SUMMARY

The introduction of self-regulation in the last quarter of 1995 by the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) is a milestone for the development control process in Singapore. It is in line with the wider government policy of "liberalising" the various economic sectors to make them more competitive in a global age.

The introduction of self-regulation in the real estate and building sector strives to achieve the competitive edge in two ways. Firstly, it emphasizes the need for public sector excellence by forcing these government authorities to re-think their plan checking and approval process, making them streamline their operations to reduce bureaucratic red tape and improve operational efficiency. Secondly, it compels the private sector professionals to update and upgrade their skills, expertise and knowledge to play a wider role in the development control process. This research into the assessment of the self-regulation system is timely as it evaluates what has been achieved in the direction of introducing more flexibility in the development control process. It also gives a continuity to the previous research carried out on the development control process in Singapore.

Through statistical tests, the study attempts to measure the following:
1. The level of acceptability of the self-regulation system by the private sector, ie: the success of the implementation by the government authorities,
2. The level of success of the private sector in meeting the higher demands and standards imposed by the self-regulation procedures.

A regression analysis is also carried out to check if a linear trend exists over time. If it exists, it may be possible to predict the level of success achieved by the public and the private sectors. Hence, the perceived
benefits of the self-regulation system may be anticipated over a future timeframe.

Data on the number of submissions made under self-regulation were obtained from URA. These submissions, called "lodgements" were compared against the submissions made under the conventional system. The data covered the years 1995 to 2000. These data were used to test the acceptability of the self-regulation system compared to the conventional system over the 6 years since its implementation, as well as to check if a linear trend exists over time.

Data on the number of non-compliance cases in submissions made to government authorities are reflective of the level of expertise of the private sector. These data were obtained from the Fire Safety Bureau (FSB) who compiles them on a monthly basis for plan submissions on fire safety matters. Statistical tests were conducted to assess the standard of plan submissions over the period of 1998 to 2000 and to check if a linear trend exists over time.

Qualitative analysis by way of structured interviews with members of both the public and private sectors were also carried out to gather information which may not be revealed by the statistical tests.

This research will be relevant to the government authorities who have implemented or have yet to implement self-regulation in the processing of plans submitted to them. It will also benefit the private sector to be constantly aware of their professional obligations and changing roles in the real estate and building industry.