



BEST BOOT FORWARD...

Online approval = \$160 million annual savings

M ADCAP contractor Phua Chu Kang should be happy.

He can now get building permits and planning approval all under one roof — his own — at the click of a mouse.

Yes, builders need no longer go around government offices to start a project.

From today, some 900 consultancy firms can apply online for all types of building plans simultaneously to 12 different government agencies.

They can submit building plans and apply for building permits and certificates through the Construction and Real Estate Network (Corenet).

So says Mr Mah Bow Tan, Minister for National Development, in a speech he is to give this morning at the opening ceremony of BauCON Asia.

The Building and Construction Authority (BCA) estimates this will help the construction industry save about \$160 million a year.

To help, various government agencies will set up computer terminals on their premises.

But companies can acquire the necessary hardware and software themselves.

BCA and the Singapore Productivity and Standards Board have packaged a financial assistance scheme to help them do so.

However, this scheme will be available only to the first 400 applicants.

BCA will also offer subsidised training on the new system.

Two other electronic systems are being launched today.

The Construction Information System will carry information about

building codes, regulations and standards from different agencies.

And the Electronic Buildable Design Appraisal System will enable users to calculate whether a building plan complies with official regulations.

Developed at a cost of just over \$5 million, these three systems should help raise productivity in the construction industry.

The construction industry is no longer just a brick and mortar business.

Already 72 firms involved in 31 projects are using the Internet for project collaboration through Project Website, a private-sector online system.

There's also an electronic procurement project started by local contractors. Started in May this year, it has 55 companies trying out the new online method of procurement of services.



HELP AT A CLICK:
Mr Mah Bow Tan, Minister for National Development, has good news for contractors.

WHAT'S NEW?

■ **Construction and Real Estate Network** — to submit plans and apply for permits and certificates

■ **Construction Information System** — details about building codes, regulations and standards

■ **Electronic Buildable Design Appraisal System** — to check if a building plan complies with official regulations