

### **GROUNDBREAKING CEREMONY FOR ICAC HEADQUARTERS BUILDING Main contractor Shui On creates new employment opportunities as ICAC project commenced**

**(Hong Kong, 27 January 2005)** Today marks the beginning of the construction of Shui On Construction And Materials Limited ("SOCAM", stock code: 983)'s recently awarded government project - the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) Headquarters Building. Located at the North Point waterfront, the first purpose built ICAC Headquarters Building will feature a comprehensive range of new facilities and state-of-the-art technologies to meet the ICAC's current and projected needs with an aim to enhance close partnership between the community and ICAC.

The groundbreaking ceremony for the Headquarters Building was held today at the work site on Java Road, North Point. Officiating guests included Mr Raymond H.C. Wong, Commissioner of ICAC, Mr C.H. Yue, Director of Architectural Services, and Mr Vincent H.S. Lo, Chairman of Shui On Construction And Materials Limited whose subsidiary Shui On Joint Venture is the main contractor of the project. More than 120 guests attended the ceremony.

Speaking at the ceremony, Mr Lo expressed his gratitude for being able to participate in this new project. He said, "Shui On has been involved in government projects for 27 years. For every project we participated in, we regard it as an opportunity to make use of our skills and expertise to assist the government in building a better environment for Hong Kong. The construction of ICAC Headquarters Building will mark a new milestone for ICAC, and we will bring in our management expertise, latest construction techniques, state-of-the-art technology and environmentally friendly design and measures to undertake this important headquarters building for the ICAC."

In Chief Executive's Policy Address 2005, it mentioned the HKSAR Government would implement new initiatives to speed up the urban renewal process and improve the maintenance and management of old buildings that would create employment opportunities for the construction, property management and related industries in the next few years. The ICAC project is expected to shed light to the construction industry.

"Although competition is still very keen and margins on both private and public-sector works are at a fraction of the peak, the increased amount of works available for tender indicate a slow market recovery in the medium term. The ICAC project will also create new employment opportunities as the amount of work increases during construction. This is an encouraging news to the construction industry and also to the Hong Kong labour market," Mr Lo said.

As the main contractor, Shui On is responsible for the design and construction of the ICAC Headquarters Building. Its previous "design and build" public-sector projects include the North Point Government Offices and Nam Cheong Street Public Health Laboratory Centre which was awarded a certificate of merits by the esteemed Quality Building Award in 2004.

With a construction floor area of approximately 54,000 square meters, the 25-storey ICAC Headquarters Building will place ICAC offices and training facilities in different locations under one roof. It will feature office accommodation and a comprehensive range of supporting facilities such as a forensic computer laboratory, a report centre and an indoor shooting range. There will also be a museum to help the community to better understand ICAC's work. ICAC Headquarters Building is targeted for completion in 2007.

## END ##

#### **About SOCAM**

SOCAM, a member of the Shui On Group, was listed on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange in 1997 and is engaged in cement, construction and construction materials. The company also has an interest of more than 20% in Shui On Land Limited.