

President's Report for 1st QGM 2008

Dear Members,

As we enter the auspicious year of the Rat, I wish everyone continued good health and prosperity for 2008.

1. Management Review

The Review has been completed and an executive summary has been made available to all members. You can log in at:-

www.hkia.net/other_images/management_review.pdf to view it.

Council has had two independent workshops on the Report to highlight items that HKIA should attend to. As there are many issues to address and it is impossible to do all of them at once, we have allocated the items into three time frames.

1. Immediate – within 6 months.
2. Medium term – up to 18 months.
3. Long term – over 18 months.

The Council has given the Office Bearers the mandate to seek outside consultancy to help with the implementation and to report to Council on the items to be carried out in the next few months and its costs.

These will be made known to you later.

2. HK/SZ Bi-City Biennale of Urbanism & Architecture

The Biennale is open up to 15 March 2008. See www.hkszbiennale.asia.

It has been a great success and I would encourage any members who have not been there to make an effort to see the great works and to encourage others to go to see the sixty local and overseas works.

The setting is perfect as the exhibitors balanced the existing historic old buildings with the modern exhibitions.

As of 11 February 2008,

- There have been 26,304 visitors.
- 520 people attended the 12 forums and lectures.
- 12 schools and organizations have visited.

We are hoping for a meaningful Closing Ceremony involving the whole communities of Lan Kwai Fong, Soho, Hollywood Road and mid-level for all the people of Hong Kong. Please reserve the evening of 15 March free.

3. Liaison with Partnering Institutes/External Bodies

a. Travel to the Middle East

As the representative of the Architectural Profession, I was invited (on a self-financing basis) to join the Hong Kong High Level Delegation to Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates between 25 January to 1 February 2008 led by the Chief Executive of Hong Kong, the Hon Donald Tsang.

There were 24 delegates excluding those from the Government and TDC.

The purpose was to promote bilaterally Hong Kong's investment and service opportunities to the Middle East and to encourage investment from the Middle East to Hong Kong and China.

If members are interested, TDC can arrange for HKIA members to have a trade mission to the Middle East to promote our services.

b. Joint Institute Dinner

The JID held on 20 February 2008 was hosted by HKIA on a rotational basis.

The items discussed were:

- Mandatory CPD requirements for Registered Professionals.
- Financial support by Development Bureau for the maintenance of the APEC Architect Project and for legal representation in case of litigation of registration matters arise.
- Support of Affiliates/Associates of the Professional Bodies of HKIA and HKIE.

- Inter-Institute support and participation of our Conference to be held on 22 November 2008 and our Golf Day to be held at the Hong Kong Golf Club on either 14 November 2008.
- Share common CPD programmes to expand our learning of related disciplines to member's rate.
- Mutual recognition of professionals in the PRC.

c. Council's Dinner with the Past Presidents

The dinner held on Tuesday, 26 February 2008 was warmly received by Past Presidents including Mr. Edwin Wong, Mr. Andrew Lee, Mr. Chung Wah Nan, the Hon. Patrick Lau, Mr. Stephen Poon, Mr. Barry Will and Mr. John Wong. This gives an opportunity for Council Members to meet the Past Presidents on a more intimate basis and to share both past and present experiences so as to further learn from each other.

d. Dinner with AIA (HK) Chapter

The dinner was held on 28 February 2008 and the purpose was to find common grounds to share our professional goals. We already have an agreement offering member's rate for CPD programmes.

It is hoped they will help us find good speakers from the US for our Conference in November (see item 8).

e. Dinner Invitation by Coordination Dept, Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in HKSAR

This was an Annual Spring Dinner extended to all Council Members and was held on 5 March 2008.

f. Board of Architects Singapore Visiting HKIA & ARB

Mr Chan Sui Him, President of Board of Architects Singapore and Mr Ng Lye Hock, Registrar will meet with HKIA and ARB on their visit to Hong Kong on 19 March 2008.

g. DEVB-MOC Conference 2008

The Conference will be held after end October 2008. The city and exact date to be held will be confirmed.

4. HKIA Premises

a. 19/F, 1 Hysan Avenue, Causeway Bay

The lease of this property has been signed for three years from 1 June 2008 expiring 31 May 2011.

Given that the renovation work will cost around HK\$1.5 million and the Secretariat staff will be unduly disturbed during the work, it is very likely that only very minor and maintenance work will be carried out. It is also felt that the money can be better spent towards the implementation of the immediate items as recommended in the Management Review.

b. 15/F, Success Building, 245-251 Hennessy Road, Wanchai

The premises which we bought in 1985 and leased out when it was too small for our need has been relet for another two years to 31 May 2010.

c. New Premises

I still have a dream that in three years' time, HKIA will have its own premises large enough for us to use which we can call "home".

In early 2010, HKIA will have this opportunity to make a conscious decision whether to own its own premises and pay mortgage instead of leasing.

5. CEPA

In mid January 2008, the Works Branch of the Development Bureau led a delegation of professionals to Beijing to meet with the Ministry of Construction (MOC).

A negotiation to extend the five year CEPA mutual recognition can only be considered after the present five year agreement is completed in 2008. To effect this, a negotiation has to be carried out at the highest government level.

MOC has also indicated that they are prepared to offer to HKIA members a recognition examination for Professional Construction Manager qualification (建設工程監理師資格). Details are being worked out.

At the end of February, it was agreed with MOC that the bilateral professional examination would take place from 7 to 11 July 2008. The venue is to be confirmed. The number of candidates is still under negotiation.

Members were being requested to indicate their interest for participation in the forthcoming mutual recognition exercise.

6. Professional Assessment

Last year, we engaged Mr CC Choi, the former Secretary General of the Hong Kong Examination and Assessment Authority to review our professional assessment system. A full report has been submitted and there are many things that we can do to improve our system.

We have employed Mr SK Wong, former Deputy Director of ASD to help us implement the recommendations of the Report made by the CC Choi Report on a part time basis and to help the Professional Assessment Committee and the Secretariat. SK commenced work on Monday, 7 January 2008. Please welcome SK to HKIA.

7. Human Resources

With the improved market conditions for our profession and the extended market beyond Hong Kong to Mainland China, Macau, Southeast Asia and the Middle East, etc, there is a general shortage of good architectural staff.

The application for work visa for overseas staff through the Immigration Department has been slow and difficult in the past few years. We wrote to the C.E.'s Office late last year together with the assistance of the Hon Patrick Lau, which resulted in a helpful meeting with the Director of Immigration, Mr TK Lai and his key staff. A seminar was held at HKIA on Tuesday, 29 January 2008 during which Ms Helen Chan, Assistant Director of the Immigration Department met with 30 of our members to understand the requirements of the Department so as to facilitate ease of application for work permits for overseas professional staff.

We have also written to both the University of Hong Kong, the Chinese University of Hong Kong and the UGC to increase their intake of Architectural Students by 20%.

8. HKIA Conference and Annual Dinner 2008

We shall be holding our first one day Conference on Saturday, 22 November 2008. Vice Presidents, Dominic Lam and Elizabeth Cheng are the two co-chairs for this Conference.

The theme is “Urbanism & Architecture” and there will be a global study on the subject. Speakers will be invited from London, New York City, Shanghai and Hong Kong.

We also hope to involve RIBA whose President, Sunand Prasard and Chief Executive, Richard Hastilow have agreed to attend to meet the 700 RIBA members in Hong Kong. Others from RAI, AIA will also be invited.

The Chief Executive, The Hon Donald Tsang, has agreed to attend our Annual Ball and present the Dr Cecil Chao Architectural Design Award to the winner.

Please keep the whole of this day free and participate.

If you want to join either the Conference Committee, please contact Dominic Lam or Elizabeth Cheng.

For the Ball Committee, please contact Murphy Ngan or Katherine Ngan.

Vivian Sie of our Secretariat will be coordinating both events and can be contacted at Tel: 2805-7090 and email: hkiasec@hkia.org.hk.

Dr Ronald Lu, *CHKIA*
President
The Hong Kong Institute of Architects