

Building Surveying Division Chairman's Message



Vincent Ho BSD Council Chairman

Problems in aged building: Sub-divided Flats

Building problems are becoming more apparent when the built environment is getting old and densely populated. Widely-spread unauthorized building works in old buildings may be due to long-standing abuse of occupation of buildings by the owners as well as insufficient resource allocation from the government in tackling the huge number of UBWs.

The fire tragedy occurred at the 8-storey aged building at Ma Tau Wai on 15 June 2011 with several casualties has aroused public attention on this long-standing building safety issue in aged buildings involving sub-divided flats.

Sub-division of flats or units may be considered as building works exempted from prior approval and consent by the building authority if it does not involve structural alteration

under section 41(3) of the Buildings Ordinance. Thus the works may be carried out quietly without alerting the government authority. To highlight, these works must still fulfill and satisfy all safety and health requirements under the respective building regulations. Although there is no formal statistics carried out on subdivided flats, I believe it is an obvious problem in many aged buildings in old districts. Generally as there was lack of proper design and supervision by competent building professionals, these subdivided flats are often designed and constructed in fault, leading to great fire safety hazard together with other environmental and health or even potential long-term structural safety concerns. In order to enable the public in gaining better understanding on the safety considerations in subdivided flats and the necessary review of the situation, BSD held a press conference on the subject on 21 June 2011. We have also put forward a proposal to the Government on regulating the flat sub-divisioning works. The press release stating HKIS-BSD's concern and our proposal to handle the subject is extracted (in Chinese) below:

香港測量師學會 關注樓宇「劊房」影響逃生途徑

近日馬頭圍道火災，使大眾注意到香港樓宇「劊房」的問題。香港測量師學會（下稱「學會」）對「劊房」的問題深表關注。

一般而言，「劊房」若不涉及建築物的結構便毋需建築事務監督事先批准及同意的情況下進行。然而有關工程可能違反《建築物條例》的規定，例如阻礙逃生通道或救援進出途徑因而會在發生火警或意外時造成危險；阻礙天然照明與通風因而影響樓宇的光線及空氣的流通。另外，亦可能影響樓宇結構及引致滲水問題。

由於「劊房」的問題涉及安全、樓宇管理及房屋問題等不同範疇，學會建議政府應全面檢討現行建築物監管、樓宇管理、房屋、土地資源及發展政策以妥善解決有關問題。因為「劊房」涉及民生的重大問題，學會認為不應一刀切將「劊房」全面取締，而應在平衡安全及基層市民的需要而作出監管，長遠而言需與香港的整體樓宇管理及房屋政策配合，並作相應的考慮。

就《建築物條例》的執行而言，學會得悉政府對「劊房」的定義未能作出界定，卻將不同的工種，如加高地台、增設間隔牆、鋪設供水管和排水渠等建議納入不同的小型工程類別從而作出監管。學會對有關做法的可行性抱有極大疑問，學會認為進行「劊房」的工程不應就個別項目獨立考慮，而應全面評估其影響而作出規管。對於已完工的「劊房」，學會認為政府應制定一套全新的覆檢計劃，容許有關業主聘請「認可人士」就「劊房」作全面評估並對違規項目作出糾正，再遞交相關圖則予屋宇署記錄在案。對於擬建的「劊房」，政府可參照第一類小型工程的模式，由「認可人士」一併監督整個「劊房」所有項目的進行。對於適用於「劊房」的相關規例，學會認為就某些不涉及安全的範疇可以作出適度的寬限，例如於小型「劊房」單位內不設置廚房，以機械通風補足廚房、浴室的通風要求等，有關細節可再進一步與業界商討。



Collapse of Canopy at Tuen Mun

The recent collapse of a reinforced concrete canopy at an aged industrial building in Tuen Mun on 9 June 2011 has also rung the alarm bell on the safety of similar type of canopies in Hong Kong. Shortly after the incident, our spokesman Mr David Chan inspected the spot and interviewed by the mass media on behalf of HKIS. The incident has alerted the public attention to the state of maintenance and repair on these high risk cantilevered slab canopies. While the Government is still investigating the cause of the accident, building surveyors should be cautious in checking out the canopy condition when undertaking building survey, maintenance or alteration works which associates with similar construction.



廣東省監理協會年會

應廣東省建設監理協會之邀請，我連同副主席梁志添及前主席黃來發代表建築測量組參加了協會於2011年6月9日及10日於廣州舉行的第三屆一次年會及換屆選舉。

同時，協會亦委聘了我們多位前主席及資深建築測量師成為他們的名譽顧問，包括：

- 黃比
- 劉智強
- 陳旭明
- 鍾鴻鈞
- 陳文偉

另外，協會亦邀請了我和李海達成為他們的名譽理事，藉此增加雙方溝通聯繫。

How much do you know about our BSD Council?

I think most of you have no idea about BSD Council. BSD Council is made up of a group of enthusiastic corporate members who contribute their effort and time for the development and promotion of our profession and benefits of our members on a voluntary basis. From this issue on, I would like to give a brief introduction of our Working Groups / Panels / Committees one by one so as to give you a glimpse of understanding to our BSD Council. Here, let's get start from the one which I believe you frequently benefit from its works in your professional development – the CPD Panel.

The Panel is currently led by Mr Daniel Pong and comprised of members Mr Nathan Lee, Mr Peter DY and Ms Astor Chu. The panel searches and organizes CPD events including site visits on interesting, hot and update issues in surveying knowledge and practice. Recent CPD events such as "A Turning Point of Green Building Movement in HK: PNAP APP-152 SBD" and "NT Small Houses vis-a-vis UBWs" have received exhilarating full-house subscriptions. BS Conference is the main dish in the annual menu of CPD for which the CPD panel and Organizing Committee (Convener of BS Conference 2011 is Mr Andrew Kung) have paid their greatest efforts for the success and smooth delivery of the Conference. Your participation to these CPD events is definitely the greatest encouragement to the CPD panel! 🇮🇪