

23 April 2010



Mr WONG Siu-yee
Clerk to Bills Committee on Buildings (Amendment) Bill 2010
Legislative Council Secretariat
8 Jackson Road, Central
Hong Kong

**The Chartered Institute of
Building (Hong Kong)**

Room 1602, 16/F,
Tung Chiu Commercial Centre
193 Lockhart Road, Wan Chai
Hong Kong
t: +852 2543 6369
f: +852 3011 1105
e: enquiry@ciob.org.hk
w: www.ciob.org.hk

CB(1)1781/09-10(01)

Dear Sir

**Re: Buildings (Amendment) Bill 2010
Mandatory Building Inspection Scheme (MBIS) and
Mandatory Window Inspection Scheme (MWIS)**

Reference is made to the above consultation and our Institute, The Chartered Institute of Building (Hong Kong) would like to comment and propose the following for your perusal and consideration:

1. We agree in principle that the Government should tackle maintenance problems for buildings aged 30 years or above as soon as possible. The proposed schemes are preventive measures requiring owners to regularly inspect their buildings and windows, identify defects if any at an early stage and carry out remedial works where necessary. It will enhance public health and safety.
2. However, we are of the views that the Government needs to resolve the costs issue for carrying out the proposed schemes which is the most concerned to the owner. Such costs should be set at reasonable and acceptable level, otherwise the low income group or even the retirees could not afford the costs and are forced to commit offences under the new law.
3. We are also of the view that inspection activities under the proposed schemes mainly involve visual inspections, record plan checking, defects identification and record ... etc. Apart from Authorized Persons (AP), Registered Professional Engineers (RPE) and Registered Professional Surveyors (RPS) (all with qualified disciplines), there are a number of construction personnel who are well qualified to conduct such inspection and should be included in the list of Registered Inspectors (RI) for MBIS and Qualified Persons (QP) for MWIS.
4. We advocate for increasing the number of RI and QP because competitive market price could be achieved thereby benefiting the community as a whole. As such, RI and QP should not be limited to AP, RPE and RPS. By limiting RI and QP to AP, RPE and RPS, our concerns are a) there may not be sufficient number of RI and QP who are willing to conduct and complete the required inspections within a short period of time; and b) even if there are, the charges may not be competitive enough to suit the owners, in particular those from the low income group.

5. As mentioned in paragraph 3 above, the building inspections to be conducted under the schemes are relatively simple, we suggest adopting the current Site Supervision Plan system run by the Buildings Department ("BD") that Technical Competent Person Grade 3 (T3) under the stream of AP, RSE, RGE and RC can act as RI and QP. At the moment, only those who have Higher Diploma/Certificate in relevant building academic qualifications or equivalent plus 5 years relevant experience will be accepted as T3 in their respective streams.
6. In our view, T3 are competent and capable enough to conduct the MBIS and MWIS. If they are included into the list of RI and QP, this will increase the numbers of RI and QP thereby reducing its inspection cost significantly which will benefit to the end users.
7. In addition to that, under the Buildings Ordinance, a number of personnel, namely, Technical Director (TD) and Authorized Signatories (AS) who possesses certain academic qualification and necessary experience before they are accepted by BD as TD and AS for Minor Works Registered Contractors (MWRC) and Registered General Building Contractors (RGBC), they shall also be qualified as RI and QP.
8. However, in order to give more confidence to the public, we agree that prior registration by Buildings Department for RI and QP are required as proposed in the Bill.
9. In order to simplify the procedures for inspection and repair, we also suggest to have "one stop shop" services led by relevant RI and QP. We believe, in so doing, it will also reduce the overall costs of MBIS and MWIS.

Our Institute is more than happy to provide more information to you and please include our Institute into the invitation list. In case there are further consultations on this matter, please let us know, we will send representatives to participate in any consultation or forum.

Many thanks for your kind attention.

Yours faithfully,



Ding Charn-lam Edmond
President of CIOB (HK)