

WB(CR) 10/148

TEL. NO.: 2848 2104

FAX NO.: 2524 9308

22 January 2002

Ms Anita Sit
Clerk to Panel on Planning, Lands and Works
Legislative Council
Legislative Council Secretariat
3/F Citibank Tower
3 Garden Road
Hong Kong

Dear Ms Sit,

**LegCo Panel on Planning, Lands and Works –
Re-engineering of Architectural Services Department**

The Government announced this afternoon the re-engineering and outsourcing initiative of the Architectural Services Department (ArchSD). A copy of the press statement issued just now is attached for your information.

The Works Bureau and ArchSD would like to brief the LegCo Panel on Planning, Lands and Works in early February 2002 on the above initiative. I should be grateful if you could make the necessary arrangements for the meeting and advise me of the details at tel. no. 2848 2104, fax no. 2524 9308 or by e-mail at jchan@wb.gov.hk.

Yours sincerely,

(Jack Chan)
for Secretary for Works

cc Internal (with enclosure)
SCS (Attn: Mrs Jessie Ting) – 2537 1514
S for Tsy (Attn: Miss Elizabeth Tse) – 2523 5722
DArchS (Mr S H Pau) – 2810 7341

DS(P&R)

Press Statement**[To be released at 3:30 pm on 22.1.2002]****Re-engineering of Architectural Services Department**

Following a business review of the Architectural Services Department (ArchSD), the Government decided that ArchSD will in future focus on its strategic roles as the building authority for and steward of government buildings and as Government's corporate professional advisor on architectural policies, building planning and maintenance matters.

2. Government fully appreciates the professional competency and achievements of ArchSD over the years and the review has reaffirmed the important role of the Department. "Apart from the above functions, the Architectural Services Department will in future focus more on raising the professional standards and promoting best practice in the design for buildings which are more intelligent, environmentally and user friendly, and work towards leading the local construction industry in improving its overall quality and standards in construction, site management and safety," a spokesman from Works Bureau.

3. The department will concentrate on project management and supervisory functions in delivering and maintaining public building projects. "This will enable the department to put more focus on strategic issues and will enhance the overall professionalism in the relevant fields," the spokesman said.

4. As a means to raise the productivity of ArchSD and to allow the department to focus on its strategic roles, the bulk of the building and maintenance works currently undertaken by ArchSD will be outsourced to the private sector. This will involve the outsourcing of up to 90% of all new projects approved in September 2001 and onwards, including both the professional and technical services and outsourcing/devolving up to 80% to 100% of a range of maintenance activities.

5. "The outsourcing initiative will not in any way undermine the quality of building and maintenance works as ArchSD will continue to provide professional advice as well as oversee and upkeep the overall standard of works," the spokesman said, "We are also committed to a smooth transition."

6. In explaining the benefits of the re-engineering of ArchSD, the spokesman said, "Extensive outsourcing will enable the use of resources, new technology and practices in the private sector in the delivery and maintenance of public building projects. It helps create a considerable number of jobs in the private sector while enabling Architectural Services Department to concentrate on its professional role in raising the quality and standards in construction, site management and safety. It will enhance the productivity of the department in its service delivery in terms of the speed of delivery and the volume of building projects and greater flexibility to cope with fluctuation in the construction volume. This partnership ensures the most effective use of the expertise and resources in the public and private sectors."

7. As the Government has committed to increasing its investment in minor works, which has a positive effect on job creation, there will be no staff surplus to requirement in the Architectural Services Department in the next two years," said the spokesman.

8. "Government has undertaken that there will be no compulsory staff redundancy arising from this outsourcing programme," he said. An inter-departmental working group comprising all relevant parties has been set up to work out the detailed staffing arrangements and related issues such as staff retraining, staff redeployment, implementation timetable and plans etc. "The staff will be fully consulted on these matters and we look forward to their support and co-operation in working together with the department in meeting its new challenges," the spokesman said.

Works Bureau

22 January 2002