

Solving Housing Woes

“Need to be Clear on Roles and Responsibilities”

THE Institution of Engineers, Malaysia (IEM) sympathises with the many unfortunate house buyers who are caught in the web of abandoned housing projects. In this respect, the IEM has, at its last Council meeting, deliberated on the pros and cons, and decided to support the “Build-Then-Sell” concept which we believe would protect house buyers from abandoned housing projects.

On the same issue, it was noted that the IEM has been reprimanded by the *Ketua Setiausaha Negara* (KSN) (as reported in *The Sun* on 3 and 4 April 2012) regarding its role in abandoned housing projects. In fact, we believe that the comments from the KSN could be due to the confusion and misunderstanding of the roles of the different professional institutions and their regulating bodies in the housing industry.

The IEM is a learned society and a professional organisation for engineers, and our membership of more than 20,000 engineers are from all disciplines. Our membership also includes consulting engineers who are specifically involved in the construction and housing industries. However, there is another engineering association specifically representing consulting engineers in the country, and the issues which were brought up by the KSN and relating to the role and responsibility of consulting engineers in housing projects should be brought up to their attention.

It may also be of interest for the public to know that the Board of Engineers, Malaysia (BEM) is the body specifically authorised with the role of regulating engineers and the engineering profession, and includes the responsibility and power to discipline errant engineers. IEM can only do what is within its means; one of which is to advise its members to abide by its “Code of Ethics” which forms part of the basic charter for engineers to become a Corporate Member of the IEM.

The IEM believes that the entire housing development process is in place and well documented, and all that is needed is to examine the relevant “flowchart” to establish the role and responsibility of the various parties involved in the entire process. What is missing are the “fine-tuning” and the will to ensure that whatever that needs to be done in every step of the process is being strictly adhered to. The KSN is taking a proactive role in this matter and his effort is laudable. The IEM gives its full support to his efforts and would be willing to assist if our contribution is needed. ■

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