

Effective for annual periods  
beginning on or after 1 January 2009\*

*HK(IFRIC) Interpretation 15*

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# Agreements for the Construction of Real Estate

\* ~~HK(IFRIC) Int 15 is applicable for annual periods beginning on or after 1 January 2009. Earlier application is permitted. HK(IFRIC) Int 15 supersedes HK Interpretation 3 issued in 2005 as revised in 2006.~~

This Standard is superseded by HKFRS 15 *Revenue from Contracts with Customers*. HKFRS 15 shall be applied for annual reporting period on or after 1 January 2018.



Hong Kong Institute of  
**Certified Public Accountants**  
香港會計師公會

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*paragraphs*

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<p>Hong Kong (IFRIC) Interpretation 15 <i>Agreements for the Construction of Real Estate</i> (HK(IFRIC)-Int 15) is set out in paragraphs 1–25. HK(IFRIC)-Int 15 is accompanied by an information note, illustrative examples and a Basis for Conclusions. The scope and authority of Interpretations are set out in the <i>Preface to Hong Kong Financial Reporting Standards</i>.</p>
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## Hong Kong (IFRIC) Interpretation 15 Agreements for the Construction of Real Estate

### References

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- HKAS 1 *Presentation of Financial Statements* (as revised in 2007)
- HKAS 8 *Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors*
- HKAS 11 *Construction Contracts*
- HKAS 18 *Revenue*
- HKAS 37 *Provisions, Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets*
- HK(IFRIC)-Int 12 *Service Concession Arrangements*
- HK(IFRIC)-Int 13 *Customer Loyalty Programmes*

### Background

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- 1 In the real estate industry, entities that undertake the construction of real estate, directly or through subcontractors, may enter into agreements with one or more buyers before construction is complete. Such agreements take diverse forms.
- 2 For example, entities that undertake the construction of residential real estate may start to market individual units (apartments or houses) 'off plan', ie while construction is still in progress, or even before it has begun. Each buyer enters into an agreement with the entity to acquire a specified unit when it is ready for occupation. Typically, the buyer pays a deposit to the entity that is refundable only if the entity fails to deliver the completed unit in accordance with the contracted terms. The balance of the purchase price is generally paid to the entity only on contractual completion, when the buyer obtains possession of the unit.
- 3 Entities that undertake the construction of commercial or industrial real estate may enter into an agreement with a single buyer. The buyer may be required to make progress payments between the time of the initial agreement and contractual completion. Construction may take place on land the buyer owns or leases before construction begins.

### Scope

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- 4 This Interpretation applies to the accounting for revenue and associated expenses by entities that undertake the construction of real estate directly or through subcontractors.
- 5 Agreements in the scope of this Interpretation are agreements for the construction of real estate. In addition to the construction of real estate, such agreements may include the delivery of other goods or services.

### Issues

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- 6 The Interpretation addresses two issues:
  - (a) Is the agreement within the scope of HKAS 11 or HKAS 18?
  - (b) When should revenue from the construction of real estate be recognised?

## Conclusions

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- 7 The following discussion assumes that the entity has previously analysed the agreement for the construction of real estate and any related agreements and concluded that it will retain neither continuing managerial involvement to the degree usually associated with ownership nor effective control over the constructed real estate to an extent that would preclude recognition of some or all of the consideration as revenue. If recognition of some of the consideration as revenue is precluded, the following discussion applies only to the part of the agreement for which revenue will be recognised.
- 8 Within a single agreement, an entity may contract to deliver goods or services in addition to the construction of real estate (eg a sale of land or provision of property management services). In accordance with paragraph 13 of HKAS 18, such an agreement may need to be split into separately identifiable components including one for the construction of real estate. The fair value of the total consideration received or receivable for the agreement shall be allocated to each component. If separate components are identified, the entity applies paragraphs 10-12 of this Interpretation to the component for the construction of real estate in order to determine whether that component is within the scope of HKAS 11 or HKAS 18. The segmenting criteria of HKAS 11 then apply to any component of the agreement that is determined to be a construction contract.
- 9 The following discussion refers to an agreement for the construction of real estate but it also applies to a component for the construction of real estate identified within an agreement that includes other components.

### **Determining whether the agreement is within the scope of HKAS 11 or HKAS 18**

- 10 Determining whether an agreement for the construction of real estate is within the scope of HKAS 11 or HKAS 18 depends on the terms of the agreement and all the surrounding facts and circumstances. Such a determination requires judgement with respect to each agreement.
- 11 HKAS 11 applies when the agreement meets the definition of a construction contract set out in paragraph 3 of HKAS 11: 'a contract specifically negotiated for the construction of an asset or a combination of assets ...' An agreement for the construction of real estate meets the definition of a construction contract when the buyer is able to specify the major structural elements of the design of the real estate before construction begins and/or specify major structural changes once construction is in progress (whether or not it exercises that ability). When HKAS 11 applies, the construction contract also includes any contracts or components for the rendering of services that are directly related to the construction of the real estate in accordance with paragraph 5(a) of HKAS 11 and paragraph 4 of HKAS 18.
- 12 In contrast, an agreement for the construction of real estate in which buyers have only limited ability to influence the design of the real estate, eg to select a design from a range of options specified by the entity, or to specify only minor variations to the basic design, is an agreement for the sale of goods within the scope of HKAS 18.

### **Accounting for revenue from the construction of real estate**

#### *The agreement is a construction contract*

- 13 When the agreement is within the scope of HKAS 11 and its outcome can be estimated reliably, the entity shall recognise revenue by reference to the stage of completion of the contract activity in accordance with HKAS 11.

- 14 The agreement may not meet the definition of a construction contract and therefore be within the scope of HKAS 18. In this case, the entity shall determine whether the agreement is for the rendering of services or for the sale of goods.

*The agreement is an agreement for the rendering of services*

- 15 If the entity is not required to acquire and supply construction materials, the agreement may be only an agreement for the rendering of services in accordance with HKAS 18. In this case, if the criteria in paragraph 20 of HKAS 18 are met, HKAS 18 requires revenue to be recognised by reference to the stage of completion of the transaction using the percentage of completion method. The requirements of HKAS 11 are generally applicable to the recognition of revenue and the associated expenses for such a transaction (HKAS 18 paragraph 21).

*The agreement is an agreement for the sale of goods*

- 16 If the entity is required to provide services together with construction materials in order to perform its contractual obligation to deliver the real estate to the buyer, the agreement is an agreement for the sale of goods and the criteria for recognition of revenue set out in paragraph 14 of HKAS 18 apply.
- 17 The entity may transfer to the buyer control and the significant risks and rewards of ownership of the work in progress in its current state as construction progresses. In this case, if all the criteria in paragraph 14 of HKAS 18 are met continuously as construction progresses, the entity shall recognise revenue by reference to the stage of completion using the percentage of completion method. The requirements of HKAS 11 are generally applicable to the recognition of revenue and the associated expenses for such a transaction.
- 18 The entity may transfer to the buyer control and the significant risks and rewards of ownership of the real estate in its entirety at a single time (eg at completion, upon or after delivery). In this case, the entity shall recognise revenue only when all the criteria in paragraph 14 of HKAS 18 are satisfied.
- 19 When the entity is required to perform further work on real estate already delivered to the buyer, it shall recognise a liability and an expense in accordance with paragraph 19 of HKAS 18. The liability shall be measured in accordance with HKAS 37. When the entity is required to deliver further goods or services that are separately identifiable from the real estate already delivered to the buyer, it would have identified the remaining goods or services as a separate component of the sale, in accordance with paragraph 8 of this Interpretation.

## **Disclosures**

- 20 When an entity recognises revenue using the percentage of completion method for agreements that meet all the criteria in paragraph 14 of HKAS 18 continuously as construction progresses (see paragraph 17 of the Interpretation), it shall disclose:
- (a) how it determines which agreements meet all the criteria in paragraph 14 of HKAS 18 continuously as construction progresses;
  - (b) the amount of revenue arising from such agreements in the period; and
  - (c) the methods used to determine the stage of completion of agreements in progress.
- 21 For the agreements described in paragraph 20 that are in progress at the reporting date, the entity shall also disclose:
- (a) the aggregate amount of costs incurred and recognised profits (less recognised losses) to date; and
  - (b) the amount of advances received.

## **Amendments to the ~~appendix to~~ illustrative examples accompanying HKAS 18**

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~~22 This Interpretation supersedes the real estate guidance (Example 9) in the appendix to HKAS 18.~~

23 The appendix to HKAS 18 is amended as described below.

All of the text under the heading '~~9 Real estate sales.~~' is deleted.

New text is inserted under the heading as follows:

~~'This example has been superseded by Hong Kong (IFRIC) Interpretation 15 *Agreements for the Construction of Real Estate.*'~~

22-23 [Amendments incorporated in the illustrative examples accompanying HKAS 18]

### **Effective date and transition**

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24 An entity shall apply this Interpretation for annual periods beginning on or after 1 January 2009. Earlier application is permitted. If an entity applies the Interpretation for a period beginning before 1 January 2009, it shall disclose that fact.

25 Changes in accounting policy shall be accounted for retrospectively in accordance with HKAS 8.

### **Withdrawal of HK Interpretation 3**

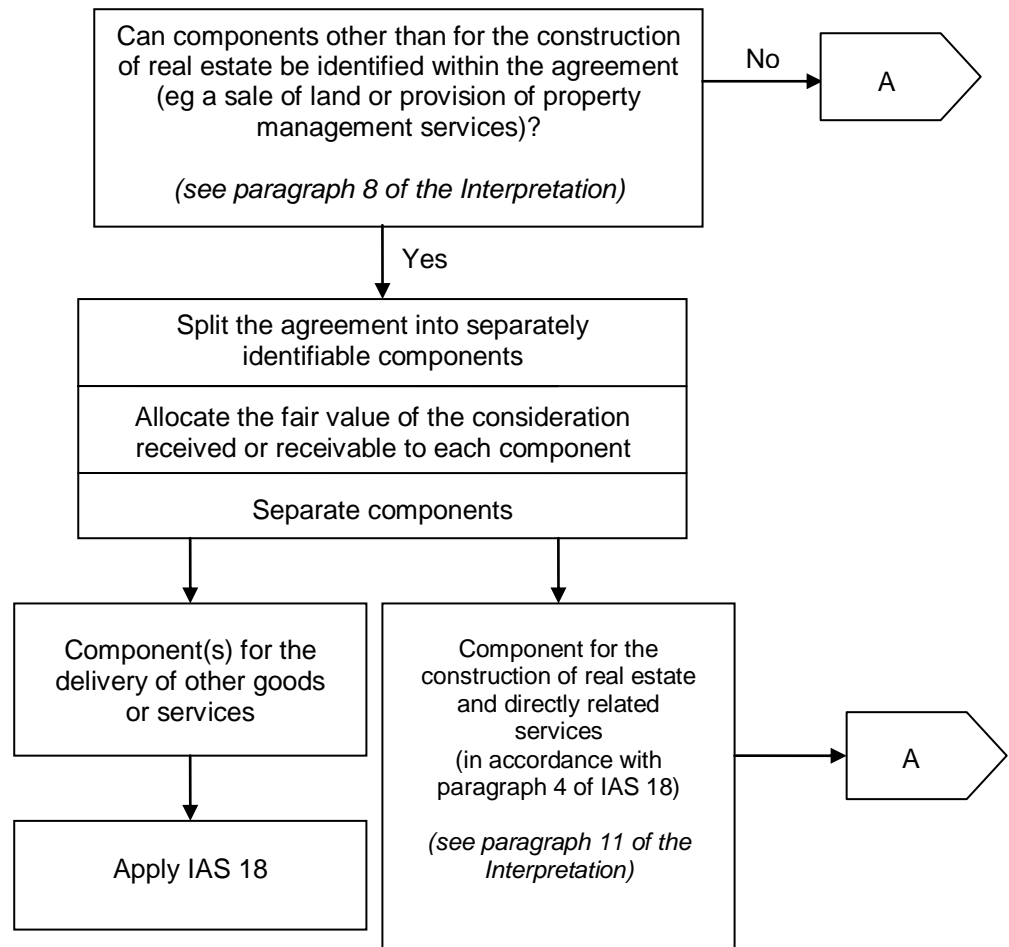
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26 This Interpretation supersedes HK Interpretation 3 *Revenue – Pre-completion Contracts for the Sale of Development Properties* issued in 2005 as amended in 2006.

**Information note**

**Analysis of a single agreement for the construction of real estate**

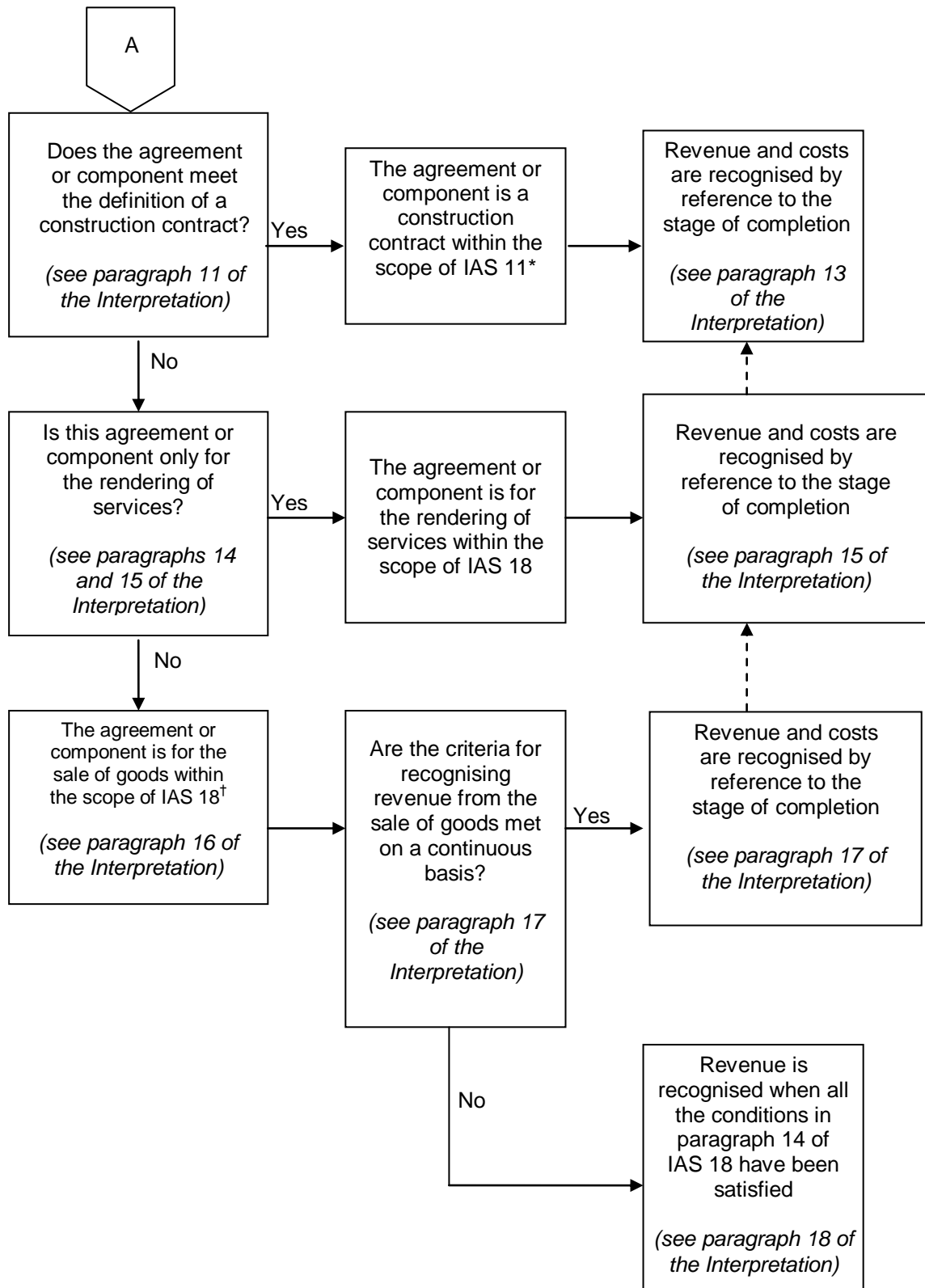
*This note accompanies, but is not part of, IFRIC 15.*



*continued...*



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\* The construction contract may need to be segmented in accordance with paragraph 8 of IAS 11

† Directly related services may need to be separated in accordance with paragraph 13 of IAS 18

## Illustrative examples

*These examples accompany, but are not part of, IFRIC 15.*

### Example 1

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- IE1 An entity buys a plot of land for the construction of commercial real estate. It designs an office block to build on the land and submits the designs to planning authorities in order to obtain building permission. The entity markets the office block to potential tenants and signs conditional lease agreements. The entity markets the office block to potential buyers and signs with one of them a conditional agreement for the sale of land and the construction of the office block. The buyer cannot put the land or the incomplete office block back to the entity. The entity receives the building permission and all agreements become unconditional. The entity is given access to the land in order to undertake the construction and then constructs the office block.
- IE2 In this illustrative example, the agreement should be separated into two components: a component for the sale of land and a component for the construction of the office block. The component for the sale of land is a sale of goods within the scope of IAS 18.
- IE3 Because all the major structural decisions were made by the entity and were included in the designs submitted to the planning authorities before the buyer signed the conditional agreement, it is assumed that there will be no major change in the designs after the construction has begun. Consequently, the component for the construction of the office block is not a construction contract and is within the scope of IAS 18. The facts, including that the construction takes place on land the buyer owns before construction begins and that the buyer cannot put the incomplete office block back to the entity, indicate that the entity transfers to the buyer control and the significant risks and rewards of ownership of the work in progress in its current state as construction progresses. Therefore, if all the criteria in paragraph 14 of IAS 18 are met continuously as construction progresses, the entity recognises revenue from the construction of the office block by reference to the stage of completion using the percentage of completion method.
- IE4 Alternatively, assume that the construction of the office block started before the entity signed the agreement with the buyer. In that event, the agreement should be separated into three components: a component for the sale of land, a component for the partially constructed office block and a component for the construction of the office block. The entity should apply the recognition criteria separately to each component. Assuming that the other facts remain unchanged, the entity recognises revenue from the component for the construction of the office block by reference to the stage of completion using the percentage of completion method as explained in paragraph IE3.
- IE5 In this example, the sale of land is determined to be a separately identifiable component from the component for the construction of real estate. However, depending on facts and circumstances, the entity may conclude that such a component is not separately identifiable. For example, in some jurisdictions, a condominium is legally defined as the absolute ownership of a unit based on a legal description of the airspace the unit actually occupies, plus an undivided interest in the ownership of the common elements (that includes the land and actual building itself, all the driveways, parking, lifts, outside hallways, recreation and landscaped areas) that are owned jointly with the other condominium unit owners. In this case, the undivided interest in the ownership of the common elements does not give the buyer control and the significant risks and rewards of the land itself. Indeed, the right to the unit itself and the interest in the common elements are not separable.

## Example 2

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- IE6 An entity is developing residential real estate and starts marketing individual units (apartments) while construction is still in progress. Buyers enter into a binding sale agreement that gives them the right to acquire a specified unit when it is ready for occupation. They pay a deposit that is refundable only if the entity fails to deliver the completed unit in accordance with the contracted terms. Buyers are also required to make progress payments between the time of the initial agreement and contractual completion. The balance of the purchase price is paid only on contractual completion, when buyers obtain possession of their unit. Buyers are able to specify only minor variations to the basic design but they cannot specify or alter major structural elements of the design of their unit. In the jurisdiction, no rights to the underlying real estate asset transfer to the buyer other than through the agreement. Consequently, the construction takes place regardless of whether sale agreements exist.
- IE7 In this illustrative example, the terms of the agreement and all the surrounding facts and circumstances indicate that the agreement is not a construction contract. The agreement is a forward contract that gives the buyer an asset in the form of a right to acquire, use and sell the completed real estate at a later date and an obligation to pay the purchase price in accordance with its terms. Although the buyer might be able to transfer its interest in the forward contract to another party, the entity retains control and the significant risks and rewards of ownership of the work in progress in its current state until the completed real estate is transferred. Therefore, revenue should be recognised only when all the criteria in paragraph 14 of IAS 18 are met (at completion in this example).
- IE8 Alternatively, assume that, in the jurisdiction, the law requires the entity to transfer immediately to the buyer ownership of the real estate in its current state of completion and that any additional construction becomes the property of the buyer as construction progresses. The entity would need to consider all the terms of the agreement to determine whether this change in the timing of the transfer of ownership means that the entity transfers to the buyer control and the significant risks and rewards of ownership of the work in progress in its current state as construction progresses. For example, the fact that if the agreement is terminated before construction is complete, the buyer retains the work in progress and the entity has the right to be paid for the work performed, might indicate that control is transferred along with ownership. If it does, and if all the criteria in paragraph 14 of IAS 18 are met continuously as construction progresses, the entity recognises revenue by reference to the stage of completion using the percentage of completion method taking into account the stage of completion of the whole building and the agreements signed with individual buyers.

## Example 3

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- IE9 Determining whether the entity will retain neither continuing managerial involvement to the degree usually associated with ownership nor effective control over the constructed real estate to an extent that would preclude recognition of some or all of the consideration as revenue depends on the terms of the agreement and all the surrounding facts and circumstances. Such a determination requires judgement. The Interpretation assumes the entity has reached the conclusion that it is appropriate to recognise revenue from the agreement and discusses how to determine the appropriate pattern of revenue recognition.
- IE10 Agreements for the construction of real estate may include such a degree of continuing managerial involvement by the entity undertaking the construction that control and the significant risks and rewards of ownership are not transferred even when construction is complete and the buyer obtains possession. Examples are agreements in which the entity guarantees occupancy of the property for a specified period, or guarantees a return on the buyer's investment for a specified period. In such circumstances, recognition of revenue may be delayed or precluded altogether.

- IE11 Agreements for the construction of real estate may give the buyer a right to take over the work in progress (albeit with a penalty) during construction, eg to engage a different entity to complete the construction. This fact, along with others, may indicate that the entity transfers to the buyer control of the work in progress in its current state as construction progresses. The entity that undertakes the construction of real estate will have access to the land and the work in progress in order to perform its contractual obligation to deliver to the buyer completed real estate. If control of the work in process is transferred continuously, that access does not necessarily imply that the entity undertaking the construction retains continuing managerial involvement with the real estate to the degree usually associated with ownership to an extent that would preclude recognition of some or all of the consideration as revenue. The entity may have control over the activities related to the performance of its contractual obligation but not over the real estate itself.

## Basis for Conclusions on IFRIC 15 *Agreements for the Construction of Real Estate*

*This Basis for Conclusions accompanies, but is not part of, IFRIC 15.*

HK(IFRIC)-Int 15 is based on IFRIC Interpretation 15 *Agreements for the Construction of Real Estate*. In approving HK(IFRIC)-Int 15, the Council of the Hong Kong Institute of Certified Public Accountants considered and agreed with the IFRIC's Basis for Conclusions on IFRIC Interpretation 15. Accordingly, there are no significant differences between HK(IFRIC)-Int 15 and IFRIC Interpretation 15. The IFRIC's Basis for Conclusions is reproduced below. The paragraph numbers of IFRIC Interpretation 15 referred to below generally correspond with those in HK(IFRIC)-Int 15.

### Introduction

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- BC1 This Basis for Conclusions summarises the IFRIC's considerations in reaching its consensus. Individual IFRIC members gave greater weight to some factors than to others.
- BC2 The IFRIC released draft Interpretation D21 *Real Estate Sales* for public comment in July 2007 and received 51 comment letters in response.

### Scope

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- BC3 Agreements for the construction of real estate are widespread and may relate to residential, commercial or industrial developments. Construction often spans more than one accounting period, may take place on land the buyer owns or leases before construction begins and agreements may require progress payments.
- BC4 The main area of divergence in practice concerns the identification of the applicable accounting standard for agreements for the construction of real estate. In some jurisdictions, the prevailing practice is to apply IAS 11 *Construction Contracts* and to recognise revenue as construction progresses. In others, it is to apply the requirements for the sale of goods in IAS 18 *Revenue* and to recognise revenue only when the completed real estate is delivered to the buyer.
- BC5 The IFRIC considered whether the scope of the Interpretation should be confined to agreements for the construction of real estate. It concluded in D21 that the scope should be limited to the request received to clarify the requirements of IAS 18 with respect to 'real estate sales' because that was the area identified as having the most diversity in practice. In redeliberating the issue, the IFRIC took the view that the notion of 'real estate sales' in D21 might create confusion and clarified that this Interpretation applies to 'agreements for the construction of real estate'. The primary issue of whether an agreement is within the scope of IAS 11 or IAS 18 arises only when agreements include construction activities. Such agreements may or may not meet the definition of a construction contract. The IFRIC also clarified that the Interpretation might affect entities that undertake the construction of real estate, directly or through subcontractors.
- BC6 The IFRIC noted that respondents to D21 were concerned about the implications of the IFRIC's conclusions for agreements that required manufacture of goods to a customer's specifications in industries other than real estate. The IFRIC reconsidered the scope of the Interpretation after it had redeliberated its conclusions with respect to agreements for the construction of real estate. It concluded that the scope of the Interpretation should remain confined to agreements for the construction of real estate. The IFRIC noted that it might be applied by analogy to industries other than real estate in accordance with IAS 8 *Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors*.

## Issue

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- BC7 The issue is when should revenue from the construction of real estate be recognised? In International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRSs), two standards deal with accounting for revenue: IAS 18 and IAS 11. Because many agreements involve the construction or manufacture of an asset to meet customer's specifications, the IFRIC was asked to clarify how to determine whether an agreement for the construction of real estate is a construction contract within the scope of IAS 11.

## Consensus

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- BC8 The nature and extent of the entity's continuing managerial involvement with the item sold may affect the accounting for the transaction. It may be accounted for as a sale, or as a financing, leasing or some other profit-sharing arrangement. Because the issue addressed in this Interpretation is a revenue recognition issue, the Interpretation assumes that the entity has previously analysed the agreement for the construction of real estate and any related agreements and concluded that it will retain neither continuing managerial involvement to the degree usually associated with ownership nor effective control over the constructed real estate to an extent that would preclude recognition of some or all of the consideration as revenue. This assumption, that the entity would recognise revenue at some point and the issue was one of timing, was implicit in D21 but was not clearly stated. In response to comments received, the IFRIC clarified that an entity must have concluded that the arrangement will result in the recognition of revenue to be within the scope of the Interpretation.
- BC9 Some respondents to D21 asked the IFRIC to provide guidance on agreements with multiple components so the Interpretation would cover the more complex transactions that often occur in practice.
- BC10 In its redeliberations, the IFRIC noted that, in addition to the construction of real estate, an agreement may include the delivery of other goods or services (eg a sale of land or provision of property management services). In accordance with paragraph 13 of IAS 18, such an agreement may need to be split into separately identifiable components, including one for the construction of real estate. Because IAS 18 is the standard that sets out requirements for revenue recognition in general, the IFRIC decided to consider the issue in the context of IAS 18, ie an entity should first determine whether an agreement that includes the construction of real estate also includes other components that do not need further analysis in this Interpretation.
- BC11 The IFRIC noted that IFRIC 12 *Service Concession Arrangements* and IFRIC 13 *Customer Loyalty Programmes* already provide guidance on determining whether a single agreement should be divided into components and, if so, how to allocate the fair value of the total consideration received or receivable for the agreement to each component (see paragraph 13 of IFRIC 12 and paragraphs 5–7 of IFRIC 13). Therefore, the IFRIC concluded that this Interpretation should include only a reminder in paragraph 8 that such identification and allocation are required.
- BC12 Regarding the issue of whether and when there is a separately identifiable component for the sale of land, the IFRIC concluded from the existing guidance that the identification of a component for the sale of land should be undertaken when first analysing any potential components. Depending on facts and circumstances, the entity may or may not conclude that such a component is separately identifiable from the component for the construction of real estate.

- BC13 The IFRIC noted that respondents were uncertain whether an entity applying D21 would follow the guidance on combining and segmenting contracts in IAS 18 or that in IAS 11. The approach adopted in the Interpretation makes it clear that the specific criteria for contract segmentation in IAS 11 are applied only after the entity has concluded that the agreement is within the scope of that standard.

### **Determining whether the agreement is within the scope of IAS 11 or IAS 18**

- BC14 One view is that IAS 11 applies to all agreements for the construction of real estate. In support of this view, it is argued that:
- (a) these agreements are in substance construction contracts. The typical features of a construction contract—land development, structural engineering, architectural design and construction—are all present.
  - (b) IAS 11 requires a percentage of completion method of revenue recognition for construction contracts. Revenue is recognised progressively as work is performed. Because many real estate development projects span more than one accounting period, the rationale for this method—that it ‘provides useful information on the extent of contract activity and performance during a period’ (IAS 11 paragraph 25)—applies to real estate development as much as it does to other construction contracts. If revenue is recognised only when the IAS 18 conditions for recognising revenue from the sale of goods are met, the financial statements do not reflect the entity’s economic value generation in the period and are susceptible to manipulation.
  - (c) US Statement of Financial Accounting Standards No. 66 *Accounting for Sales of Real Estate* requires a percentage of completion method for recognising profit from sales of units in condominium projects or time-sharing interests (provided specified criteria are met). Thus US generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) acknowledge that such real estate sales have the same economic substance as construction-type contracts. IFRSs can and should be interpreted in the same way to avoid unnecessary differences.
- BC15 A second view is that IAS 11 applies only when the agreement meets the definition of a construction contract. When the agreement does not meet the definition of a construction contract, the agreement is within the scope of IAS 18.
- BC16 The consensus reflects the second view. In reaching this consensus, the IFRIC noted that:
- (a) the facts that the construction spans more than one accounting period and requires progress payments are not relevant features to consider when determining the applicable standard and the timing of revenue recognition.
  - (b) determining whether an agreement for the construction of real estate is within the scope of IAS 11 or IAS 18 depends on the terms of the agreement and all the surrounding facts and circumstances. Such a determination requires judgement with respect to each agreement. It is not an accounting policy choice.
  - (c) IAS 11 lacks specific guidance on the definition of a construction contract and further application guidance is needed to help identify construction contracts.
  - (d) differences exist between the requirements in IFRSs and US GAAP for revenue recognition in general and for construction contracts in particular. They cannot be eliminated by interpretation. They are being addressed in a general project on revenue recognition conducted jointly by the IASB and the US Financial Accounting Standards Board.

- BC17 The IFRIC noted that when IAS 11 applies, for accounting purposes, the construction contract also includes contracts for the rendering of services that are directly related to the construction of the real estate in accordance with paragraph 4 of IAS 18 and paragraph 5(a) of IAS 11.
- BC18 In D21 the IFRIC concluded that an agreement for the construction of real estate would be within the scope of IAS 11 in two circumstances—if the agreement met the definition of a construction contract and/or if control and the significant risks and rewards of ownership of the work in progress in its current state transferred to the buyer continuously as construction progresses. Many respondents pointed out that IAS 11 does not require ‘continuous transfer’ for the use of the percentage of completion method, only that the contract be a ‘construction contract’. The IFRIC clarified in the consensus that IAS 11 applies only when the agreement meets the definition of a construction contract and carried forward into the Interpretation the guidance in paragraphs 9(a), 10(a) and BC5(a) of D21.
- BC19 In addition, many respondents asked the IFRIC to provide guidance to distinguish between construction contracts that meet the definition included in D21 and other agreements for the manufacture of goods to a customer’s specifications. The IFRIC concluded that the most important distinguishing feature is whether the customer is actually specifying the main elements of the structural design. In situations involving the manufacture of goods to a customer’s specifications, the customer generally does not have the ability to specify or alter the basic design of the product. Rather, the customer is simply choosing elements from a range of options specified by the seller or specifying only minor variations to the basic design. The IFRIC decided to include guidance to this effect in the Interpretation to help clarify the application of the definition of a construction contract.

### **Accounting for revenue from the construction of real estate**

- BC20 When the agreement is within the scope of IAS 11 and its outcome can be estimated reliably, the entity should recognise revenue by reference to the stage of completion in accordance with IAS 11.
- BC21 When the agreement does not meet the definition of a construction contract, the agreement is within the scope of IAS 18. The IFRIC identified the following types of agreements for the construction of real estate that are within the scope of IAS 18 and that are distinguishable in substance:
- (a) agreements for the rendering of services only;
  - (b) two types of agreements for the sale of goods:
    - (i) agreements in which the entity transfers to the buyer control and the significant risks and rewards of ownership of the work in progress in its current state as construction progresses;
    - (ii) agreements in which the entity transfers to the buyer control and the significant risks and rewards of ownership of the real estate in its entirety at a single time (eg at completion, upon or after delivery).
- BC22 The IFRIC noted that a customer may decide to act in essence as its own general contractor and enter into agreements with individual suppliers for specific goods and services. When the entity is responsible only for assembling materials supplied by others (ie it has no inventory risk for the construction materials), the agreement is an agreement for the rendering of services. The IFRIC noted that, if the criteria in paragraph 20 are met, IAS 18 requires revenue to be recognised by reference to the stage of completion using the percentage of completion method. IAS 18 then refers to IAS 11 and states that the requirements of IAS 11 are generally applicable to the recognition of revenue and the associated expenses for such a transaction.



- BC23 The IFRIC also noted that construction activities often require an entity that undertakes the construction of real estate, directly or through subcontractors, to provide services together with construction materials. However, the entity delivers to the buyer a real estate asset, either completed or in its current stage of completion. Therefore, the IFRIC concluded that the criteria in paragraph 14 of IAS 18 for recognition of revenue from the sale of goods should apply to such agreements.
- BC24 As noted in paragraph BC18, the IFRIC agreed with respondents to D21 that IAS 11 does not require the entity to transfer to the buyer control and the significant risks and rewards of ownership of the work in process in its current state as construction progresses ('continuous transfer') in order to use the percentage of completion method, only that the contract be a 'construction contract'. In its redeliberations, the IFRIC noted that the criterion it included in paragraph 9(b) of D21 was actually one of the criteria in IAS 18 for recognition of revenue from the sale of goods. Although these agreements may not meet the definition of construction contracts, the IFRIC concluded that they may result in the entity meeting all of the criteria for recognising revenue from the sale of goods in IAS 18 (including the transfer of control and the significant risks and rewards of ownership) continuously as construction progresses, as opposed to at a single time (eg at completion, upon or after delivery).
- BC25 The IFRIC concluded that if all these criteria are met continuously, an entity should recognise revenue on the same basis (by reference to the stage of completion). Like paragraph 21 of IAS 18 for the rendering of services, the Interpretation refers entities to IAS 11 for guidance on applying the percentage of completion method. The IFRIC observed that this conclusion was consistent with the basis for using the percentage of completion method in Statement of Position No. 81-1 *Accounting for Performance of Construction-Type and Certain Production-Type Contracts* issued by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, which states:
- ...the business activity taking place supports the concept that in an economic sense performance is, in effect, a continuous sale (transfer of ownership rights) that occurs as the work progresses...
- BC26 The IFRIC noted that agreements with 'continuous transfer' might not be encountered frequently. However, the IFRIC decided that the Interpretation should address the accounting for such agreements because some respondents to D21 identified agreements with these characteristics.
- BC27 The IFRIC also identified agreements for the construction of real estate in which the entity transfers to the buyer control and the significant risks and rewards of ownership of the real estate in its entirety at a single time (eg at completion, upon or after delivery). The IFRIC reaffirmed its conclusion in D21 that these agreements are sales of goods within the scope of IAS 18. Such agreements give the buyer only an asset in the form of a right to acquire, use and sell the completed real estate at a later date. The IFRIC concluded that revenue from such agreements should be recognised only when all the criteria in paragraph 14 of IAS 18 are satisfied.
- BC28 The IFRIC noted that this conclusion is consistent with revenue recognition requirements for significant contracts for the delivery of multiple units of goods manufactured to the customer's specifications over more than one accounting period, such as subway cars. In such circumstances, the entity recognises revenue as individual units (or groups of units) are delivered. However, in contrast to the contracts described in paragraph BC24, control and the significant risks and rewards of ownership of the work in process in its current state do not transfer to the buyer as construction/manufacture progresses. This transfer takes place only on delivery of the completed units. In this case, the entity would apply the requirements of paragraph 14 of IAS 18 at that time; use of the percentage of completion method would not be appropriate.

BC29 In some circumstances, an entity has to perform further work on real estate already delivered to the buyer. The IFRIC noted that IFRIC 13 *Customer Loyalty Programmes* already provides guidance on how to apply paragraphs 13 and 19 of IAS 18. Paragraph BC9 of IFRIC 13 states that:

... IAS 18 does not give explicit guidance. However, the aim of IAS 18 is to recognise revenue when, and to the extent that, goods or services have been delivered to a customer. In the IFRIC's view, paragraph 13 applies if a single transaction requires two or more separate goods or services to be delivered at different times; it ensures that revenue for each item is recognised only when that item is delivered. In contrast, paragraph 19 applies only if the entity has to incur further costs directly related to items already delivered, eg to meet warranty claims. In the IFRIC's view, loyalty awards are not costs that directly relate to the goods and services already delivered—rather, they are separate goods or services delivered at a later date ...

BC30 The IFRIC concluded that the Interpretation should provide similar guidance.

## Disclosures

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BC31 The IFRIC noted that IAS 1 *Presentation of Financial Statements* (as revised in 2007) requires an entity to provide disclosures about its significant accounting policies (paragraph 117), judgements management has made in applying those policies (paragraph 122) and major sources of estimation uncertainty.

BC32 For greater certainty, the IFRIC concluded that, for agreements with 'continuous transfer', the Interpretation should require specific disclosures similar to those of paragraphs 39 and 40 of IAS 11 to satisfy the general requirements of IAS 1.

BC33 The IFRIC noted that this conclusion was generally consistent with D21 because D21 included such agreements in the scope of IAS 11 and therefore implicitly required the full disclosures of that standard.

## Changes from draft Interpretation D21

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BC34 Most respondents to D21 supported the IFRIC's conclusion that it should develop an interpretation on this issue. However, nearly all respondents expressed concern with some aspects of the proposals or the possible application by analogy to industries other than real estate.

BC35 The most significant changes made from D21 in the light of comments received relate to:

- (a) *scope*. D21 referred to 'real estate sales'. The IFRIC clarified that the Interpretation applies to agreements for the construction of real estate.
- (b) *applicable standard*. D21 listed typical features, including 'continuous transfer', to help determine whether an agreement for the construction of real estate is within the scope of IAS 11 or IAS 18. The IFRIC concluded that only agreements that meet the definition of a construction contract are within the scope of IAS 11 and carried forward into the Interpretation the guidance in paragraphs 9(a), 10(a) and BC5(a) of D21 on when a contract satisfies that definition.
- (c) *continuous transfer*. Many respondents believed that the indicator of 'continuous transfer' (the entity transfers to the buyer control and the significant risks and rewards of ownership of the work in progress in its current state as construction progresses) set out in paragraph 9(b) of D21 was relevant, although not specifically included in IAS 11. The IFRIC took the view that when the criteria for recognising revenue from the sale of goods set out in paragraph 14 of IAS 18 are met continuously, it is appropriate to recognise revenue as the criteria are met. The IFRIC carried forward the criterion set out in paragraph 9(b) of D21 and concluded

that the percentage of completion method appropriately recognises revenue in such circumstances. However, the IFRIC did not carry forward the features set out in paragraph 9(b)(i)–(iii) of D21 on the basis that the criterion was sufficiently clear. Overall, the Interpretation and D21 provide similar revenue recognition conclusions for agreements with ‘continuous transfer’ but for different reasons.

- (d) *multiple components*. Some respondents to D21 asked the IFRIC to address the issue of a single agreement with multiple components in order to cover the more complex transactions that often occur in practice. The requirements of IAS 18 in this respect have been included in the consensus and the issue is also addressed in an illustrative example.
- (e) *disclosures*. D21 did not specify disclosures because agreements with ‘continuous transfer’ were included in the scope of IAS 11 and its disclosure requirements would have automatically applied. Paragraphs 20 and 21 of the Interpretation have been added to require specific disclosures for such agreements that now fall within the scope of IAS 18.
- (f) *flow chart and illustrative examples*. The IFRIC decided that a flow chart and illustrative examples should accompany, but not be part of, the Interpretation to help entities apply the Interpretation.