgent review of the manpower model for the Engineer Grade and increase the number of engineers of various ranks to cope with the social demand. The same number of engineers established in the old days cannot deliver the same public infrastructure project nowadays.*

2.4 *Furthermore, we have urged the Administration 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. With the dishing out various major public works projects, including the ten mega infrastructure projects, additional and high rank Engineers are required to deliver high quality engineering service to the public.*

### Merging of Engineer Grades in CEDD and WSD

2.5 *The Administration has rolled out the consultation paper on its proposal to merge the Engineer Grades within CEDD and WSD recently. We advocate that the Administration should provide a comprehensive perspective on the rationale, benefits and details of the proposed merging arrangements and fully consult the staff side*

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*prior to the implementation of the intended merging. We request that the proposed merging mechanism should be fair to engineers of all departments involved.*

2.6 *The Council will continue to monitor the development closely.*

### Grade Structure Review for the Directorate Grade

2.7 *In view of prevailing complex responsibilities and super heavy workload shouldered by Directorate Grade Officers, this Association has expressed views to the Standing Committee on Directorate Salaries and Conditions of Service on the Grade Structure Review for the Directorate Grade in February 2008 and proposed to review the salary and fringe benefits of Directorate Grade Officers.*

### Performance Appraisal

2.8 *The Council had raised the concerns of our Members on this subject on many occasions in the past years.*

2.9 *While both the Association and our Members accept the justification 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 are not convinced that there is a need to set arbitrary quotas for the other grades, such as the 50% quota for the “Very Effective” grade. This arbitrary quota mechanism could deprive the good performers of proper recognition of performance simply because of the limitation imposed by the quota. This is most demoralizing. The Association will continue to pursue with the Grade Management to abolish this arbitrary quota.*

### Incremental Credit for Experience (ICE)

2.10 *The Association is deeply concerned with the promulgation of CSB Circular No. 10/2007 which makes “recruitment difficulty” a mandatory requirement when considering the granting of ICE; unlike previously HODs/HOGs are delegated with the authority to judge whether there are operational reasons (e.g. the specific requirement for a certain skill set/experience in a certain post) to do so. In*

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*addition, the new policy requires candidates to declare if they are willing to join Government without ICE. Those not willing will be given lower priorities than those less competent but willing ones. The Council considers that this circular has wrongly placed financial consideration as the overriding factor in its employment policy instead of the capability of the candidates. We have written to CSB and our Hon Adviser to raise our objection on the arrangement.*

*2.11 The Council will continue to pursue the matter with the Administration via our collaboration with HKSGOA and our Hon. Adviser, Ir Dr. the Hon. Raymond HO.*

### **3. Contract Engineers and Assistant Engineers, including Geotechnical Engineers (NCSC Es/AEs)**

*3.1 The Association cares much about the continuous employment and career prospect of the NCSC Es/AEs. Over the years, the Association spent considerable amount of time and effort on this issue.*

*3.2 Since the recruitment freeze of permanent civil service posts a few years ago, NCSC Es/AEs have been the only additional manpower source to take on the ever-increasing workload in the Works Departments. They have contributed a lot in up-keeping the civil engineering quality in the civil service.*

*3.3 In 2007, the continuous employment of the NCSC Es and qualified AEs was most encouraging. With the assistance of our Hon. Adviser, Ir Dr. the Hon. Raymond HO, PS for Dev (Works), Heads of Grades and Heads of Works Departments, virtually all NCSC Es and qualified AEs were retained in government employment.*

*3.4 With the lift of the civil service recruitment freeze scheduled in early 2008, the Association has been working together with Ir Dr. the Hon. Raymond HO, PS for Dev (Works) and Heads of Grades since late 2007 to understand more on the arrangement of the first revived civil service E recruitment exercise. While this Association congratulates the success of 76 no. of serving NCSC Es/AEs in entering the civil service, we are not entirely satisfied with the*

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*outcome of the recruitment exercise which does not take full account of the contribution, dedication and past performance of the serving NCSC Es/AEs during the past years.*

*3.5 We advocate in-service recruitment among the serving NCSC Es/AEs in civil service E recruitments and retention of this group of high caliber staff, who have been working with loyalty and good performance in the government for many years, by creation of more permanent civil service E posts and additional NCSC E posts or by extension of existing NCSC E contracts. In the long term, we hope that all our capable NCSC Es/AEs can be absorbed into the permanent civil service and a clear career ladder can be re-established for our engineering graduates.*

#### **4. Liaison Office of Central People's Government in HKSAR**

*4.1 We have, in the past 12 months, maintained close liaison with the Social Work Department and the Education, Science and Technology Department of the Liaison Office of Central People's Government in HKSAR on issues of common interests.*

*4.2 With much pain and sorrow to see the great power of nature in the 5.12 earthquake, we wish to express our deepest sympathy and condolences to the victims and homeless in Sichuan. The Association has appealed all colleagues to donate generously to help the rescue and recovery work by whatever means. Upon our appeal, we have received a lump sum of donation and have passed them to the Liaison Office for onward transmission. Despite this unhappy tragedy, we wish to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to the Liaison Office for inviting the Council to visit Sichuan in September 2007. During the visit, the Council had the opportunity to visit the memorial site of the Long March, site of the famous hydraulics wonder of Doujiangyan and meet the Hong Kong Macau Affairs Office of the State Council of the Sichuan Province.*

*4.3 With the assistance of the Liaison Office, we also organized a visit to Dongguan and Guangzhou from 30 November to 2 December 2007. We visited the Honda, Songhua Lake Technology Park and the Dongshen Aqueduct project and met the Hong Kong Macau Affairs Office of the State Council of the Guangdong*

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*Province and saw the rapid developments in Dongguan. We are glad to advise that with the same assistance, the Association is organizing another delegation to Yunnan towards end June to visit the major infrastructures and heritage preservation sites thereat.*

*4.4 The Council will continue to maintain dialogue with our counterparts on the Mainland so as to enhance our understanding of the political and administrative systems in our Motherland. To achieve this, we will continue to count on the assistance of the Liaison Office.*

### **5. Collaboration with other Institutions/Associations**

*5.1 Our Government Young Engineers Sub-Committee (GYES) has collaborated with the young member section of seven other professional institutions and government staff association, with the assistance from the Education, Science and Technology Department of Liaison Office of Central People's Government in HKSAR, in organizing the Sun-yat-sen University China Study Tour from 4 to 6 April 2008. Participants (13 no. enrolled via GYES out of a total of 120 no.), mostly young engineers, benefited from the tour by learning about the infrastructure development in the Pearl River Delta as well as the legal system and diplomatic policy in Mainland China. Our young engineers also had the opportunity to meet and network with their counterparts working in the private sector and in other engineering disciplines.*

*5.2 The Council will continue to maintain collaboration with other institutions/associations with common objectives and organize meaningful events for our Members.*

### **6. HKIE Activities**

*6.1 The Annual General Meeting of the HKIE has been scheduled for 26 June 2008 (Thursday). The election of Elected Ordinary Members (EOM) for the 2008/09 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 votes.*

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6.2 *Our Council Member, **Ir EVA MAK Yee-wa**, will run for the HKIE EOM election in partnership with **Ir Frank CHAN Fan, JP** (Assistant Director of Electrical & Mechanical Services Department), **Ir TANG Chung-ming** (Senior Structural Engineer of Buildings Department), **Ir Prof Louis LOCK Fat-shing** (Site Manager (Lamma) of Hong Kong Electric) and **Ir Colin CHUNG Chi-leong** (Executive Director of Parsons Brinckerhoff (Asia) Ltd).*

6.3 *All the above-mentioned candidates have participated actively in both the activities of staff associations as well as functions of HKIE in the past few years. They share the same visions about the Institution's future as well as the civil service interests. Same as last year, this is a collaboration amongst engineers of both the public and private sectors covering all engineering disciplines in Government and private practices. These candidates have the support of the government engineers associations. **Your Council therefore appeals to all Members for giving support to them.***

6.4 *Your vote really matters. We hope that our voice is constantly heard in the HKIE Council.*

### 7. 2008 LegCo Election

7.1 *The 2008 Legislative Council Election will be conducted in September this year. We have appealed all our Members to exercise their civil right to register as voters before the deadline on 16 May 2008 and vote in September especially under the Engineering Functional Constituency.*

### 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 with 72 new members joining in the 2007/08 session. We hope that our Association will continue to grow, particularly after the lift of the civil service recruitment freeze earlier this year. Once again, we appeal to Members to **encourage more fellow engineers to join our Association** so as to boost our representation. Please contact our*

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*Hon. Secretary at tkliu@dsd.gov.hk or hksargcea@yahoo.com.hk or your department's representative in Council for membership application.*

### 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 BOK Kwok-ming )*

*Chairman*

*2 June 2008*