

# reports FROM DISCIPLINE ADVISORY PANELS

## Building Discipline Advisory Panel

The Panel continued to focus on membership qualification issues. There were some changes in the membership of the Panel this year: Ir Edmond YW Fong, Ir John C W Wong and Ir Thomas O S Ho retired from their service, and Ir Dr Mohan M Kumaraswamy, Ir Ting Wah and Ir Siu Man-po became our new members. The Panel would like to thank the outgoing members for their valuable contribution to the Discipline.

Since 1994, the Panel has been supporting a Certificate Course in Building Studies run by the Department of Building and the School of Continuing and Professional Education of the City University of Hong Kong for members to top-up their academic qualification to meet the entry requirements of Member. By February 2003, the course had held 10 intakes of 274 graduates. The Panel would take this opportunity to express its gratitude to all the parties, in particular to Ir Dr C M Tam, for their great effort in starting the course, and has been running it successfully.

The Panel at last would like to give thanks to its assessors and members of the Building Division Committee for their help in all matters related to the Building Discipline.

## Building Services Discipline Advisory Panel

The Panel continued to provide advice and support to the Q&M Board and associated committees on matters relating to membership qualifications, training and education. This Session, the Panel updated the Building Services Core Objective for Scheme 'A' training, reviewed the Reciprocal Recognition Agreement with CIBSE and prepared suggestions on changes to the relevant ordinances, regulations and code of practice for the wider use of Registered Professional Engineers.

The Panel also updated the admission requirements for the Building Services Discipline and supported the Education & Examinations Committee in the assessment of the academic qualifications of individual applicants.

## Chemical Discipline Advisory Panel

The Panel continued to advise and support the Q&M Board and associate committees on matters relating to membership qualifications, training and education. The Panel also promoted Scheme 'A' training to local companies and graduates.

## Civil Discipline Advisory Panel

Able supported by its members, the Panel provided advice to the Q&M Board, the Engineers Registration Board and associated committees on matters relating to education, training, professional qualifications, membership admissions and registration of professional engineers. During the Session, the revamping of the Reciprocal Recognition Agreement with the Institution of Engineers, Australia was finalised to provide for partial interview of illegitimate reciprocatees. The Panel further initiated talks with the Institution of Civil Engineers in the UK with the view to a merger of over 200 annual professional assessments in Hong Kong.

## Control, Automation & Instrumentation Discipline Advisory Panel

Based on the advice of the Discipline Advisory Panel and with the endorsement of the Q&M Board, the Institution reached an agreement on reciprocal recognition with the Institute of Measurement and Control (UK). The formal agreement will be signed by the presidents of both institutions in the later part of this year. Meanwhile, the Panel is still

actively exploring further co-operation with other engineering institutions on activities related to the Control, Automation & Instrumentation (CAI) Discipline.

In addition to providing advice and support to the Q&M Board and associated committees on matters relating to membership qualifications, training and education, the Panel has also been actively involved in assessing new CAI Discipline related engineering courses developed by local universities.

The Panel Members also supported the Registration Committee Member (CAI) in vetting applications for registration as R.P.E. in the CAI Discipline and Scheme 'A' (CAI) training.

## Electrical Discipline Advisory Panel

The Panel continued to provide advice and support to the Q&M Board and related committees on matters relating to membership qualifications, training and education. It also participated in the review of Reciprocal Recognition Agreements with various engineering institutions and conducted a review of the Indicative Area of Practice for Electrical Discipline.

The Panel also supported the Registration Committee Member (Electrical) in the assessment of applications for R.P.E. (Electrical) and Scheme 'A' (Electrical) training.

Members of the Panel met representatives from the Ministry of Construction on 26 July 2002 and had a fruitful discussion on the development of the registration system in the Electrical Discipline in the Mainland.

## Electronics Discipline Advisory Panel

The Electronics Discipline Advisory Panel met as often as needed to exchange views on issues pertaining to the Electronics Discipline. The Panel assisted in the vetting of membership applications, and other related matters. It also advised the Q&M Board on various issues of vital interest to the profession, such as the Continuous Professional Development and Reciprocal Recognition Agreements with sister institutions in the region. Applications for transfers from other Disciplines to the Electronics Discipline were also checked. With the dedication and commitment of members, we have resolved issues satisfactorily.

## Environmental Discipline Advisory Panel

Apart from routine activities such as the professional assessment of applicants, assessment of Scheme 'A' exemption applications, and the accreditation of degree courses, the Environmental Discipline has been actively promoting membership and the wider use of R.P.E. (Environmental) in Environmental Legislation. At present, there are some 200 Fellows and Corporate Members in the Discipline. The Panel wishes to increase membership by inviting senior government officials in the Environmental Protection Department to join as Fellow, so that they can set examples for other officers in the department to follow. Also, this would increase the professional status of the Discipline members.

The other major activity of the Panel was to promote the wider use of R.P.E. (Environmental) in Environmental Legislation. We met representatives from the Environmental Protection Department early this year to discuss the use of R.P.E. (Environmental) in environmental work and services. Subsequently, we have written to the Director of the Department to propose amendments of the current Environmental Legislation. Ir Dr the Hon Raymond C T Ho, the Representative of the Engineering Functional Constituency, has been requested to push the Government to amend the relevant Legislation.

### Gas Discipline Advisory Panel

The Gas Discipline Advisory Panel conducted two face-to-face meetings during the 2002/2003 Session and at other times frequently used e-mail to communicate and discuss issues requiring contributions from the Panel members. This mode of operation worked smoothly because most of the Panel members were frequently seeing each other at other Institutional functions and activities.

For the sake of greater transparency, the Panel established a set of internal guidelines for the selection of Assessors in the Gas Discipline. The Panel has continued to have its representatives contributing to the work of the Professional Assessment Committee (PAC), Training Committee, Education & Examinations Committee, Registration Committee, and Q&M Board. Our PAC representative headed a working group to review the criteria for selection of assessors for Associate Member professional assessments. Our Discipline Representative has continued to be responsible for the area of Gas Safety Regulations in the HKIE working group on the promotion of wider use of R.P.E. in Government regulations.

### Geotechnical Discipline Advisory Panel

The Panel met on a bimonthly basis providing advice and support to the Q&M Board and associated committees on matters relating to membership, education, training, professional assessment, and reciprocal recognition. Members were also involved in the accreditation of local engineering degree programmes relevant to the Geotechnical Discipline. The Panel is also working with the Hong Kong Branch of the Institution of Mining and Metallurgy on a review of the existing Reciprocal Recognition Agreement between the two institutions.

### Information Discipline Advisory Panel

The Panel held three meetings during the Session and continued to provide advice to the Q&M Board and associated committees on matters related to education and examinations, training, membership and professional qualifications.

A Reciprocal Recognition Agreement with the British Computer Society was established following dedicated efforts over previous years. This enhances the HKIE as a professional home for IT professionals in Hong Kong.

The accreditation procedures for computer science degrees and higher diplomas have been making good progress. Scheme 'A' training was successfully established with Ove Arup & Partners (Hong Kong) Limited, Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation and Electrical and Mechanical Services Department of the HKSAR Government. These schemes will pave way for more quality IT professionals in and for Hong Kong.

A preliminary study to facilitate the admission of IT professionals into the HKIE was conducted. These potential applicants may not have the formal engineering or computer science academic background. More work has to be done to understand the potential implications to the HKIE as a whole.

The Engineers Registration Board held meetings with the Office of the Telecommunications Authority and the Information Technology Services Department of the HKSAR Government respectively to obtain an understanding of their needs related to R.P.E. A study conducted afterwards concluded that more R.P.E. should be promoted, following the successful example of having Information Discipline R.P.E. as authorised persons in the Electronic Transactions Ordinance. We shall continue the dialogue with various Government departments, and seek self-declared competent R.P.Es to suit the specific needs of ordinances, regulations or codes of practice.

### Manufacturing & Industrial Discipline Advisory Panel

The Panel held several meetings during the Session and continued to provide advice to the Q&M Board and associated committees on matters relating to membership, qualifications, training, education and examinations within the Manufacturing & Industrial Discipline.

The Panel regularly attended the Education & Examinations Committee, the Training Committee, the Professional Assessment Committee and the Q&M Board meetings. It was also involved in the accreditation exercises on local engineering degree programmes related to the Manufacturing & Industrial Engineering Discipline.

The Panel is actively seeking suitable new members to strengthen the decision-making roles required for the ever-increasing number of issues related to quality and standards within the Discipline.

### Marine & Naval Architecture Discipline Advisory Panel

Panel Members met regularly during the Session and discussed various matters relating to the Marine & Naval Architecture Discipline. Panel Members and representatives continued to serve the Q&M Board and different committees and provided advice on matters relating to qualifications, membership, training, professional assessment, education and examinations and accreditation of engineering courses. The Panel also reviewed other issues such as the interview presentation requirements and the standards for vetting membership applications for the Discipline.

### Materials Discipline Advisory Panel

The Panel has continued its active participation in the Q&M Board and its committees. It has also promoted interest in the Materials Discipline and it is hoped that several companies will be approved for Scheme 'A' programmes in Materials Discipline over the coming year. We welcome more active participation by Associate Members who will be joining the Panel.

### Mechanical Discipline Advisory Panel

The Discipline Advisory Panel held regular meetings during the Session and initiated a comprehensive exchange of views by providing advice and support to the Q&M Board on subject matters relating to education, membership qualifications, accreditation, training and professional assessment.

Due to the increasing number of mismatching cases, the Panel has now devised a system on setting topping-up courses. The advocacy of the use of R.P.E. in Government Ordinances is still in progress.

The Panel also met with people in different industries and institutes with an aim to propagate Mechanical Discipline and to expand the membership at all levels.

Thanks to the support of all assessors, the professional assessment process has been maintained in good shape and dealt with promptly.

### Structural Discipline Advisory Panel

The Structural Discipline Advisory Panel met three times during the Session to discuss a number of important issues.

Together with the Ministry of Construction (MOC), the panel worked on an agreement covering the mutual recognition of First Class Registered Structural Engineer / HKIE Structural Discipline membership. Two formats of examination were accepted by the Advisory Panel and later also the Committee of the Division. The formats were also accepted by the Q&M Board. It is now left to the MOC and the HKIE to sign a formal agreement.

On the agreement with the Shanghai Authority on the mutual exchange of Professional Practice License/HKIE Structural Discipline membership, the principle in the format of exchange was agreed by the Advisory Panel and the Q&M Board. The Shanghai Authority and the HKIE will work towards signing the formal agreement.

The Advisory Panel discussed the contents of some of the Practice Notes for Authorised Persons and Registered Structural Engineers, which may have important implications on members of the Discipline.