



## Land Surveying Division

Sr Dr Conrad Tang LSD Council Chairman

### Smart City

As addressed in the 2017 Policy Address, land surveyors should “make best use of [the] opportunities” to contribute to the building of a smart city. The Development Bureau is commissioning a strategic study on the development of common spatial data infrastructure (SDI). With this announced theme of development, surveyors should further consider how the data for precise positioning, detailed maps and plans, and lot boundaries could be freely used and shared by our community. The development of a data policy on the use and assessment of spatial data is of utmost importance to our industry.

The LSD has formed an SDI working group led by Sr Chan Yue-chun. It welcomes input from other HKIS members, too. If you are willing to help, please contact an LSD council member or me at [lstang@hkis.org.hk](mailto:lstang@hkis.org.hk).

### Boundary

Land surveyors in Hong Kong understand that it lacks the legal sanction of lot boundaries. Under leasehold land grants without subsequent provisions on the re-establishment of lot boundaries, land surveyors’ attempts to achieve precise works are reduced to individual professional opinions. Unlike typical title jurisdictions, where subsequent surveys prevail, our works are just intelligent guesses of where the lot boundaries were when the land grants were made, be it 1905, 1884, or any date indicated on an initial land grant.

The same land boundary system worked well before the 1980s because Hong Kong was under a prerogative (i.e., Crown) government administration. Flourishing land boundary disputes and court cases have emerged in recent decades. They are not caused by high land prices, but rather by the lack of an

authoritative determination of lot boundaries. Easily disputable boundary determinations have prevented the government from performing or even confirming lot boundary re-establishments in areas that undergo frequent turnover in terms of development. Unnecessary hurdles are imposed, so delays and cost overruns are expected. Fairly speaking, professionals may be glad to repeatedly provide their services on the same lots; it is just inefficient for Hong Kong to stick with such a primitive land boundary system.

The LSD has a conscientious duty to strive to amend the Land Survey Ordinance so that individual lot boundaries could be re-established with legal effect. The helpless, if sincere, excuse from top policy officials on this matter indicates that the government would have great difficulty amending the Land Survey Ordinance in the current legislative environment. Thus, the LSD aims less to achieve its goals.

The Land Boundary Committee, under the leadership of Sr Prof Leung Shou-chun, seeks pragmatic ways to ascertain the lot re-establishment results. With such a conviction, the LSD’s delegate to the Working Group of the Site Area Determination for Building Development under the Buildings Department, Sr Dr Ken Ching, has advised the committee and called for an efficient and positive decision from the government.

The Building (Administration) Regulations [Cap 123A 8(1)(h)(i)] stipulate that an authorised person should submit a diagrammatic plan with information that includes site coverage and plot ratio. The Building (Planning) Regulations [Cap 123F 19-21] provide detailed rules on calculating site coverage and plot ratio, which are inevitably based on site area. The Buildings Department recently amended the Essential Information in Plan Submissions in the Practice Note for AP, RSE and RGE (ADV-33). It stipulates that site area and dimensions can be submitted using a land survey plan prepared by an authorised land surveyor. Details of this arrangement will be shared in the upcoming CPD Event 2017021 – Site Area Determination and Land Boundary Plan (LBP) for Building Plan Submission, which is scheduled for 27 February 2017.

A duplicate set of land survey plan together with the survey record plan, survey report and proof of owner's approval will be submitted to Buildings Department for onward transmission to Survey and Mapping Office of Lands Department for the purpose of information sharing with others.

## Membership

The LSD Council continues to pursue possible ways to recognise the professional training and experiences of local professional institutes of equal status. Sr Edmond Yu leads the newly-reformed Working Group, which conducted its first meeting on 20 January. The Working Group commenced a preliminary liaison with the relevant professional institutes to find ways that benefit both sides.

The HKIS has been inquired on the Guidance Notes for Land Boundary Survey. The HKIS promulgated the first edition of the Guidance Notes in 2002. Its second edition was updated by the then-Boundary Survey Advisory Committee, pursuant to the instruction of LSD Chairman Sr Koo Tak-ming, in 2013. This edition has, of course, superseded the first edition and has been approved and promulgated by the HKIS for use by its members. The Guidance Notes can be downloaded from the HKIS website at: <http://www.hkis.org.hk/ufiles/GN-LBS1.pdf>.

This month, the HKIS informed the LSD that four corporate members, 25 probationary members, one associate member, and three student members were quitting the HKIS after they declined to renew their annual subscriptions. Members are reminded to update their contact information to avoid receiving this embarrassing message. The significant number of probationers quitting certainly reflects practical difficulties in the professional training process. The LSD is willing to hear from and seek ways to help its younger members to succeed. Should our probationers require further assistance in the course of their professional training, they are

welcome to contact any LSD council member or me at [lstang@hkis.org.hk](mailto:lstang@hkis.org.hk).

## Publicity for Land Surveying Activity

Apple Daily has made a video and report on the "Protection of Trigonometric Stations". Many local hikers like to take photos using trigonometric points as landmarks. But this may delay surveying work and damage the trigonometric posts. Vice Chairman Sr Joseph Wong appeared in the video and called for the protection of this form of infrastructure. The link of 【港式Kill標】行山做柱男影相 can be found on Apple Daily's website:

[http://hkm.appledaily.com/detail.php?guid=2\\_462326\\_0&category\\_guid=nextplus&category=magazine](http://hkm.appledaily.com/detail.php?guid=2_462326_0&category_guid=nextplus&category=magazine)

## Surveying & Geomatics Technology Forum for Smart City Development in Hong Kong

The conference is organised by the Hong Kong R&D Centre for Logistics and Supply Chain Management Enabling Technologies. It is scheduled on 2 March 2017 (14:30 - 17:00) at the Lecture Theatre Y305, Lee Shau Kee Building, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University. The Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors is a supporting organisation. No conference fee is needed for HKIS members; registration starts at 14:00.