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14 August 2000

All Registered Lift Contractors

Dear Sirs,

Circular No. 14/2000

Safety Precautions while Carrying Out Lift Works inside Lift Wells

Recently two lift workers were fatally injured while carrying out lift works inside lift wells. These accidents have raised serious concern whether adequate safety measures had been taken to prevent workers from injury while carrying out lift works inside the lift wells.

I have to remind you, your engineers and workers to observe the safety precautionary measures while working inside the lift well. Under section 11J(1)(e) of the Lifts and Escalators (Safety) Ordinance (the Ordinance), the registered lift contractor shall ensure that adequate safety precautions are taken to prevent injury to any person while carrying out lift works. Section 27H of the Ordinance requires lift works to be carried out in accordance with the Code of Practice on the Examination, Testing and Maintenance of Lifts and Escalators (ETM Code). The safety measures for lift/escalator works are specified in Clauses 2.2, 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4 of Section C of the ETM Code.

It has also been stated under Clause 4.2 (amended version) of ETM Code that lift/escalator works shall be carried out in compliance with the Code of Practice for Safety at Work (Lift and Escalator) issued by the Labour Department. Please note section 6 "Management System for Safety and Health" and section 9 "Safety Practices for Working on Lifts" of this Code of Practice. While safety practices for working on and below lift car are specified in sections 9.2 and 9.3, the various safety precautions to be taken when carrying out lift/escalator works are listed in section 6.6 of the Code of Practice. When carrying out lift works inside lift well, particular attention should be paid to the following:

- (i) The safe spaces/clearances under the car in the pit and safe headroom above the car at the top of its travel should be ascertained. Relevant safety and warning signs should be displayed and other safety precautions should be considered if there are only limited spaces/clearances.
- (ii) Arrangement for the use of communication equipment by the working personnel during the work should be made. Also key words/signals to be used in the communication should be specified.
- (iii) The safety devices in the lift well/pit and the car top control station should be functioning properly. Especially, the effectiveness of those emergency stop switch and manual control mode switch should be checked.
- (iv) The working conditions in the lift well/pit should be assessed. Environmental factors including temperature, ventilation, lighting, etc. inside the lift well/pit should be suitable for working during difference processes of work.

You should establish safety guidelines/instructions for carrying out lift works inside lift wells and provide adequate training to the lift workers to follow the safety guidelines/instructions, if you have not already done so. Please provide us a copy of such safety guidelines/instructions for record purpose before 31 August 2000. As a registered lift contractor, you should ensure that adequate safety precautions are taken and closely followed when carrying out lift works inside lift wells. Regular monitoring action should also be taken to remind all lift workers to adhere to the safety precautions to prevent occurrence of industrial accidents. With the effort and co-operation of the registered lift contractors/engineers and lift workers, accidents can be prevented.

Yours faithfully,

(G.M.W. CHUI)
for Director of Electrical & Mechanical Services