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Chairman, Bills Committee on
Construction Industry Council (No.2) Bill
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Bills Committee on the Construction Industry Council (No.2) Bill

Meeting Arrangements of the Construction Industry Training Authority

The Administration has undertaken to revert with arrangements adopted by the Construction Industry Training Authority (CITA) for public attendance of its meetings as well as some relevant statistics.

The guidelines at **Annex** have been put in place since February 1997 to open up meetings of the CITA board except where confidential or sensitive topics such as personnel management, financial decisions and levy assessment/collection are involved. However, closed sessions may also be held subject to resolution by a two-third majority of members present to discuss specific items. Some main aspects are highlighted below –

- (a) public announcement made in a Chinese diary newspaper 10 days before each meeting of the CITA board;
- (b) access of papers including agenda and minutes of the open sessions to interested parties;
- (c) reservation of seats done on a first come, first served basis since the venue could accommodate a maximum of only 24 people;
- (d) possible attendance by CITA staff in their private capacities;
- (e) visitors must behave in an orderly manner and cannot display any signs, messages or banners; and
- (f) visitors who arrive late will not be allowed to enter the venue after commencement of the meetings to avoid undue interruptions.

Apart from seven urgent meetings called in short notice, all 21 meetings of the CITA board have been conducted openly from 2002 to 2004. Since these guidelines are well accepted by the industry, we propose that the Construction Industry Council should promulgate similar practices given its status as a statutory co-ordinating body with self-regulatory powers.

(Clement Cheung)
for Secretary for the Environment,
Transport and Works

Restricted

Construction Industry Training Authority

Paper for : Discussion and Decision

Subject : Revised proposal on detailed procedures for the opening up of meetings of the Authority

1. Introduction

- 1.1 During the 152nd meeting of the Authority, Members discussed the recommendation made by the Subcommittee on Review of Advisory and Statutory Bodies under the LegCo Panel on Home Affairs that all advisory and statutory bodies should open up their meetings. It was agreed in principle that only meetings of the Authority will be opened up, while Committee meetings would not be opened to the public.
- 1.2 This paper presents a revised proposal on the detailed procedures of the opening up of meetings of the Authority.

2. Venue for open meetings of the Authority

- 2.1 It is proposed that Room 702 on the 7th floor of the Management Training and Trade Testing Centre in Aberdeen would be a suitable venue for the open meetings. The room is now being used as a lecture room and is able to accommodate all Members of the Authority and about 24 members of the general public.
- 2.2 A proposed layout plan is attached as Annex 1 for consideration by Members of the Authority.

3. Items that should not be discussed at open meetings

3.1 It is proposed that all matters concerning the operation of the Authority can be discussed at open meetings with the exception of the following items:

- a. decisions and recommendations made by the Committee on Staff Establishment, such as staff reports and renewal of contracts;
- b. decisions and recommendations made by the Committee on Levy, such as proposed amendments to the Ordinance and actions against defaulters; and
- c. decisions and recommendations made by the Committee on Finance such as operating results and investments.

These items should be classified as "confidential/sensitive" and should be discussed during closed sessions or by circular resolution.

3.2 While decisions made by the Committees with regard to selection of quotations or appointments for building projects, purchase of equipment and so on can be endorsed or discussed during open meetings of the Authority, it is suggested that the money amounts or names should not be disclosed.

4. Detailed procedures of open meetings

Having studied the Standing Orders of the Art Development Council; and the Administrative Instructions for Regulating Admittance and Conduct of Persons of the Legislative Council and taking into consideration the operation and environment of CITA, the following procedures are proposed to be adopted for open meetings:

- a. Members of the public will be notified of the date, time and venue of open meetings of the Authority through the press at least ten days prior to the meeting. An advertisement will be placed in a Chinese daily newspaper which is considered an appropriate channel for such notice. Due to the nature of business of this Authority, an advertisement in an English daily newspaper is considered unnecessary.

- b. The agenda of the meeting will not be published in the newspaper but will be made available for public inspection at least five days prior to the meeting during office hours at the Head Office of CITA. The agenda may be sent through facsimile to any member of the public or the press upon request. The agenda shall indicate which items are to be discussed in closed session and which in open session (matters to be dealt with in closed session will be considered first and the public will then be invited to join the meeting).
- c. During the open sessions, a maximum of 24 members of the public shall be admitted to attend the meetings of the Authority. No parking space will be provided and members of the public are encouraged to utilize public transport to reach the premises.
- d. Persons wishing to attend the meetings must be aged 18 and above and should be properly dressed. No singlets, shorts, sandals and slippers will be allowed.
- e. Persons who are physically disabled are welcome to attend the meetings and should declare such disability when making reservation so that necessary arrangement can be made for access to the venue of meeting.
- f. Members of the staff may attend meetings of the Authority but are required to apply for annual leave for such attendance. To reserve seats for members of the public, the maximum number of CITA staff attending any one meeting will be limited to five.
- g. Reservation for seats has to be made by phone at least three days prior to the meetings and will be dealt with on a first come, first served basis. Personal particulars such as name, age and Identity Card number will be recorded.
- h. Members of the public wishing to attend open meetings should report to the reception desk on ground floor of the Management Training and Trade Testing Centre in the half hour prior to commencement of the open session. The staff on duty at the reception desk will check the identity of the persons attending the meeting against the list of reservation. They will then be issued with a visitor's pass for which they should sign and without which they may not enter the venue of meeting. Persons not on the list will not be admitted.

- i. Persons entering or within the premises of the Authority shall behave in an orderly manner and comply with any direction given by any staff of the Authority for the purpose of keeping order.
- j. Any person displaying any sign, message or banner, or may otherwise behave in a disorderly manner will be refused admission to the premises.
- k. Members of the public shall proceed directly to a waiting room after entering the premises. Staff will be posted at appropriate locations to guide members of the public to the waiting room. At the conclusion of the closed session, members of the public will be invited to join the meeting. No further members of the public will be admitted once the open session has commenced.
- l. Members of the public and CITA staff attending the meeting are not allowed to participate in any discussion, have to remain silent throughout the meeting and leave quietly at the end of the meeting. If a member of the public interrupts the proceedings at any meeting, the Chairman may order his/her removal by force if necessary, from the venue of meeting.
- m. At the conclusion of the meeting, members of the public must leave the premises immediately in an orderly manner.
- n. The Authority may, if a majority of two-thirds of the Members present at the meeting so decide, exclude the public from such meeting or any part thereof, owing to the nature of the business being dealt with or about to be dealt with.
- o. With the exception of papers classified as "confidential/sensitive", all discussion papers and minutes will be made available for public inspection during normal office hours at the Head Office shortly after the meetings at which the papers are discussed.
- p. Two sets of minutes will be prepared: one for both the closed and open sessions of the meeting and one for the open session only. The minutes will be printed on papers of different colours for easy identification.

- q. The minutes of the open session will be made available for public inspection during normal office hours at the Head Office soonest after confirmation, while minutes of the entire meeting will be restricted for internal use only. Photocopying of any part of the minutes by the public is not allowed.
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Members of the Authority are requested to consider the venue for conducting open meetings of the Authority as given in Section 2, to comment on the items that should not be discussed at open meetings as set out in Section 3 and to discuss the appropriateness of the procedures governing open meetings as set out in Section 4.

5th February 1997

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Layout Plan for Open Meetings
to be held at Room 702 on 7/F of the
Management Training and Trade Testing Centre

