

Construction Industry Council

Construction Industry Training Board

Meeting No. 003/14 of the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) was held on Tuesday, 15 April 2014 at 9:30 a.m. at Conference Room, CIC Headquarters, 15/F, Allied Kajima Building, 138 Gloucester Road, Wanchai, Hong Kong

Present : Ir PANG Yat-bond, Derrick Chairman
Ir HO Ngai-leung, Albert
Ms HUNG Yee-man
Sr LAI Yuk-fai, Stephen
Mr LAM Ping-hong, Robert
Mr NG Kwok-kwan
Mr SZE Kyran
Prof TAM Chi-ming
Mr TSE Chun-yuen
Ms WONG Hoi-wan, Charmaine (representing Mr LAM Kai-chung, Albert)

In Attendance: Ir LAU Chun-kit, Ricky Ch AS (Works) 6, DEVB
Mr LAM Shing-tim AS (Works Policies) 9, DEVB
Mr WONG Doon-ye, Charles Director - Training & Development, CIC
Ir LEUNG Wai-hung, Alex Deputy Director - Training & Development, CIC
Ms Katherine TAM Senior Manager - Finance, CIC
Mr WONG Chi-lap Senior Manager - Construction Trade Testing, CIC
Mr CHU Yin-lin Senior Manager - Construction Training, CIC
Mr CHEUNG Yuk-lung Senior Manager - Development & Support Services, CIC
Dr Thomas TONG Chief Research Consultant, CIC
Ms Jamie CHAI Manager - Trainees Career Support, CIC
Ms Joyce AU Manager - Board Services, CIC
Ms Formula CHEN Assistant Manager - Board Services, CIC

Apologies : Mr LOK Kwei-sang, Tandy
Mr MAK Tak-ching

Ir SYNN Raymond-cheung
Mr LI Chi-leung

Progress Report

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3.1 Confirmation of Progress Report of the last meeting

Members took note of Paper CIC/CTB/R/002/14 with revisions made according to Members' comments as tabled and confirmed the revised Progress Report of the 2nd meeting held on 19 March 2014.

3.2 Matters arising from the last meeting

3.2.1 Agenda item 2.4.4 — Progress of Investing in Construction Manpower project and the proposed follow-up actions

Members noted that the management would allocate the remaining subsidy of around \$2.70 million under Senior Construction Workers Trade Management Course to subsidize the fees of trade tests according to the resolution of CITB. However, if there were workers applying for the above Management Course, CIC could continue to use the funding to subsidize those workers.

3.2.2 Agenda item 2.5.2 — Proposed estimates for establishing two new outdoor training grounds

Members noted that the captioned proposal of estimates would be submitted to Committee on Administration and Finance for approval. The relevant tender documents were now under the final stage of revision and tender was expected to be called by end April.

3.2.3 Agenda item 2.6.3 — Revision to proposed ratio of instructors to trainees for timber formwork under Contractor Cooperative Training Scheme (CCTS) by Gammon Construction Limited

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Members noted that CIC had informed the captioned construction company of the revision made by CIC to its proposed change to the ratio of instructors to trainees for timber formwork under CCTS.

3.2.4 Agenda item 2.7.2 – Proposal to revise application mechanism of Plumbing-Contractor Cooperative Training Scheme

Members noted that the management had met with Hong Kong Plumbing & Sanitary Ware Trade Association Ltd on 8 April 2014 and informed the Association of the revised eligibility for application under the application mechanism of the above Scheme as determined by CIC while the Guidelines on Subcontracting Practice developed by CIC was also mentioned in the meeting. Senior Manager – Development & Support Services supplemented that the Guidelines by CIC was only applicable to the contract signed between first-tier sub-contractor and second-tier sub-contractor. It was not applicable to those contracts signed between second-tier sub-contractors and third-tier sub-subcontractors. Therefore, CIC had recommended the Association to request the second- and third-tier sub-contractors to sign relevant sub-contracting contracts when submitting applications and the Association had agreed to the proposed arrangement. A Member pointed out that the captioned cooperative training scheme only covered second-tier sub-contractors and third-tier sub-subcontractors but did not involve fourth-tier sub-contractors or sub-contractors at lower tiers, so it should be put on record clearly. Chairman agreed and requested it to be recorded in related document.

**Senior
Manager-
Development
& Support
Services**

3.2.5 Agenda item 2.12.1 – Proposal of revised enhancement measures for the framework document for Sub-contractor Cooperative Training Scheme

Members noted that Task Force on Sub-contractor Cooperative Training, E&M Training and Subsidy Scheme would follow up the drop-out of trainees under Sub-contractor Cooperative Training Scheme

**Task Force on
Sub-contractor
Cooperative
Training,
E&M Training**

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and whether it was necessary for this Scheme to be linked with On-the-job Training Subsidy Scheme. In addition, all task forces would follow up the training outcomes of their respective training schemes.

**and Subsidy
Scheme**

3.3 Verbal Report by Task Force on Training

3.3.1 Chairman of Task Force on Training, Ir HO Ngai-leung, Albert, reported that the first meeting of the Task Force was scheduled for 28 May 2014 and highlights of its work for 2014 included:

- to discuss the manpower demand and target training places for construction industry in the future;
- to explore training-related enhancement measures like shortening the waiting time for courses and enhancing the course contents, etc.;
- to review the quantity of training courses, increase the quantity of courses through enhanced complementary facilities and introduce training courses in need in the coming years but not yet been on offer; and
- to review and ensure the quality of training courses in line with the market demand.

The objective of the Task Force was to offer suitable courses with appropriate quantity for the industry.

3.3.2 Chairman expressed that there were more than 40 courses offered by CIC at present and it took quite some time to review all of them. Thus, it was recommended that courses with imminent need be reviewed first. Moreover, in the previous communication meeting with course advisory panels, it was raised by participating panel chairmen that manpower shortage was found in some trades like draftsmen, measurement technicians etc. Chairman proposed the task forces to follow up with the industry about the feasibility of training the required personnel and requested chairmen of relevant task forces to communicate with each other on the subject matter and coordinate relevant arrangement.

**Task Force on
Training**

3.3.3 As regards the view of the industry to have CIC to

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train up semi-skilled workers to become skilled workers, Chairman recommended to first review training courses with longer queues and longer waiting time for admission before following up the issue. **Task Force on Training**

3.4 Verbal Report by Task Force on Trade Testing

3.4.1 Chairman of Task Force on Trade Testing, Mr NG Kwok-kwan, reported that the first meeting of the Task Force was scheduled for 16 April 2014 and the highlights of its work for 2014 included:

- to shorten the waiting time for taking trade tests to within two months as stated in the guidelines;
- to review trade tests with relatively low passing rate;
- to cater for and address possible increase in demand for trade tests due to the revision of Construction Workers Registration Ordinance and the implementation of “designated workers for designated trades”; and
- to explore short-term measures to cope with sudden increase in applications for taking trade tests of certain trades.

3.4.2 Chairman proposed the Task Force on Trade Testing be responsible for reporting the waiting time and the number of candidates lining up for trade tests in the future. **Task Force on Trade Testing**

3.5 Verbal Report by Task Force on Contractor Cooperative Training, Apprenticeship Scheme and On-the-job Training

On behalf of Chairman of Task Force on Contractor Cooperative Training, Apprenticeship Scheme and On-the-job Training, Ir SYNN Raymond-cheung, who could not attend the meeting, Deputy Director reported that the first meeting of the Task Force was scheduled for 8 May 2014. Apart from introducing the functions of the Task Force and the manpower demand and target training places for construction industry in the future, the meeting would also discuss the key tasks of the Task Force in 2014, which included:

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- to understand the operation of Contractor Cooperative Training Scheme, Apprenticeship Subsidy Scheme and On-the-job Training Subsidy Scheme as well as their progress;
- to review the effectiveness of various schemes such as the trades, training places, subsidy period, allowance amount, drop-out rate of trainees etc. covered by these schemes; and
- to explore the directions of development for various schemes.

3.6 Verbal Report by Task Force on Sub-contractor Cooperative Training, E&M Training and Subsidy Scheme

3.6.1 Chairman stated that the first meeting of Task Force on Sub-contractor Cooperative Training, E&M Training and Subsidy Scheme was scheduled for 15 May 2014. Apart from getting a better understanding of the manpower demand and target training places for construction industry in the future, the key tasks of the Task Force for 2014 also included:

- to take note of the number of training places and quality of training under Sub-contractor Cooperative Training Scheme, Contractor Cooperative Training Scheme for E&M trades, and “DVE Program” Subsidy Scheme;
- to review the effectiveness of training provided by different sub-contractors under Sub-contractor Cooperative Training Scheme;
- to follow up whether Sub-contractor Cooperative Training Scheme should be linked with On-the-job Training Subsidy Scheme; and
- to explore whether the mode of cooperative training schemes should be changed after using up the allowance of \$320 million earmarked by the Government.

3.6.2 Chairman reiterated the three objectives of the future work for CITB and hoped that the four Task Forces could have a clear understanding of these objectives to facilitate effective and substantial discussions.

3.7 Proposed training target of Sub-contractor Cooperative Training Scheme in 2014 (for discussion)

- 3.7.1 Members took note of the revised Paper CIC/CTB/P/096/14 as tabled and noted the number of target training places of Sub-contractor Cooperative Training Scheme for 2014 was 600. The estimated expenditure was around \$40,894,421, which was already set aside in 2014 budget, and the balance of \$17,526,181 would be offset in 2015. However, there were 401 trainees already participated in Sub-contractor Cooperative Training Scheme in 2013. As of end 2013, there were still 205 trainees undertaking training and the relevant training expenses for this batch of trainees in 2014 were around \$11,704,000. The Secretariat had to request for additional expenditure estimates, which was not reserved in the budget, from Committee on Administration and Finance.
- 3.7.2 A Member representing the union stated that Sub-contractor Cooperative Training Scheme must be linked with On-the-job Training Subsidy Scheme, or otherwise, the expected outcome could not be achieved. That Member also pointed out that the estimated training cost of \$97,367.67 per trainee under Sub-contractor Cooperative Training Scheme was relatively high, so the proposed 600 training places for 2014 should first be discussed by the related task forces and then submitted to CITB for consideration. For the proposal of providing additional expenditure estimates for 205 trainees admitted in 2013 but were still under training in 2014, that Member opined that CIC had to ensure that batch of trainees was able to complete the relevant training.
- 3.7.3 After discussion, Chairman proposed that the additional expenditure estimates for those 205 trainees, who were admitted in 2013 and were still under training in 2014, be approved first. Regarding the proposed 600 training places for Sub-contractor Cooperative Training Scheme in 2014, Chairman opined that the training scheme needed to be

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continued and CIC had already allocated a lump sum. Thus, it could consider approving 200 places first and the Task Force on Sub-contractor Cooperative Training, E&M Training and Subsidy Scheme would review the subsidy mechanism within a predefined time frame. The application for additional provision for the remaining training places would be considered after the review. If there was a change in the cooperative mechanism, arrangement for provision would be adjusted accordingly.

- 3.7.4 A Member representing Hong Kong Construction Sub-contractor Association stated that training of talents should be in line with the industry. If the Sub-contractor Cooperative Training Scheme was temporarily suspended in 2014, the construction cost would be increased. The industry might resort to other means like importing labour to fill up the vacancies. In fact, the Sub-contractor Association was working hard to promote cooperative training scheme and select suitable and committed sub-contractors for the scheme as far as possible.
- 3.7.5 Member representing the union reiterated that Sub-contractor Cooperative Training Scheme and On-the-job Training Subsidy Scheme must be linked with the aim of retaining the trainees in the industry for at least two years. Yet, the union received complaints that there were trainees, who had not yet worked for six months, dismissed by their employers. Thus, the urgent need to approve all training places for Sub-contractor Cooperative Training Scheme in 2014 was in question. That Member also stated that there were voices in the industry that the Scheme was helping employers hire cheap labour.
- 3.7.6 Chairman proposed to review the Scheme within a specified time frame, say around two months, and necessary adjustments would be made immediately after the review. Chairman also expressed his understanding of the stand and concerns of the union. He however did not go with the saying that sub-contractors made use of the scheme to employ workers at low wages. Individual complaint should

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not be generalized to cover all sub-contractors. In fact, there was a great demand for workers in the industry and industry stakeholders all hoped to do better in the training work.

- 3.7.7 Member representing the union again stated the union had expressed earlier that being a stakeholder in the construction industry, the union would like to take part in cooperative training scheme to train the required manpower for the industry. Chairman requested the management to follow up with the union to review the possibility of extending partnership under the training scheme.

**Senior
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Development
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- 3.7.8 Regarding the breakdown of trades for target number of trainees in 2014 under the Sub-contractor Cooperative Training Scheme tabulated in Table 2 of the Paper, a Member asked that some of the trades were not included in the list of 14 trades having short-term shortage in manpower supply as given in Table 1. It was hoped that the management could provide information and data on situation of manpower shortage in the industry when submitting the target training places to CITB for approval.

- 3.7.9 Chairman requested the management to re-organize Table 1 to give reasons for providing training places for those trades given in Table 2. The updated tables should then be circulated to all Members. Chairman concluded that CITB would now approve the additional expenditure estimates of \$11,704,000 for those 205 trainees, who were admitted in 2013 and were still under training in 2014, and approve initially 200 training places under Sub-contractor Cooperative Training Scheme for 2014. After the related task force had reviewed the mechanism of the scheme, it would follow up the approval of the remaining training places for 2014.

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3.8 Report on evaluation of productivity of CIC graduates (for information)

- 3.8.1 Members took note of Paper CIC/CTB/P/097/14 and noted the background of conducting evaluation on

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productivity of graduates. The report only evaluated five trades which had greater manpower demand from the construction industry. The trade association and labour union respectively assigned two senior practitioners with qualifications as skilled workers from the five trades to represent the industry while CIC would randomly select two graduates by trades who voluntarily participated in the evaluation. For the evaluation of the standard of trade skills, graduates of short courses and of Sub-contractor Cooperative Training Scheme respectively achieved 85% and 78% of the standard of the industry representatives. This reflected that these graduates did possess a certain level of trade skills. For task completion time, graduates from the above courses respectively completed the tasks with average time index as 127% and 144% of the industry representatives. This showed that these graduates were new to the industry and needed more practical working experience to enhance productivity.

- 3.8.2 Chairman expressed that the report on evaluation was indicative but only simple analysis could be made as the sample size was small. Compared with graduates of CIC short courses, the productivity of graduate representatives of the cooperative training schemes were lower. Thus, relevant task forces were proposed to make reference to it and take follow-up actions.

Task Force on Contractor Cooperative Training, Apprenticeship Scheme and On-the-job Training and Task Force on Sub-contractor Cooperative Training, E&M Training and Subsidy Scheme

3.9 2012/2013 Survey on employers' satisfaction towards the work performance of trainees (for information)

- 3.9.1 Members took note of Paper CIC/CTB/P/098/14 and noted the revised Slide 17 of the Paper tabled. Members noted the background information of conducting the captioned survey. The results showed

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that 50%-60% employers considered graduates of Basic Craft Courses, Adult Short Courses and Enhanced Construction Manpower Training Scheme met the technical requirements in respect of the needs of trade skills. For meeting with the overall expectation and needs of the industry, over 20% employers considered graduates, who accumulated experience for two years or more, could meet with the needs of the industry. The survey also identified trades with higher and lower levels of satisfaction, and also the trainees' abilities and personal attributes that were regarded by the employers with high and low levels of satisfaction. It also found the abilities and personal attributes of graduates with declining level of satisfaction when compared with survey results in the past three years.

3.9.2 In addition, Members noted the retention rate, reasons for staying in the industry, reasons for staying in the industry but not engaging in the trades they were trained and also reasons for leaving the industry of graduates of Supervisor/Technician Courses, Basic Craft Courses and Full-time Short Courses as surveyed between 2010 and 2012. Members also noted the various proposals made by the management in relation to the survey.

3.9.3 Chairman recommended that relevant task forces could refer to the findings and analyses of the survey and the issues of concern. He also instructed that survey targets in the future should be direct supervisors of the graduates concerned such that the comments collected could accurately reflect the level of satisfaction towards the performance of trainees.

**Manager -
Trainees
Career
Support**

3.10 Any Other Business

3.10.1 Review on the use of training venues

Chairman stated that the visit to CIC training centres and training grounds right after the last meeting could help Members understand the training situation. From the visit, Chairman opined that it was necessary to review the way of using CIC training venues to

**Director -
Training &
Development**

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enhance efficiency, increase training outputs and strengthen the sense of belonging of trainees towards the industry. It was also considered to propose to CIC for appointing a consultant to conduct an overall review on training venues to ensure that CIC could have suitable venues for training and trade testing in the long run.

3.10.2 Continuous professional development of instructors

Responding to a Member's enquiry on the arrangement for continuous professional development of instructors, Deputy Director stated that one of the objectives of CITB was to enhance the quality and standard of instructors. Chairman proposed the Task Force on Training to follow up on how to achieve the said objective.

**Task Force on
Training**

3.11 There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:55 a.m.

**CIC Secretariat
April 2014**