

**Views of the
Construction Industry Training Authority
on the Factories and Industrial Undertakings (Medical Examination)
Regulation
September 1999**

1. Standpoint

The Construction Industry Training Authority (CITA hereafter) supports the Government's proposal to introduce legislation to provide medical examinations for construction workers engaged in 17 hazardous occupations in industrial establishments where they are exposed to specific hazardous substances and physical agents. It was understood that these medical examinations are to be performed by Appointed Medical Practitioners (AMPs) with recognized training. We firmly believe that provision of such pre-employment and periodic medical examinations to construction workers will further enhance the protection of the health of construction workers concerned.

2. Role to be played by CITA

Given the unique multi-layer sub-contracting system of the construction industry where a worker may only work a brief period of time on daily-wage basis with a sub-contractor, it is considered unreasonable that the sub-contractors should be required to pay for the cost of the said medical examinations. We share the view that it will be more appropriate to appoint an agency to finance and to make arrangements centrally for medical examinations of construction workers. As the CITA is already collecting levy from the whole industry, it appears to be logical that the CITA could take up the role as a central coordinating agency for the implementation of the proposed medical examinations; and finance the medical examinations for the construction workers by using additional funds specially collected from the industry for this purpose. At its meeting on 4th March 1999, the Authority has agreed to take on this additional role subject to our Ordinance being amended to effect this.

3. The granting of varying grace periods

Regarding the provision of varying grace periods to implement the medical examinations scheme, this Authority renders its full support as such arrangement would allow time for the proprietors, employees, doctors, private laboratories and all those affected to prepare themselves to cope with the new requirements.

4. Funding

This Authority will be pleased to play a part in ensuring that the well-intentioned scheme is properly administered, provided additional funding can be made available to this Authority by way of the raising of the construction levy rate by 0.03%. We are advised that the Real Estate Developers Association of Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Construction Association both support the proposal of entrusting this task to our Authority, amending the existing legislation to expand our ambit to do this, and the consequential adjustment to the levy rate.

7th September 1999