

EMSD Symposium 2018 - Co-creating a Smart Future

Welcome Address by Ir Alfred Sit JP, Director of Electrical & Mechanical Services

Good morning, Mr Wong, Mr Christenson, Professor Armstrong, Dr Chai, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Welcome to the EMSD Symposium 2018. First of all, I would like to extend my wholehearted gratitude to the Honourable Michael Wong Wai-lun, Secretary for Development, for speaking to us this morning.

My warmest thanks also go to our keynote speakers: Mr Clint Christenson, President of the Association of Energy Engineers; Professor Robert Armstrong, Director of the MIT Energy Initiative, both of them have travelled a long way from the United States to Hong Kong; as well as our home-grown entrepreneur Dr Sunny Chai Ngai-chiu, Chairman of the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation.

We welcome and thank all our speakers and panellists for sharing their knowledge; our delegates from Hong Kong for their support; and those who have come all the way from other cities for their participation. True to our theme “Co-creating a Smart Future” today, I have no doubt everyone in this hall will contribute valuable ideas to the development of smart cities and a smarter world of tomorrow.

The year 2018 has special meaning for EMSD, as it marks our 70th anniversary. For humans, 70 years is a long time. But for an organisation which in theory can live on forever, 70 years may well only be the beginning. As a government department, EMSD has been fortunate to have spent our first 70 years growing in tandem with Hong Kong’s post-war development, and made our small contribution to the community.

When EMSD was set up in 1948, it was a provider of vehicle maintenance and simple E&M services to the Government. After 70 years, we have evolved to become an E&M engineering service provider for government departments and an enforcement agent of 15 different legislations on matters related to E&M safety, gas safety, railway safety and energy efficiency. Thanks to the vision of our predecessors, we have built an organisation culture that cares for people, the community and the environment, and we

do not hesitate to change with the times, take on new challenges and embrace technology.

The year 2018 is also special for Hong Kong, in that two mega transport infrastructure projects have just been opened in September and October respectively. The new Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link (XRL) Hong Kong Section and the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge connect Hong Kong more closely with the Mainland, in particular with the other 10 cities in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area for greater economic integration. We are pleased to have the opportunity to participate in these two mega projects and offer contributions.

Indeed, the connection made by these mega projects is good news for the E&M sector in Hong Kong as we see strong potential for our future collaboration with Mainland organisations in the Greater Bay Area in Innovation and Technologies (I&T) exchange and development, as well as joint manpower development, just to name a few possibilities.

To put this into context, EMSD is delighted to have recently signed two Memoranda of Cooperation (MoC) with the Guangzhou Municipal Human Resources and Social Security Bureau and the Guangzhou Industry and Trade Technician College respectively, to promote and facilitate cooperation and exchange in manpower development. Later this morning, we will sign a Memorandum of Co-operation (MoC) with other 6 organisations to jointly promote retro-commissioning of buildings in the Greater Bay Area. This is because we believe in the value of partnership and co-creating, whether in helping our city adopt new technologies for a smarter way of living, or enhancing the Government's capability in innovation, city management and nurturing manpower.

Within EMSD we have also been putting more resources in I&T and digitisation work and try to set a good example for our E&M industry. We would seek to broaden our "promoter" and "facilitator" roles in I&T and work with entities in the Greater Bay Area.

In this age of super connectivity, innovation is probably impossible without collaboration, aptly summarised in today's theme "Co-create a Smart Future". I hope

this Symposium would provide a forum to inspire fruitful discussion and new co-creation ideas.

Finally, I must thank CLP Power, Hong Kong Electric, Towngas and MTR Corporation which have supported and sponsored the Symposium over the years. They will chair four sessions this afternoon to share inspiring experiences.

Let me end my remarks with a question. According to the latest (2018) Global Competitiveness Report, Hong Kong ranks 7th overall among 140 economies globally, and third in Asia. This sounds not too bad but, among the 12 pillars of assessment, our “innovation capability” ranking is only 26th. What should we do to become more innovative and competitive?

With this, I wish to thank everyone once more, and wish you all a wonderful Symposium. Thank you.

15 November 2018