

Closing Address
“Quality is not an act, it is a habit.”

Mr J A MILLER, JP

Director, Housing Department, HKSAR Government

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Learning from successful experience from reformists and practitioners, both local and overseas, is always an enlightening exercise. Today is no exception.

As **Mr John Ng** and **Mr Stephen Lee** vividly talked about sustainable design and construction innovation concepts that the Authority has spearheaded with our partners in the past and at present, they clearly show us that we can partner for success, despite the challenges ahead.

Talking about innovation, we cannot help looking at the Japanese experience. We admire the simplicity of the Kodan type Skeleton and Infill Housing design shown by **Mr Kumagai**, as well as the advanced construction techniques of the Automated and Sheltered Construction System presented by **Mr Nakagawa**. Our colleagues' visits to Japan prove very fruitful, and I will be keen to see how they can actively apply these concepts to our work.

On the procurement front, **Mr Mike Moir** showed us how “turnkey” design and build approach used in a project in Tokyo enabled a product of exceptional quality to be produced, within budget and exactly on schedule. In the local arena, **Mr Thomas Ho** presented to us two projects showing how construction excellence is achieved through innovation and 2nd generation of strategic partnering.

Pivotal to achieving project success, as **Dr David Stevens** showed us, is trust amongst contracting parties and how to sustain partnership for the life of the project. We need to build trust on all fronts, right through the supply chain down to the workers in the frontline.

Mr Alan Crane's keynote presentation on Movement for Innovation in UK and in particular, the concept of “Demonstration Projects” clearly reinforce my firm belief that we need to find more “pilot projects” to apply our new initiatives comprehensively, so as to reap early benefits and obtain feedback. It seems obvious that we need to work harder on this front, although I can easily name three most notable ones in the pipeline so far.

- We have pilot samples like **Tseung Kwan O Area 73A** that **Prof J M Ko and Ir Ricky So** has shown us in the use of pre-fabricated bathroom. It shows us how contractors and the Department can work in partnership to drive construction innovation.
- Another notable example is the use of innovative techniques in piling and site surveillance for **Un Chau Street Piling Contract** that is shown by **Mr S T Chan** in the display panels for the roving exhibition.

- Perhaps the most comprehensive one is **Shui Chuen O**, which has its roots in an Open Design Competition Project, and has become our pilot “Green Estate”. This is clearly evident from the experience shared with us by **Ir Neil Horsfield** and **Dr Raymond Yau** in their talk on Innovative Engineering and sustainable design approach. In fact, Shui Chuen O is a “demonstration project” in more ways than one and there is still potential for taking more new initiatives on board.

I am sure that valuable experience and feedback obtained from these pilot projects on product quality and productivity can be used as reference by other projects. I also wish to impress upon our partners that our non-standard design is not synonymous to ornamental architecture or disregard to cost control.

On procurement, we will be looking actively internally for pilot projects to try out integrated procurement methods that are more conducive to sharing risk and reward, pain and gain with our business partners to secure the best value to the Employer and best quality to the end user. This may mean taking some risks, but I would urge both colleagues and partners not to be afraid. The risks are well worth taking and, with partnering at work I am sure we will be able to find solutions.

As Aristotle said, “Quality is not an act. It is a habit.” Partnering means trust, it means communication, it means sharing. We wish to see both partnering and quality to be our habits! Started off as one of the 50 Quality Housing Initiatives, organizing an annual partnering conference now becomes our habit. The next one will be held in 2003. It will be a particularly meaningful event, because it will be an integral part of our celebrations to mark the 50th Anniversary of public housing development in Hong Kong, and I look forward to seeing all of you there.

At the close of this conference, I hope you will agree with me that it is a very meaningful event that provides us with some food for thought on the way forward on Quality Housing Reform. As **Mr S S Lee** pointed out, we need the impetus generated from the industry in order to strive for excellence. We do see some signs of delight in the territory. The Integer Project has attracted a lot of interest on sustainable development in the local arena. On the partnering front, I am also glad to learn that a group of volunteers has formed a Special Interest Group to explore the concepts further.

With our partners on our side, we are not the lone runners on the road to reforming the industry. We are also pleased to see some pioneers who are bold enough to take the challenge and start to innovate on their own and invest a lot of resources on training, enhancing quality, safety and environmental protection. Working together works. As our Chairman, **Dr H K Cheng** said, we need to equip ourselves with better skills. *I wish to call upon you all to support our drive for employment of more trade tested workers, and we wish to achieve 60% trade tested workers for core trades in advance of our pledged target date we have made before.*

With **partnering** as our solid foundation, **procurement** and **quality systems** as supporting framework, we nurture our **quality people** to deliver **quality homes and services** to our customers.

Ladies and gentlemen, as the Quality Housing Partnering Conference comes to a close, it also marks the **launching of our road show**, which is the display of our colleagues' work showing a few living examples of our Quality Housing Initiatives at work.

We need your support and active participation to make it a success.

Last but not least, I wish to thank all our speakers and all of you for your contribution and participation to make this a successful event, and thanks to all those colleagues for their hard work to organize the event – especially when they walk the talk by going for IT, save paper and save our forest, by just giving out a CD-Rom – a pioneer act which I assure you should be our habit in future.

Thank you.

All rights reserved. No part of this paper may be reproduced, distributed, published, or transmitted without the prior permission of the copyright owner.