



Message from the Chair



It is my great honour to have been elected by the Council Members as the Chairman of the Association of Consulting Engineers of Hong Kong (ACEHK) for the 2019/2020 session. The social unrest over the last few months has impacted everyone in Hong Kong and has had a major impact on our industry. Indeed the vandalism to the legislative building and the continuous filibustering of the finance budget committees has also resulted in longer delays and longer endorsement times for public project approvals.

We have experienced various roller-coaster rides in construction over the last few decades with many ups and downs within the industry, some foreseeable and some less so. Companies who understood the market, mapped the trends and prepared well during the downturns generally did better when the industry turned around and boomed. These days with a similar climate of uncertainty it is important for us to prepare ourselves for the next challenge, for the uphill struggle, before the whoosh and the next race on the rollercoaster ride. We need to embrace technology, think efficiency, move smart, become more sustainably focussed to get a better planned, consistent and phased future. This year we will focus on the following areas :

- Challenging business environment – by liaising with the HKSAR Government to rationalise the procurement policy to improve the prosperity and continuity of the industry.
- Excellence – to promote technical excellence and quality services offered by our industry by sharing from the stakeholders and learn from overseas best practices.
- Innovation & Creativity – to promulgate adoption of latest applicable technology in our industry to enhance our professional services and improve delivery and safety within the industry.
- Diversity – to encourage participation and inclusion of gender equality at all levels and in particular in senior management roles as well as encourage and promote minority group inclusion within our industry.
- Succession – to cultivate a nurturing environment to allow our young energetic and talented professionals to display and push their talent forward.

I think the future can be bright even when its gloomy, I look forward to receiving your support in pushing these initiatives forward.

Ir James SZE
Chairman

2019 EGM and AGM

The ACEHK's 43rd Annual General Meeting (AGM) was held at 6.15pm at The Hong Kong Club on 16 December 2019, and was preceded by an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) at 6pm and cocktails starting at 5.30pm. The EGM/AGM was well attended by more than Council Members, Registered Principals and guests.

At the EGM, a vote was taken on a proposed Ordinary Resolution for the purpose of updating the qualification requirement of Registered Principals and improving clarity of certain clauses of the Articles of Association of ACEHK. The Resolution was passed unanimously.

At the AGM, it was revealed that six nominations were received for the election to fill three vacancies in the Council for the 2019/2020 session. They were Johnny LAM of Aurecon; Tony PEARSON of Mott MacDonald; Stephen LAI of AECOM; Francis SOOTOO of MVA; Alexi BHANJA of SMEC; and James PENNY of Arcadis. After the vote was taken, Johnny LAM, Francis SOOTOO and James PENNY were elected; Tony PEARSON and Stephen LAI were co-opted; and Alexi BHANJA became and Observer. The current Council are shown below and listed on p2.



Coronavirus Pandemic

2020 has proved to be the year of the pandemic. Although Hong Kong is currently doing better than most other places, there have still been significant impacts to our economy – shrinking 8.9% year on year in the first quarter, the deepest for a single quarter since records began in 1974! While the aviation, hospitality, retail, tourism and other service sectors have been hit hard, the consulting sector has not been spared. Wage freezes, no pay leave, pay cuts and/or redundancies have all been experienced by our members.

Back in early February, when the COVID-19 infection rate was increasing, there were rumours circulating on social media regarding staff infections and company responses, both of ACEHK member firms and contractors. Some rumours turned out to be true, others were false. In either case, such rumours were at best distracting and at worst potentially harmful to our employees if they were believed and acted upon. ACEHK therefore took upon itself to act as trusted repository of information related to COVID-19 infections, collated directly from member firms. This information was then distributed in a timely manner to all member firms as and when such incidents arose, so that senior management could respond to their staff in an consistent, authoritative and informative manner, thereby replacing rumour and avoiding panic amongst staff.

To help alleviate the hardship we are all facing, three Hong Kong-wide initiatives have been announced by government that are directly beneficial to ACEHK Members:

1. On 24 February, the Construction Industry Council (CIC) launched the Construction Industry "Anti-epidemic Fund" (AEF). The first round of this allows firms, including those who are members of ACEHK, to claim a HKD 50,000 subsidy to enhance workplace cleanliness and sanitation for epidemic prevention. Applications can be made online through the CIC website (http://www.cic.hk/eng/main/anti_epidemic_fund/company/) until 31 August. Any ACEHK member firms who have not yet applied for this subsidy are strongly advised to do so.
2. On 20 April, government announced the Employment Support Scheme (ESS) to provide time-limited financial support to employers to retain their employees who will inevitably be made redundant due to the downturn in business. According to government "the provision of subsidies for employers will help the businesses to stay afloat and retain jobs to prepare for quick recovery once the epidemic is over". All firms are eligible to receive a subsidy of 50% of the monthly wage of each staff with a MPF account (capped at HKD 9,000) for a period of six months from June to November. Payment will be made in two tranches, with the first pay-out no later than the end of June to subsidise employers to pay employees' wages from June to August. Firms are strongly advised to apply for the first tranche of this subsidy when applications are accepted online between 25 May and 14 June.
3. On 27 April, government announced the second round of subsidy under the AEF. This allows firms, including those who are members of ACEHK, to claim a HKD 50,000 subsidy for training. Applications can be made now by submitting the required documents by email to DevB (wbaef@devb.gov.hk). Later, online applications can be made through the CIC website. Applications can be made until 31 August. Any ACEHK member firms who have not yet applied for this subsidy are strongly advised to do so.

In addition to the above, on 2 March DevB introduced a one-off "special advance payment" arrangement for ongoing Government consultancy agreements on top of the interim relief measure previously promulgated to raise the "percentage payment upon agreement signing" to 10% under new Government consultancy agreements. Under the "special advance payment" arrangement, the Employer will make a one-off special advance payment to the Consultants, upon their request, in an amount equal to 5% of the lump sum fee, which is capped at HKD 5,000,000. This amount of payment will be deducted in instalments at a later stage of the agreement. To enable proper implementation of the "special advance payment", a supplementary agreement shall be executed between the Employer and the Consultants in the form of a deed. All ACEHK member firms are encouraged to enter into supplementary agreements for their government projects so as to help their cashflow situation.

Key Accomplishments During the 2018/19 Session

- **The Council** comprised twelve Council Members comprising senior management from a wide spectrum of companies to provide a balanced representation of engineering consultants.
- **Membership** increased by one: PineBridge Consulting Ltd. Currently there are 29 member firms
- **Government Liaison** was maintained regular dialogue with the Development Bureau (DevB) through the Consulting Engineering Committee (CEC) meeting and communication meeting with the Architectural Services Department (ArchSD) to exchange views on government practices and policies that may affect the delivery of consultancy services.
- **Networking Events** to provide networking opportunities for member firms to interact with government officials, business partners and clients. These events include the Annual Seminar, networking luncheon and breakfast talk and Annual Dinner
- **Annual Seminar** themed “Preparedness of Consulting Engineering Practice in Meeting New Era of Construction Challenges” was held on 8 November 2019 with over 190 attendees
- **3rd Annual Award** organized and presented during Annual Dinner.
- **Young Members Committee** has grown in the number of members to over thirty young professionals. Mentorship programme and breakfast meeting series were arranged for providing a platform to young consultants to develop their professional networks.

ACEHK Involvement on External Committees

Council Members sit on the following committees to represent the views and the interests of ACEHK Member Firms, although few committees have been active so far in 2020 due to COVID-19 concerns:

- DevB CEC – last meeting on 7 January 2020 to raise issues including EACSB, RSS and Manpower checking management matters
- Construction Industry Council (CIC) – BIM Committee (formerly the Working Group on BIM) / BIM Vetting Sub-committee on Construction Innovation and Technology Fund
- CIC Committee on Subcontracting – Task Force on Security of Payment Legislation
- CIC – Task Force on Construction Expenditure Forecast
- CIC – Task Force on Reasonable Consultancy Fee Evaluation System
- Focus Group of Consultancy Services on Forecasting the Demand and Supply of Site Supervisory Personnel, Technicians and Professionals in Hong Kong Construction Industry
- Hong Kong Institution of Surveyors – BIM Contract Alliance
- Mainland and Hong Kong Construction Industry Forum 2020 – Organising Committee
- EMSD Working Groups (WGs) – Building Energy Code Performance Based WG and Lighting WG; WGs on Development of Best Practices for Operation and Maintenance of E&M Assets; WG for Reviewing the Code of Practice (CoP) for the Electricity (Wiring) Regulations
- Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC)'s Belt and Road Initiative – ACEHK is a Strategic Partner and One Belt, One Road (formerly the Belt and Road Portal) Advisor
- FSD – Ventilation Installation Liaison Group Meeting
- Hong Kong Green Building Council (HKGBC) – Civil Project Rating System Committee

ACEHK Supporting Other Organisations

- Accepted an invitation from the Hong Kong Institution of Surveyors to be a supporting organisation for the *Best Development & Conservation Award 2020*
- Accepted an invitation from the Institution of Civil Engineers Hong Kong Association (ICE HKA) to be a supporting organisation for the *ICE HKA Annual Conference 2020*
- Accepted an invitation from Chun Wo Construction Holdings Company Ltd to be a supporting organisation for the *Chun Wo Innovation Student Awards (CWISA) 2020*
- Accepted an invitation from the Hong Kong Polytechnic University to be a supporting organisation for the *2020 Belt and Road Cross-Professional Advancement Programme – Industrial Parks and Cross-border Cooperation Zones*

New Member Firms and Registered Principals

ACEHK welcomes the following new Registered Principals from current Member Firms:

- From Aurecon Hong Kong Ltd: Ir Ray CHAN Wai Keung
- From Jacobs China Ltd: Ir Julian TYSON
- From Mott MacDonald Hong Kong Ltd: Ir Eric CHING Ming Kam, Ir Ole WONG Ming Yan, Ir Hyvan WONG Tse Yat
- From Halcrow China Ltd: Ir William NG Siu Kee
- From Atkins China Ltd: Ir Dickson LAW Ting Kwok
- From WSP (Asia) Ltd: Ir Ivy KONG Hoi Yan, Ir Herbert LAM Lung Wai, Ir Eddie LEUNG Sheung Lai, Ir Joseph WONG Chi Wai
- From WSP Hong Kong Ltd: Ir George CHAN, Ir YAU Kwok Fai, Ir WONG Hon Wah, Ir YAU Chun Yee
- From Meinhardt (Hong Kong) Ltd: Ir YUEN Man Fai

A number of applications have been received recently from consulting engineering companies wanting to join ACEHK. These are still under consideration by the ACEHK Council and by current Member Firms. When approved, the new Member Firms will be announced on the website and in the next newsletter.

ACEHK Council Members

Position	Name	Company
Chairman 主席	Ir James SZE 施宏楚	Arup
Vice Chairman 副主席	Ir Kenneth LI 李兆江	WSP
Hon Secretary 名譽秘書	Ir Andy KWOK 郝炎	Black & Veatch
Hon Treasurer 名譽司庫	Ir Stephen MAK 麥德明	Meinhardt
Council Member 理事	Ir Victor CHEUNG 張志剛	J Roger Preston
Council Member 理事	Ir TONG Wai Lok 唐偉樂	Au Posford
Council Member 理事	Ir Chris LEE 李子良	CM Wong
Council Member 理事	Ir Johnny LAM 林建源	Aurecon
Council Member 理事	Ir Francis SOOTOO 司徒玉倫	MVA
Council Member 理事	Ir James PENNY	Arcadis
Co-opted	Ir Tony PEARSON	Mott Macdonald
Co-opted	Ir Stephen LAI 黎以仁	AECOM
Observer	Ir Alexi BHANJA	SMEC
Secretariat	Bernice CHENG	c/o OM Link

Upcoming Events

ACEHK Annual Awards – 19 August Entry



- **Promote** awareness and enhance presence of the engineering industry
- **Showcase** and give due recognition to truly excellent projects
- **Share** and highlight practices and management that made projects successful

Details are posted on www.acehk.org.hk. This new event is a prime opportunity for all of us across the engineering industry to be enlightened on what engineering excellence can be. We are confident that this event will be a success, and will act as an accessible platform for valuable project and experience sharing. Note the **19 August deadline for entries**.

New ACEHK Pin

We have been working on a new pin that will soon be distributed to all ACEHK members. It has a matte gold finish, the same as the old pin, but with a smooth ring and black logo and text. Wear it with pride!



Old (left) and New (right)

New ACEHK Website

Please visit ACEHK's new website to check out all the ACEHK events and latest news <http://www.acehk.org.hk>

Feedback: Members can provide feedback on any issue to the Chairman at: chairman@acehk.org.hk