

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

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(Question Serial No. 2160)

Head: (42) Electrical and Mechanical Services Department
Subhead (No. & title): (700) General non-recurrent
Programme: (2) Mechanical Installations Safety
Controlling Officer: Director of Electrical and Mechanical Services (PANG Yiu-hung)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Regarding the maintenance works of lifts and escalators as mentioned in the Programme, would the Government please advise:

1. What are the numbers of applications received and the lifts involved since the launch of the Lift Modernisation Subsidy Scheme (LIMSS)? What is the estimated number of applications which will be processed in the coming year?
2. What is the number of lifts not yet equipped with safety devices of the latest standard in the territory over the past two years? Please provide the information by the year of service of the lifts.
3. It is mentioned that the Government would step up inspection of registered contractors' maintenance works for aged lifts and escalators. What are the details of the specific measures? What are the outcomes of the inspections carried out in the past two years?
4. There has been a persistent shortage of lift maintenance workers. What are the number and the related changes of registered lift workers in the past five years? What does the Government do to strengthen training and improve the remuneration of the trade so as to attract more people to join the industry?
5. Regarding the above-mentioned measures, what is the estimated expenditure to be incurred in the coming year?

Asked by: Hon MAK Mei-kuen, Alice (LegCo internal reference no.: 83)

Reply:

1. In two rounds of application of the Lift Modernisation Subsidy Scheme (LIMSS), a total of 2 035 valid applications involving 8 256 lifts were received. In view of the large number of buildings applying for the subsidies under the scheme as well as the capacity of

the industry, the applications would be processed in batches according to their priorities. It is expected that about 370 applications involving around 1 100 lifts would be processed in 2021-22.

2. Under the LIMSS, lifts are required to be equipped with all four essential safety devices upon completion of the modernisation works. In 2019 and 2020, the number of lifts not yet equipped with all four essential safety devices in the territory by their year of service is tabulated below:

Year of service	Number of lifts not equipped with all four essential safety devices	
	2019	2020
51 or above	3 267	3 393
41-50	4 995	5 576
31-40	10 189	10 268
21-30	13 456	13 592
11-20	13 738	12 358
10 or below	965	496
Total:	46 610	45 683

3. Since June 2018, we have stepped up the inspection of aged lifts and escalators. Starting from 2019, the overall number of inspections has significantly increased from around 11 000 per year to around 29 000 per year. Among the inspections conducted, we have particularly stepped up the inspection on the maintenance works of aged lifts. The number of lift incidents involving equipment failure in the past two years has dropped by about 33% as compared to that in 2018.

4. There has been an increase in the number of registered lift workers over the past five years. The related figures are tabulated below:

Year	Number of registered lift workers		
	Total number	Changes as compared with the preceding year	
		Number	Percentage
2016	5 354	+107	+2.0%
2017	5 550	+196	+3.7%
2018	5 559	+9	+0.2%
2019	5 687	+128	+2.3%
2020	5 788	+101	+1.8%
Total increase over the past five years:		+ 541	+10.3%

Apart from registered workers, the number of general workers in the trade increased from 1 452 in 2015 to 2 191 in 2020, representing an increase of about 50.9%. General workers may apply for registration as registered workers after receiving relevant training and accumulating sufficient experience. As a whole, the number of lift workers increased from 6 699 in 2015 to 7 979 in 2020, representing an increase of about 19.1%.

We have always maintained close communication with the trade and stakeholders as well as closely monitoring the manpower situation of the industry. In recent years, with the aim of

attracting more new blood to the lift and escalator industry, we have worked with the relevant parties to implement a series of measures. The details are given below:

- (i) Since the launch of the Earn & Learn Scheme jointly organised by the Vocational Training Council (VTC) and the Construction Industry Council (CIC) in 2014, the annual enrolment of new trainees has significantly increased. During the period between 2017 and 2019, over 300 new trainees enrolled in lift apprenticeship, certificate and diploma courses annually, while over 340 new trainees enrolled in 2020;
- (ii) The Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD), in collaboration with the trade, regularly organises a wide range of events, including the “E&M Go!” Orientation Ceremony, the Pilot Cooperative Apprentice Training Scheme that provides more training opportunities for the youngsters, the “E&M Expo” that provides on-the-spot job applications, etc. Moreover, the EMSD provides the trade with the latest information on training and career prospects from time to time, so as to publicise the prospects of the trade and hence attract new blood to the industry;
- (iii) With a view to increasing the manpower capacity of the trade to meet the workforce demand of modernisation works arising from the LIMSS, the EMSD collaborated with the CIC to include the lift industry in the Intermediate Tradesman Collaborative Training Scheme that is currently run for the construction industry, so as to attract more technical workers to the lift industry; and
- (iv) The EMSD and VTC are working together to provide promotion pathways and establish the vocational and professional qualifications for registered workers so that trade practitioners can acquire level 5 professional qualification under the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework after completion of training courses. This will help build up a better prospect for those who are preparing to join or have already joined the industry.

5. In 2021-22, the estimated expenditure for the LIMSS is about \$578 million. The inspection of maintenance works for aged lifts and escalators, and the work in relation to attracting new blood to the industry are undertaken by a dedicated team of the EMSD. As the routine duties of the said dedicated team also include various tasks, no separate breakdown of the expenditure on individual items of work (e.g. inspection of aged lifts) is available.

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