

Focus

Architects to offer building inspection service for homeowners

Just like regular medical check-ups, your home should also be given a clean bill of health

By G. Umakanthan

Come April, homeowners in the country can expect to benefit from a new service that will give them greater peace of mind over safety and maintenance issues concerning their homes.

This is the building inspection service (BIS), to be provided at an affordable rate by Architect Centre Sdn Bhd, a company now being set up by Pertubuhan Akitek Malaysia (PAM) in joint venture with Australian service provider Archicentre Ltd.

"Architect Centre will operate as a business that serves the public ... it will charge affordable rates, be run professionally, and be independent of PAM," said its immediate past president Dr Tan Loke Mun.

Australian architect Angus Kell, the state manager of Archicentre Ltd's New South Wales and Australian Capital Territory branches, will lead in the establishment of the centre and supervise in ensuring the BIS model will be as successful as the Australian service, which has been in operation for 27 years.

Architect Centre will be tailored after Archicentre Ltd, a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects.

In addition to BIS, Archicentre provides renovation reports and new home designs, and has built up a database on building inspections around Australia.

"In any given area, we have identified the common problems occurring in residential and commercial buildings, and this is also what we plan to do in Malaysia," Kell said.

Similar to the Australian

model, the local one will carry out BIS by matching architects with critical knowledge and experience of neighbourhood planning and building controls with clients.

PAM president Lee Chor Wah said Malaysia has always had a poor tradition of building management.

Asset management is not well looked into, and this is what the Architect Centre plans to rectify, he said.

He added that the Architect Centre is currently sending out job descriptions



Tan (left) and Kell aim to make Architect Centre a trusted body that members of the public can depend on.

to practising architects and it hopes to have 100 of them in its panel by April. They will be provided with training, before being accredited as registered members of the centre, which will bill the client.

"Our aim," said Tan, "is to build the Architect Centre into a trusted body that members of the public can depend on ... we aim to make it a household name in about five years."