

◆ Building Discipline Advisory Panel

Ir Arthur Yung took over the chairmanship of the Panel from Ir Sunny Law in December 2003 as Ir Law had to pursue his career. In spite of the change of the chairmanship during the Session, the Panel continued its on-going dialogue with various government departments, aiming to seek statutory recognition of the HKIE Members of the Building Discipline. The Panel is optimistic that this recognition will appear in the revamped Buildings Ordinance.

The Panel was also charged with seeking mutual recognition between Supervising Engineers and the HKIE Members of the Building Discipline. Two meetings were held with the Ministry of Construction with positive results. The Ministry will visit the Institution shortly to develop the issue further. The Institution had also set up a task force led by Ir Dr Greg Wong, the Vice President, to pursue the mutual recognition. It was agreed that the Building Discipline would represent the Institution in these discussions.

Despite the poor economy, the Panel managed to recruit more members this Session, making a total of 228 Corporate Members and 148 Associate Members. City University of Hong Kong, for the tenth consecutive year, supported the Discipline by organising top-up courses for candidates who do not possess accredited academic qualifications for Corporate Membership. Apart from building professionals, there are also civil and structural engineers joining the course to gain some knowledge in the building area.

There has also been increasing numbers of contractors joining the Scheme 'A' training. At present, 12 contractors with 30 trainees have registered with the Scheme.

◆ 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 Agreements with Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers and Institution of Engineers, Australia for membership and prepared suggestions on changes to the relevant ordinances, regulation and code of practice for the wider use of Registered Professional Engineers (R.P.E.) and Registered Building Services Engineers (R.S.E.).

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

◆ Chemical Discipline Advisory Panel

The Panel continued to advise and support the Q&M Board and associated 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

The Panel provided advice to the Q&M Board and associated committees on matters relating to education, training, professional qualifications and membership admission. The Panel also provided advice on the registration of professional engineers to the Engineers Registration Board. During the Session, efforts were devoted to the consultation exercise by the Government on its proposed amendments to the Buildings Ordinance.

In the area of inter-institutional affairs, revamping of the Reciprocal Recognition Agreement with the Institution of Civil Engineers in UK continued. This will rationalise membership class and admission requirements under the UK's new Standards and Routes to Registration (SARTOR) system. Further talks were held with the view to merging the annual professional assessments of over 200 applicants by both institutions in Hong Kong.

◆ Control, Automation & Instrumentation Discipline Advisory Panel

During this Session, membership of the Control, Automation & Instrumentation (CAI) Discipline increased by 1.2% and regular Panel meetings were conducted to tackle the issues and operations of the CAI Discipline.

The Reciprocal Recognition Agreement with the Institute of Measurement and Control of the UK was signed and on 11 November 2003, an HKIE team also met representatives of the China Association of Automation in Shenzhen to initially discuss issues of reciprocal recognition.

In late November 2003, an HKIE delegation met with the Macau Institution of Engineers (MIE) and gave a brief introduction on the operation of the registration of engineers in Hong Kong. The MIE stated its members appreciated the enhanced links between the engineering professions of Macau and Hong Kong.

On 13 April 2004, CAI representatives attended a ceremony organised by the Chinese Instrumentation Society in Shenzhen and met with representatives of the Society. Ir Louis Lock was nominated as a Senior Honorary Advisor to the Society.

◆ 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 participated in the review of reciprocal recognition agreements with various engineering institutions and conducted a review of the Core Objectives and Model Training Guide for Scheme 'A' training. A review on the admission requirements was also undertaken.

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

◆ Electronics Discipline Advisory Panel

During the 2003/2004 Session, the Panel handled some 20 applications for membership, of which about one fifth were for Fellow. Of the remaining applications for Member, about one third were through reciprocal recognition arrangements. The number of applications remained fairly steady with a slight increase in the class of Fellow, probably due to increasing popularity of the prestige status of Fellowship. There was also no noticeable decrease in the standards or quality of the applicants.

For the purpose of expediting the vetting process, instead of holding meeting at regular intervals, the Panel decided to communicate through emails when issues arise. In order to meet the performance pledge, the application documents were being vetted through fast circulation and comments written in note form and discussions through emails. This approach proved very successful. The Panel believed in order to allure more application for membership, more publicity and more focused approach should be considered for membership drive. Apart from vetting membership applications, the Panel also assisted in processing applications for accreditation of degree courses from local universities as well as Continuing Professional Development programmes.

◆ Environmental Discipline Advisory Panel

Apart from routine activities such as professional assessment of applicants, assessment and re-assessment of Scheme 'A' applications, and accreditation of degree courses, the Environmental Discipline has actively promoted membership. In the 2003/2004 Session, the Panel successfully encouraged senior government officials responsible for environmental protection to join the HKIE as Fellows in order to increase the professional status of the Discipline. This may also encourage other officers in the Government to join the HKIE. At present, we have 220 Corporate Members and Fellows in the Discipline and three Associate Members.

Another major activity of the Discipline was to review the Core Objectives for Scheme 'A' training. These objectives are to be met by all trainees in this Discipline irrespective of the industry in which they are working. The Core Objectives have been in use for some time and, as a result, the Panel revised and updated the Objectives to bring them into line with current developments in environmental engineering training.

The Discipline promoted the wider use of R.P.E. (Environmental) in environmental legislation. With the assistance of the Representative of the Engineering Constituency in the Legislative Council, we have been pursuing this issue with the Environmental Protection Department for a number of years. The support of the Engineers Registration Board will be sought in the coming months to help push for recognition of the professional status of members in this Discipline.

◆ Gas Discipline Advisory Panel

The Gas Discipline Advisory Panel held two meetings during the 2003/2004 Session to discuss a number of important issues. At other times members communicated and discussed ad hoc issues through emails.

The Panel looked at the measures required to deal with the situation of non-consensus results between two assessors during professional assessments, the interpretation of substantive training and experience under the standard reciprocal recognition agreement and the qualifying requirements of Supervising Engineers under the Code of Construction Project Management in the Mainland. Representatives were assigned to join the coming negotiations on reciprocal recognition with the Mainland on Supervising Engineers within the Gas Discipline.

Panel representatives continued to participate on the Q&M Board, Registration Committee of the Engineers Registration Board, Professional Assessment Committee, Education & Examinations Committee, Training Committee and Training Review Sub-committee to provide advice on matters relating to qualifications, membership, reciprocal recognition, professional assessment, education, training and accreditation of engineering courses.

◆ Geotechnical Discipline Advisory Panel

The Panel met bimonthly, providing advice and support to the Q&M Board and associated committees on matters relating to membership, education, training, professional assessment and reciprocal recognition. Panel Members were also involved in the accreditation of local engineering degree programmes and reviewing the core training objectives relating to the Geotechnical Discipline.

A review of the existing Reciprocal Recognition Agreement of Geotechnical Engineers with the Hong Kong Branch of the Institute of Materials, Minerals and Mining was completed and will now be taken to the Institution for further consideration.

The Panel also established a working group to look into the suggestion of reciprocal recognition of Geotechnical Engineers with the Mainland.

◆ 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.

The accreditation for computer science degrees and higher diplomas, and the Scheme 'A' training progressed satisfactorily during this Session. This paves the way for more quality IT professionals in Hong Kong.

A proposal to revise the admission requirements for IT professionals into the HKIE was prepared and presented to Q&M Board. This proposal needs further review, as it has wide implications to the HKIE as a whole. A Memorandum of Understanding between the HKIE and Hong Kong Computer Society was signed in March 2004. Follow up study on a possible reciprocal recognition arrangement is underway.

Following a meeting in July 2003, the HKIE was invited to take the lead as the coordinator of the Working Group for Registration System for IT professionals. Its purpose is to consider establishing a registration system for IT professionals and has representatives from different IT professional bodies in Hong Kong.

Four meetings were held in this Session and the key discussions are summarised as below:

1. It was agreed that the current objectives of this Working Group would be:
 - (a) To define the domain of IT professionals to be covered by a registration system and set the respective standards for registration.
 - (b) To define the roles and functions of the IT professionals registered under the proposed registration system.
 - (c) Through the establishment of a registration system for IT professionals, the IT profession would be better represented in giving advice to the Government and the community on IT matters.
2. Registered IT professionals should preferably be started with those at fully qualified professional level (degree level). The required standard should cover dimensions of academic, experience, CPD and assessment through interview and/or written paper.
3. Registration of IT professionals could confer qualified IT professionals with suitable recognition. This would help to develop a high level of confidence on the professional competence of registered IT professionals.

Through various activities related to the Discipline, we continue to contribute to the society and aim to make HKIE the professional home for IT professionals in Hong Kong.

◆ Manufacturing & Industrial Discipline Advisory Panel

In this Session, the Panel held three meetings to discuss a number of important issues and provided advice to various committees on matters related to membership, education and examinations, qualifications and training.

In particular, the Panel worked directly with the Special Task Force on Formal Training Scheme for Associate Members. The proposed Manufacturing and Industrial Engineering - Model Training Guide was reviewed and discussed in detail. This Guide covers a five-stage training programme – Trainee Induction, Common Core Objectives, Mandatory Core Objectives, Industry Specific and Technical Placement Options.

The Panel also looked at the new directions and paradigms of manufacturing and industrial engineering. It studied the changing dynamics of the Discipline and recognised that its role is growing from that of a pure manufacturing and/or service industry to an integrative approach that involves logistics and supply chain management.

The Panel also maintained a very close relation with the Manufacturing & Industrial Division Committee in promoting the Discipline.

◆ Marine & Naval Architecture Discipline Advisory Panel

The Panel conducted meetings regularly during the Session to discuss various matters relating to the Marine & Naval Architecture (MNA) Discipline. The Panel continued to serve the Q&M Board and associated committees including the Professional Assessment Committee, Training Committee, Training Review Sub-committees, Education & Examinations Committee and Accreditation Committee for Higher Diploma Programmes. A review on the matching of MNA Scheme 'A' training with degrees offered by local universities was conducted in this Session. The Panel also provided advice to the Registration Committee of the Engineers Registration Board.

◆ Materials Discipline Advisory Panel

The Panel continued to make a contribution to the Q&M Board and held occasional meetings to review Scheme 'A' requirements.

The Panel representatives continued to promote the recognition of R.P.E. in Materials Discipline among the local business community and public sector organisations.

◆ Mechanical Discipline Advisory Panel

The Panel held regular meetings during the Session to exchange views and ideas and to discuss unusual cases that had come to the attention of Members. A regular flow of cases relating to the Discipline membership of the Institution and also the R.P.E. registration of the Engineers Registration Board were considered. The Panel also considered whether an upgrading of the Scheme 'A' training objectives would be necessary. The Panel continued its representation on the Q&M Board and supported the Education & Examinations Committee, Training Committee and Professional Assessment Committee by providing advice on matters such as education, accreditation, training, membership qualifications and professional assessment. Members also worked closely with the Mechanical, Marine, Naval Architecture & Chemical Division in the promotion of Mechanical Engineering.

◆ Structural Discipline Advisory Panel

The major work of the Structural Discipline Advisory Panel for the Session was the formation of a standing committee for mutual recognition with the National Administration Board of Structural Engineers Registration of the Mainland (the NABSER).

Following the signing of a draft mutual recognition agreement between the HKIE and the Ministry of Construction on 17 February 2004, the Panel started active preparation for the first training course and examination. Five sub-committees were set up to deal with training, oral assessment, multiple-choice questions, administration and logistics. A number of meetings have been held since March.

The Panel is pleased to report that the first training and examination session was scheduled in late 2004. It is expected that the final agreement will be signed in the third quarter of 2004. After that, the Panel will work with the Structural Division to start a series of training courses for members. Some 200 copies of examination materials are being purchased from the Ministry to assist members to obtain the First Class Registered Structural Engineers qualification in the Mainland.