

## NOTES OF MEETING OF IES-ACES-BCA DIALOGUE 2/2008

Date: 23 Jul 2008 (Wed)  
 Time: 4:00pm  
 Venue: 5<sup>th</sup> Storey Conference Room, MND Complex

Present:

<u>IES:</u>	<u>ACES:</u>	<u>BCA:</u>
Mr. Chong Kee Sen	Mr. Lim Chong Sit	Mr. Chew Keat Chuan
Mr. Chan Ewe Jin	Mr. Koh Boon Liang	Mdm Andris Leong
Mr. Low Kam Fook	Dr. Tan Guan	Mr. Yang Kin Seng
Mr. Tham Kwok Leong	Mr. Lim Hon Chee	Mr. Thanabal Kaliannan
Mr. Chiang Heung Chin	Mr. Lim Tuan Chew	Mdm Chan Bee Bee
Dr. Chew Soon Hoe		Mr. Lim Beng Kwee
		Mr. Ng Man Hon (Secretary)

### ACTION

<b>1</b>	<b>NOTES OF MEETING OF PREVIOUS DIALOGUE SESSION</b>	
1.1	There was no amendment to the notes of the previous meeting held on 20 Feb 2008.	
<b>2</b>	<b>MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS DIALOGUE SESSION ON 20 Feb 08</b>	
<b>2.1</b>	<b>Design against disproportionate collapse</b>	
2.1.1	BCA circulated the draft guidelines on “Prevention of Disproportionate Collapse in Buildings” during the meeting and invited IES-ACES to gather feedback on the draft guidelines from their members. The guidelines made reference to the current best practices in the UK and US.	IES-ACES
<b>2.2</b>	<b>Submission of as-built drawings</b>	
2.2.1	IES-ACES shared that there were instances where QP’s interpretations on what constituted “major deviations” from approved plans were different from that of BCA, and these often happened at TOP application stage when as-built submissions were made. In order to avoid unnecessary delay in obtaining TOP due to submission of amendment plans, IES-ACES were of the opinion that detailed guidelines defining “major deviations” would be helpful. IES-ACES also believed that the frequent changes made by the project architects before BP plan submissions contributed to the frequent amendments of approved plans.	

**ACTION**

2.2.2	In response, BCA assured IES-ACES that the draft guidelines were in the final stage and would be provided to IES-ACES for comments once they are available.	BCA
<b>2.3</b>	<b>Requirements to attend training on critical software and codes</b>	
2.3.1	BCA clarified that there is no plan to accredit engineering design software at the moment. However, there is still a need to ensure QP and AC themselves are familiar with the design software used in their submissions. BCA urged IES-ACES to explore providing training courses to QPs and ACs on the commonly used software, including finite elements software. IES-ACES agreed to look into it and would update in the next dialogue	IES-ACES
2.3.2	IES-ACES reiterated that the requirement to attend software training should not be made compulsory and QPs and ACs should be encouraged to attend such trainings instead.	
<b>2.4</b>	<b>Registration of Qualified Site Supervisors (QSS) by IES/ACES</b>	
2.4.1	The meeting agreed to discuss further on issues pertaining to the taking over of registration of QSS from BCA after the signing of MOU.	
<b>2.5</b>	<b>Feedback on Shortage of REs and RTOs</b>	
2.5.1	IES-ACES feedback that there is a shortage of REs and RTOs in the market, especially REs. Some REs resigned when the projects were underway and there was considerable difficulty to find replacement. BCA updated that due to the increasing construction cost, the project values associated with the requirements for supervision team would be scaled upwards to reflect the current trend. The recent deferment of public projects would also help to alleviate the shortage of site supervisors. BCA advised that QPs could make waiver applications if they are unable to appoint enough site supervisors as specified in the Regulations.	
2.5.2	BCA also informed IES-ACES that the list of acceptable university qualifications for RE registration would not be expanded at the moment. There would not be any conversion course for applicants with other qualifications also. IES-ACES told BCA that some foreign site engineers are very experienced in foundation supervision works and they should be able to perform the duties of a RE even though they do not hold any recognised qualifications. BCA explained that if they have university qualifications, they could still qualify as RTOs.	

2.5.3	Regarding the applications for RTOs by foreign university graduates, IES-ACES highlighted that there were cases where applications for RTO were rejected even though the applicants had university degrees. BCA asked IES-ACES to forward such cases for BCA's follow-up.	BCA
<b>2.6</b>	<b>Confidential Reporting on Structural Safety (CROSS)</b>	
2.6.1	IES-ACES said that they would require additional resources to set up CROSS as their members have to be remunerated if they are asked to conduct investigation arising from confidential report, even though the administrative support of the scheme could be provided by their members on a voluntary basis.	
<b>3</b>	<b>NEW ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION</b>	
<b>3.1</b>	<b>Reorganisation in Building Engineering Division, BCA</b>	
3.1.1	BCA updated IES-ACES about the recent reorganisation in the Building Engineering (BE) Division. The latest key appointments in the BE Division are as follows: -  <u>Acting Director:</u> Mr. Chew Keat Chuan  <u>Deputy Directors:</u> Deep Excavation & Geotechnical Dept: Mr. Yang Kin Seng Strategic Project Dept: Mr. Lim Beng Kwee Policy & Regulations Dept: Mdm Andris Leong Construction & Enforcement Dept: Mdm Chan Bee Bee Bridges & Structural Steel Dept: Mr. Thanabal Kaliannan	
<b>3.2</b>	<b>Potential noise issue on driven steel piles</b>	
3.2.1	IES-ACES feedback that as driven steel piles are seldom used nowadays, they did not foresee that it would cause widespread issue. However, IES-ACES noted that excessive noise and vibration could still be generated by removal of casing during bored piling works.	
<b>3.3</b>	<b>Regulation of Underground Building Works from Oct 2008</b>	
3.3.1	IES-ACES asked whether the AC(Geo) needs to be involved with the site investigation works prior to the commence of project. They opined that if it were the case, there would be difficulty as temporary works design was not known at that stage and it would be difficult to invite AC(Geo) to quote.	

3.3.2	In response, BCA clarified that there is no requirement for the AC(Geo) appointed to be involved in the site investigation work prior to the commencement of project. If the AC(Geo) is in the opinion that the site investigation conducted is not adequate, he could still request for more site investigation works to be carried out. BCA also explained that soil investigation reports could be endorsed by any PE. BCA added that a series of seminar was conducted in April this year to brief the industry about the implementation of underground building works in which many developers also attended and they are aware of the requirements.	
<b>3.4</b>	<b>Guidelines on the use of high strength concrete and structural steel materials from alternative sources</b>	
3.4.1	BCA shared with IES-ACES that with the new BC1: "Design Guide on Use of Alternative Steel Materials", QP would have more choices in specifying structural steel other than those produced to British Standard.	
<b>3.5</b>	<b>Clarifications on duties of AC in plan submissions</b>	
3.5.1	IES-ACES questioned the current requirement where AC is required to check that plan prepared by the QP is consistent with architecture drawings as they were of the opinion that QP should be the one to ensure such consistency. IES-ACES also raised query on the need for AC to endorse on PE's calculations as AC is supposed to produce independent calculations.	
3.5.2	BCA clarified that it is the duty of AC to pick up mistakes and errors in QP's design and resolve them with the QP before plan submission to BCA. However, IES-ACES reasoned that as AC is required to produce independent calculation to check QP's design, it would not be appropriate and practical for AC to review QP's calculations and ensure that no mistakes would be found in the calculations. IES-ACES also shared that it was not uncommon that QPs refused to forward their calculations for AC's review.	
3.5.3	Regarding the feedback by IES-ACES that many mistakes were found in some of the calculations and drawings forwarded by QP to AC for checking, BCA urged AC to bring up such cases to the attention of PE Board.	
3.5.4	BCA also suggested IES-ACES to explore the idea of producing a guideline on submission of plans by QP for AC checking while BCA would look into the feedback about AC certification on QP's calculations.	BCA

<b>3.5</b>	<b>Construction drawings before approval</b>	
3.5.1	IES-ACES mentioned that there were instances where QPs had been asked by contractors or project managers to issue amendment drawings which had not been approved by BCA for construction.	
3.5.2	BCA clarified that as long as the amendment plan has not been approved by BCA, no construction should proceed even though the QP has issued the drawings to the contractor “for construction”. By issuing “for construction” drawings to builder before plan approval, QP could contravene the BC Act by permitting the builder to start work without approval.	
<b>3.6</b>	<b>QP’s supervision team</b>	
3.6.1	<p>IES-ACES raised the concern that for some projects, the tender for professional service by PEs asked for the provision of supervision team to be included and if experienced site supervisors were to be provided, it would jack up the tender bid and make the bid unattractive. BCA suggested IES-ACES to raise this issue at another forum as it involves issues regarding the rising construction cost.</p> <p>The dialogue session ended at 6:30pm. The next dialogue session is tentatively arranged in Oct 2008.</p>	