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**(ACE Paper 4/96)**  
for advice

**AIR POLLUTION CONTROL ORDINANCE  
CODES OF PRACTICE  
FOR CONTROL OF ENVIRONMENTAL ASBESTOS**

**Introduction**

1. This paper seeks Members' endorsement of the Codes of Practice for control of environmental asbestos to be issued under Section 37 of the Air Pollution Control Ordinance (Chapter 311).

**Background**

2. The Air Pollution Control Ordinance was amended in 1993 to, among other things, extend control to environmental asbestos. The ordinance requires the engagement of registered asbestos consultants, contractors, supervisors and laboratories to undertake asbestos related work. These registered parties will be subject to disciplinary action if they are found guilty of neglect or misconduct. In order to assist the registered parties to comply with the ordinance, four sets of Codes of Practice have been drawn up for their reference, covering matters relating to:

- a) Preparation of asbestos investigation reports, asbestos management plans and asbestos abatement plans (Annex 1);
- b) Asbestos work using full containment or mini containment methods (Annex 2);
- c) Asbestos work using the glove bag method (Annex 3);
- d) Safe handling of asbestos containing materials posing only low risk (Annex 4).

3. These Codes of Practice are not legally binding. Compliance with the advice given therein could be used however as evidence of good practice in the course of disciplinary and legal proceedings.

**Main Contents of the Codes**

4. The main contents of the Codes are:

- a) **Code of Practice on the Preparation of Asbestos Investigation Reports, Asbestos Management Plans and Asbestos Abatement Plans**

This Code provides guidelines for the planning and undertaking of an asbestos investigation, and the subsequent formulation of asbestos management strategy. It also sets out the specifications, scope and type of information to be included in an asbestos investigation report, an asbestos management plan and an asbestos abatement plan.

b) Code of Practice on Asbestos Work Using Full Containment or Mini Containment Method

This Code sets out the procedures to be followed when full containment or mini containment method is adopted for abatement of friable asbestos containing materials. Standards are set for the various stages of work, from site preparation and construction of containment, to final cleanup and acceptance of work. Guidelines are also given on warning signs, daily project logs and procedures dealing with emergency in the event of a mishap.

c) Code of Practice on Asbestos Work Using Glove Bag Method

The glove bag method is a widely accepted abatement technique for small project of short duration. In this Code, the applications - as well as limitations - of the glove bag method are explained. Guidelines are also given on the set-up, testing and use of commercial grade glove bags.

d) Code of Practice on Safe Handling of Low Risk Asbestos Containing Material

This Code specifies the requirements for the preparation of work sites, abatement procedures, air monitoring and acceptance of work when handling low risk asbestos containing materials such as corrugated asbestos cement sheets and vinyl asbestos floor tiles.

### Consultation

5. There has been extensive consultation on the draft Codes with the following parties:
- a) practising asbestos consultants, laboratories and contractors;
  - b) relevant trade associations including the Asbestos Control Association of Hong Kong Ltd., the Hong Kong Construction Association Ltd., the Real Estate Developers Association of Hong Kong, the Chinese Manufacturers' Association of Hong Kong and the Federation of Hong Kong Industries;
  - c) professional institutions including the Hong Kong Institution of Engineers, the Hong Kong Institute of Architects and the Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors;
  - d) major utility companies including the Mass Transit Railway Corporation and the two power companies; and
  - e) eleven government departments.

On the whole, the feedback was positive. Queries related mainly to clarification of technical points in these Codes. There are no outstanding issues.

### **Public Reaction**

6. Most of the practising asbestos professionals will welcome these Codes of Practice as useful documents helping them comply with the requirements of the law. The general public would have little interest in the contents of these technical documents.

### **Advice Sought**

7. Members are invited to endorse the proposed Codes of Practice.