

City Talk



STEP OUT AND INTO BIG OPPORTUNITIES NEXT DOOR

Engineers along with architects, planners and surveyors are excited to learn of the recent development in Qianhai. With a seven-fold increase in site area, it will provide an even more convenient stepping-stone for Hong Kong construction professionals to try their opportunities in the Greater Bay Area and other regions subsequently.

It is not new for Hong Kong engineers to work in the mainland.

For the past 40 years, I've worked in south China on projects like Daya Bay Nuclear Power Station, various stages of the metro system in Guangzhou and many road tunnels in Guangzhou and Shanghai.

I am sure my fellow engineers can provide many more examples.

Our open economy has allowed our engineers to learn the best practices in international engineering design and construction methods.

With the MTR system, we have demonstrated we can build a world-class underground railway that is safe, reliable, and efficient.

Our power supply system remains one of the best in the world.

Our airport and our container terminals still serve the SAR and the surrounding area effectively.

The knowledge and experience we have gained since the early 1970s have allowed us to be in the forefront in our infrastructure development.

This valuable experience, and our close relationship with the mainland, helped by a good understanding of the culture, and our network in being able to bring in financial, legal, insurance and other services, makes us most competitive in our participation in planning, designing and constructing various new infrastructure projects in the mainland.

In the past 20 years, the tremendous growth of infrastructure in the mainland has allowed its indigenous engineers to be



Nuts and bolts

Edmund Leung

capable of doing most of the work themselves, but I dare say the opportunities for our young engineers remain huge if they only try and venture into the vast lands of the Greater Bay Area.

The newly announced arrangements in Qianhai not only allow recognition of our qualifications, but facilitate a network of construction professionals to work together as a team to produce new designs and construction methods.

When working in the mainland 30 years ago we had no alternative but to dovetail our services into a mainland organization—like working with one hand tied behind your back.

With the new arrangements we should soon be working with both hands to produce results without too many restrictions.

I am aware young engineers need courage and enterprising spirit to start work in a new region.

But I dare to ask: apart from Hong Kong, where else in the world can engineers work their full life without having to travel extensively?

I call upon all young engineers to start thinking of a wider vision of being a “regional” or even “world” professionals.

The days of being able to return home every evening after work are diminishing rapidly, but a bright future is ahead if we start to step out of our comfort zone and venture across the border.

Come to think of it, with our high-speed rail the people working in Qianhai have a far better chance to go home for dinner and bed in good time than in many other places.

Veteran engineer Edmund Leung Kwong-ho casts an expert eye over opportunities and advances