THE HONG KONG HOUSING AUTHORITY

Memorandum for the Building Committee

Consultancy Report on the Development of Site Safety Strategy

PURPOSE

The purpose of this paper is to -

(a) inform Members of the consultancy Final Report on the development of Site Safety Strategy; and

(b) seek Members' endorsement on the proposed Site Safety Strategy developed from the consultancy.

BACKGROUND

2. A comprehensive site safety strategy, based on the consultancy study undertaken by the Occupational Safety and Health Council, was presented at the Building Committee (BC) meeting held on the 27 April 2000 vide Paper No. BC 46/2000. Presentation on the consultancy study was given by the consultant at the meeting.

3. Paper No. BC 46/2000 was also briefly discussed on the 25 May 2000 as matter arising. The BC considered that, in view of the significance and volume of the consultancy, decision should be deferred so that the Report can be studied more thoroughly. This paper is prepared for continual BC discussion and consideration.
SITE SAFETY STRATEGY

4. A comprehensive HA site safety strategy is developed by the consultant and presented in the Final Report (distributed as Annex A of Paper No. BC 46/2000). An executive summary is placed at the forefront of the Report; Section 10 gives a summary of the consultant's forty recommendations. The strategy coherently covers the following areas -

   Section 2  Accident Analysis
   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

5. The view of the Department regarding these forty recommendations is listed in Annex B.

SITE SAFETY STATEMENT

6. The HA as one of the major clients in Hong Kong can exercise her capacity to influence standards of safety through the process of tendering and contract administration.

7. One measure in this process, as recommended in the Final Report, is to place prominently 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. By setting out HA requirements and standards, this safety statement also embodies a safety mission to which HA contractors must commit. An initial version of this safety statement is attached at Annex C.
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

8. Issues discussed at the BC meetings held on the 27 April 2000 and the 25 May 2000 are addressed in Annex D as supplementary information to this paper.

CONSULTATION

9. Views from the Hong Kong Construction Association (HKCA) has 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

10. This Paper aims to seek Members’ approval of the proposed site safety strategy. Details of implementation would be developed based on the direction of the approved strategy, the progress of which would be further reported to the Building Committee at a regular quarterly interval.

11. 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 recommended 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 paragraphs 13 and 14 below.

12. 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.

RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

13. 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, it is proposed to create initially one additional staff for the Safety Unit.

14. In the course of detail implementation, further consultation may be needed. It is proposed to obtain a retainer service from the Occupational Safety and Health Council (OSHC) to further advise on the implementation, if necessary. The estimated expenditure for this service is $0.30 M.

RECOMMENDATION

15. Members are requested to approve or note the following -

(a) approve the proposed Site Safety Strategy of the Consultancy Final Report (distributed as Annex A of Paper No. BC 46/2000, April 2000) in conjunction with the view of the Department listed in Annex B.

(b) approve the adoption of a safety statement in paragraphs 6 and 7.

(c) note the programme for implementation in paragraphs 10 to 12.

(d) endorse the initial creation of additional one staff for the Safety Unit in paragraph 13. DEC/HRC submission will be made accordingly.

(e) note the requirement of a retainer service from the Occupational Safety and Health Council in paragraph 14.
DISCUSSION

16. At the BC meeting to be held on 22 June 2000, Members will be invited to discuss this paper and approve the recommendations stated in paragraph 15 above.

17. Upon approval by the BC, a paper will be submitted to the HA meeting.

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