

**Arboriculture and Horticulture Industry
Development Advisory Committee (2024-26)**
(Notes of the First Meeting)

Date and Time : 14 April 2025 (Monday) at 10 am

Venue : Conference Room 1, G/F, Central Government Offices, Tamar

Present

Miss Pamela LAM	Chairperson (DS(W)1, DEVB)
Prof Leslie CHEN, JP	Member
Mr Ray CHING	Member
Mr Daniel HO	Member
Mr LAI Ka-ming	Member
Dr Allen LIM	Member
Mr Victor MAN	Member
Mr Chiky WONG	Member
Dr Peter YAU	Member (via video conferencing from overseas)
Mr Benny LEUNG	Member (CIC)
Dr Allen ZHANG	Member (VTC)
Dr Kathy T.K. NG	Member (H/GLTMS, DEVB)
Dr Jackie YIP	Member (AD/CP, AFCD)
Mr Steve LAI	Member (GM/QF, EDB)
Miss Eva LEE	Member (CLA, HyD)
Miss Vince KOK	Member (SLA/TD&C, HD)
Ms Annie FUNG	Member (AD(LS)3(Ag.), LCSD)
Miss Angie AU YEUNG	Secretary (H/TMO, DEVB)

Absent with Apologies

Mr Kingsley CHOI	Member
Ms Iris HOI	Member
Dr Alvin TANG	Member
Ms Florence TSUI	Member

In Attendance

Miss Cindy LO	CEO(Reg), DEVB
Ms IP Lai-mui	AS(TM)3, DEVB
Dr Flora LEUNG	TMO3, DEVB
Ms Sandra CHOW	TMO4, DEVB

For IDAC Paper No. 1/2025

Dr Rex SHIH	AS(TM)2(Ag.), DEVB (notes taker)
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For IDAC Paper No. 2/2025

Mr HSU Ka-man	Project AS(UFSF), DEVB
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For IDAC Paper No. 3/2025

Dr Rex SHIH

AS(TM)2(Ag.), DEVB

For IDAC Paper No. 4/2025

Mr HSU Ka-man

Project AS(UFSF), DEVB

1. The Chairperson welcomed Members to the first meeting of the Arboriculture and Horticulture Industry Development Advisory Committee (“AHIDAC”) 2024-2026, in particular Mr Ray CHING, Mr Benny LEUNG, Dr Allen ZHANG, Dr Jackie YIP, Miss Eva LEE, Miss Angie AU YEUNG and Dr Rex SHIH, who joined the meeting for the first time.
2. H/TMO was invited to brief Members of the breakout sessions organised in 2024 and the first quarter of 2025 to discuss various issues concerning the development of the arboriculture and horticulture industry, such as the potential areas of enhancing the Study Sponsorship Scheme and Registration Scheme of Tree Management Personnel. The Chairman thanked members for their active participation in the meetings.

Item 1 : Confirmation of the minutes of the last meeting

3. The minutes of the last meeting were confirmed without amendment.

Item 2 : Report on Study Sponsorship Scheme (IDAC Paper No. 1/2025)

4. AS(TM)2(Ag.) provided an overview of the Study Sponsorship Scheme (“SSS”) and the enhanced measures implemented in July 2023 and June 2024, and the series of publicity activities launched for the promotion of the industry. He reported that after the implementation of the enhancement measures in 2023 and 2024, the number of applications increased significantly. In response to some recent feedback from the industry that the application procedures should be further streamlined, GLTMS proposed to adjust by allowing the applicants to apply for subsidy to enrol on courses in any programme category, subject to an overall cap, instead of requiring applicants to take at most one course in each programme category.
5. VTC representative supported the promotion targeted at secondary schools as the arboriculture programmes would be more appealing to students if the career path and prospect of

the arboriculture industry were clearly shown. He invited GLTMS to collaborate with Technological and Higher Education Institute of Hong Kong (THEi) to conduct forthcoming career talks in secondary schools.

6. A Member complimented the efforts of DEVB in promoting and supporting the industry over the years. He stressed the importance of promoting the diverse professional image of the industry so as to attract more talents to join the industry.
7. H/GLTMS responded to a Member's enquiry on the scholarship scheme that programme providers could nominate outstanding students from each academic year for the scholarship. The VTC representative supplemented that since the last refinement of the criteria, several VTC students had been nominated for the scholarship, and they were required to serve in the arboriculture industry after graduation.
8. Another Member suggested outreaching to students in tertiary education particularly in bioscience-related programmes and approaching institutes to offer horticulture programmes or to include elements of horticulture in existing arboriculture programmes. H/GLTMS supplemented that the GLTMS had delivered talks to some university programmes for promoting the industry. H/TMO responded that the incorporation of appropriate horticultural elements in relevant programmes could be further discussed with the institutes. Members in general had no comment on the enhancement measures as proposed (paragraph 4).

Item 3 : Report on Trainee Programme (IDAC Paper No. 2/2025)

9. PrAS(UFSF) provided an overview of the enhancement measures of Trainee Programme ("TP") in 2023 and 2024. A further series of enhancement measures to promote trainee engagement was also proposed, including strengthening partnerships with tertiary institutions and the industry practitioners, as well as reviewing entry requirements.
10. A Member enquired about the drop-out rate of trainees and the reasons behind. PrAS(UFSF) responded that 'salary' and 'working environment' were the most common reasons for dropping out, particularly among those assigned to physically demanding roles.

11. H/GLTMS supplemented that some trainees left the programme before completion as they were offered relevant positions in Government departments including AFCD and LCSD. The programmes therefore had provided new blood for the industry.
12. PrAS(UFSF) responded to a Member's question on the decrease in number of 'tree climber trainees'. He explained that the programme for 'tree climber cum chainsaw operator trainee' was launched in the second half of 2023. The change in figures since then reflected that some trainees preferred to join the 'tree climber cum chainsaw operator trainee' programme instead of the one for 'tree climber trainee' only.
13. The Chairperson thanked Members for their views and asked GLTMS to explore further enhancement measures in due course.

Item 4 : Report on Registration Scheme for Tree Management Personnel (IDAC Paper No. 3/2025)

14. AS(TM)2(Ag) provided an overview of the RSTMP, as well as enhancement measures implemented in 2024 to facilitate both registration and renewal which were generally welcomed by the industry. Recently the industry suggested further enhancement measures e.g. refining CEA requirements and facilitating the accumulation of essential CEA hours. Initiatives to strengthen training and performance monitoring of registered personnel, and promotion of best practices through industry seminars were also suggested.
15. TMO3 responded to a Member's enquiry that first aid knowledge was included in the key job function of "occupational safety and health for arboriculture and horticulture" in the existing recognised CEA courses.
16. Another Member expressed appreciation for the publication of the Handbook on Tree Management, which provided private property owners with guidelines and standards for good practices in tree management. He suggested including the job duties of various types of tree management personnel in the Handbook to ensure consistent terminology for government contracts. H/TMO responded that the Handbook

was published in 2015 and that a review and update would be conducted.

17. H/TMO responded to a Member's question on the of supply of registered tree management personnel in the market for government contracts. She explained that relevant departments had estimated required manpower based on forthcoming tasks. It was then estimated that there would be sufficient registered tree management personnel to meet the estimated manpower requirements. Moreover, the upcoming manpower survey would provide further information.
18. A Member inquired about the disciplinary actions for registered tree management personnel. CEO(Reg) explained that the Disciplinary Panel determined disciplinary actions based on the severity and nature of each case.
19. In response to a Member's enquiry on the tree management work during construction activities by registered tree works supervisors, CLA/HyD explained that in most contracts, registered arborists were responsible for supervising tree work but for small-scale construction projects, the engagement of a tree works supervisor instead of a full-time arborist would be more practicable.
20. H/TMO explained the current CEA training courses organised by GLTMS during office hours were mainly targeting Government staff and contractors. GLTMS had also organised the Hong Kong 2024 International Urban Forestry Conference, which offered CEA hours. Further opportunities to provide CEA training for the industry would be explored. VTC representative added that THEi had conducted some seminars for practitioners outside office hours, with CEA hours provided.
21. Members in general supported the proposal of further enhancing the entry and renewal requirement to RSTMP, CEA requirements, and the update in qualification requirements for Tree Risk Assessors.

Item 5: Manpower and Competence Survey for the Arboriculture and Horticulture Industry (IDAC Paper No. 4/2025)

22. PrAS(UFSF) provided a general overview of the previous manpower and competence survey in the Arboriculture and Horticulture Industry and the forthcoming 2025 survey.
23. The Chairperson encouraged Members to promote participation in the survey through their networks.
24. A Member expressed appreciation for the upcoming manpower survey, which would provide useful information of the current state of the industry. Another Member suggested the survey to include small-scale companies and estate management firms.
25. PrAS(UFSF) explained that the survey would encompass the arboriculture, horticulture, and landscape management and maintenance industries, covering construction companies, landscape contractors employed by estate management offices, and enterprises of various sizes registered under the Company Registry. A Member suggested providing the questionnaire in advance for information, H/TMO agreed to circulate the draft questionnaire to members upon request.

Item 6: Any Other Business (“AOB”)

26. AS(TM)2(Ag.) provided an update on the progress of implementing Recognition of Prior Learning (“RPL”) for the Arboriculture & Horticulture industry.
27. GM/QF added that RPL was a mechanism under the Qualifications Framework (QF) designed to recognise work experience and competencies acquired by practitioners at the workplace. This mechanism provided an alternative route for practitioners to obtain QF-recognised qualifications and facilitate their pursuit for further learning.
28. A Member shared that horticulture was closely related to tree management as well and that training with tailor-made programmes could be provided by institutes to the horticulture practitioners.

29. With no further items to be discussed, the meeting was adjourned at 1:10pm.

**Greening, Landscape and Tree Management Section
Development Bureau
September 2025**