

THE HONG KONG HOUSING AUTHORITY

Memorandum for the Housing Authority

Consultancy Report on Development of Site Safety Strategy

PURPOSE

The purpose of this paper is to inform Members of the findings of the consultancy on the development of Site Safety Strategy and the way forward to implement the Housing Authority Site Safety Strategy.

BACKGROUND

2. The 1 700 number of accidents on Housing Authority (HA) Sites in 1998 is substantially higher than the 684 number in 1997. In particular, an alarming 11 cases of fatal accidents incurred in 1998. This unsatisfactory situation was brought up to Members' attention on 29 April 1999 (Paper No. BC 72/99 refers).

3. By the same Paper, the Building Committee (BC) approved the appointment of a consultant to shape a long-term site safety strategy. The Occupational Safety and Health Council was appointed on 11 October 1999 to undertake the consultancy.

4. A comprehensive site safety strategy, based on the consultancy study undertaken by the Occupational Safety and Health Council, was supported and recommended by the BC on the 22 June 2000 vide Paper No. BC 80/2000.

SITE SAFETY STRATEGY

5. The Site Safety Strategy Final Report developed by the consultant is at
----- **Annex A**. An executive summary is placed at the forefront of the Report; Section 10 gives a summary of the consultant's 40 recommendations.

The strategy coherently covers the following areas -

Section 2 Accident Analyses

Section 3 Tenders and Contracts

Section 4 Sanctions and Incentives

Section 5 Site Related Safety Culture and Safety Systems

Section 6 Organisations' Safety Culture and Safety Systems

Section 7 Publicity and Safety Campaigns

Section 8 The Law and Law Enforcement

Section 9 A Strategy for Success

6. The consultant's 40 recommendations will be implemented in
----- conjunction with the view of the Department listed in **Annex B**. Basically, the Department supports the recommendations with some adjustments to suit the Department's context.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

7. The BC supported and recommended the Site Safety Strategy. In-
----- depth discussion was held. Key issues raised at the BC meetings held on 27 April 2000, 25 May 2000 and 22 June 2000 are addressed in **Annex C** as supplementary information to this paper.

CONSULTATION

8 Views from the Hong Kong Construction Association (HKCA) have been sought on the initiatives covered in this Paper. They are generally supportive of the proposals. Further consultation is expected as details are progressively developed. In the course of developing this proposed site safety strategy, the consultant has also conducted interviews with a broad range of related government departments and stakeholders organizations. The recommendations proposed in the Report are in context with the construction industry.

IMPLEMENTATION

9. A summary of recommendations and an implementation programme are respectively presented in Section 10 and 11 of the Final Report (**Annex A**). A priority rating has been assigned beside each recommendation. Category A indicates works which should be dealt with during the first year of implementation, though not necessarily completed. There is a sub-division within Category A indicated by [A], which represents important initiatives for safety already in place, operating successfully and recommends that they should continue. Category B recommendations are less urgent and can be dealt with commencing the second year of implementation. Successful implementation is subject to adequate resources explained in paragraph 12 below.

10. One measure recommended in the Final Report is to place in tender documents a safety statement which aims to assert HA's commitment to safety and thereby prompt all contractors to fulfil their duties on safety. This will be further considered by the BC. While the proposal is to develop a statement for issue to contractors, it is the intention to develop an HA policy statement on site safety.

11. Improving site safety is also included among the 50 recommendations of the Public Housing Quality Implementation Plan (Paper No. HA 24/2000). The consultancy is in accord with this direction. Implementation of these recommendations will also be carefully studied to integrate coherently with the Quality Housing initiatives.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

12. Competent and adequate resources are vital for successful implementation. The consultant advised the need of setting up a safety unit in HA with external help in the beginning. The function of the Safety Unit is outlined in Paragraph 6.17 of the Final Report. At present, the unit is staffed with one senior professional officer. The BC has endorsed the strengthening of the Safety Unit. This will be considered by the Human Resources Committee and the Departmental Establishment Committee. In the course of detail implementation, further consultation may be needed. A retainer service to further advise on the implementation may be required, if necessary.

DISCUSSION

13. At the next meeting of the HA to be held on 6 July 2000, Members will be invited to note the findings of the consultancy and the implementation of the HA Site Safety Strategy (paragraphs 5 and 6 above).

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