

Qianhai's NEC Pilot - A Gateway for Collaborative Contracting Across the Greater Bay Area



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Tony Ho and Francis Leung

Development Bureau (DEVB), Government of the Hong Kong SAR

The Development Bureau (DEVB) of the Government of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China and the Authority of Qianhai Shenzhen-Hong Kong Modern Service Industry Cooperation Zone (Qianhai Authority) are jointly exploring the introduction of NEC in Qianhai. The initiative aims to pilot the application of collaborative contracting in the Greater Bay Area (GBA), drawing on Qianhai's experience.

Launching of Chinese Translation of the NEC Engineering and Construction Contract Hong Kong Edition



Launching of Chinese translation of the NEC Engineering and Construction Contract Hong Kong Edition. © DEVB

On 27 November 2025, the first official Chinese translation of the NEC Engineering and Construction Contract (ECC) Hong Kong Edition was unveiled in partnership with DEVB and the Qianhai Authority at the NEC Asia Pacific Annual Conference. The bilingual edition, as well as enhancing accessibility for Chinese Mainland users and promoting good practice in project governance across the GBA, will also be of enormous help to NEC's local users — particularly those from smaller firms — in better understanding NEC mechanisms.

Why Qianhai — and Why Now

Qianhai is strategically positioned for NEC pilot projects. As a state-designated zone for Shenzhen-Hong Kong co-operation, it carries a clear mandate to deepen regulatory alignment, institutional integration and cross-boundary innovation — conditions well-suited for applying NEC's collaborative framework.

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Government-to-government collaboration is reinforced through the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Task Force on Qianhai Development, which enables structured dialogue on policy and technical alignment. This provides the institutional basis required to support cross-boundary project delivery and a pipeline of NEC pilot opportunities.

The Contract Foundation: Customised, Bilingual and Evolving

The NEC ECC Hong Kong Edition, launched in 2023 and jointly developed by DEVB and NEC, adapts NEC4 to Hong Kong's statutory, procurement and dispute resolution landscape. The release of the NEC Term Service Contract (TSC) Hong Kong Edition in 2024 further broadened the suite of collaborative contract options available for public works.

DEVB continues to maintain and refine the Additional Conditions of Contract (ACC) to the NEC ECC Hong Kong Edition, ensuring the Hong Kong NEC framework remains responsive to evolving project needs. The Chinese

language ECC will be particularly instrumental in advancing cross-boundary collaboration and facilitating bilingual tendering, training and administration from the outset. DEVB is also preparing practice notes in Chinese to guide practitioners through NEC procedures in a clear and practical manner.

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Pilot in Qianhai Preparing for GBA-wide Trials

To support pilot planning, the Qianhai Authority has appointed Turner & Townsend as delivery partner. Their role includes applying Hong Kong's NEC experience to Qianhai's project environment, assessing relevant procurement and contracting requirements, and developing implementation pathways in close collaboration with DEVB and relevant Mainland authorities.

Turner & Townsend also contributed to the production of the Chinese language ECC and have supported the Qianhai Authority in reviewing project readiness, technical standards and capacity needs. These preparations help ensure that Qianhai's NEC pilots will be grounded in aligned governance and shared understanding, laying a strong foundation for wider application across the GBA.

Future Potential

The planned NEC pilots in Qianhai are expected to produce practical case studies, capability-building models and implementation guidance to inspire broader adoption across other cities. As Mainland clients increasingly prioritise transparency, effective risk management and predictable delivery, these pilots will demonstrate the value of collaborative contracting in real-project settings.

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In the longer term, the knowledge, tools and bilingual framework developed through GBA-based NEC trials can support applications along the Belt and Road, where partner economies are seeking reliable governance models and efficient project delivery mechanisms. Hong Kong's experience positions it well to serve as a 'super connector' and 'super value-adder' for exporting collaborative contracting expertise.