

**Minutes of the 32nd Meeting of
the Gas Safety Advisory Committee (GSAC)
Held on 24 May 2011 in the Conference Room 7102,
7/F, EMSD Headquarters, 3 Kai Shing Street, Hong Kong**

Present

Ir. CHAN Hung-cheung, Stephen, JP	Chairman
Dr. CHUNG Wah-fuk, David	
Ir. CHUNG Chi-leong, Colin	
Mr. KOT Man-tai	
Ir. WONG Lam-sang, Peter	
Ms. WONG Shuk-kiu, Kathy	
Mr. WU Chi-wai, MH	
Ms. YU Ching-man, Anne	
Ir. Yuen Ho-Cheong, Kelvin	Secretary

In Attendance

Ir. CHAN Fan	EMSD
Ir. CHAN Cheong-ping	EMSD
Ir. HO Hon-ying, Lewis	EMSD

Absent with Apologies

Dr. LAM Po-hing, Michael
Mrs. POON YAM Wai-chun, Winnie, MH

01/11 The Chairman welcomed Members to the 32nd meeting. He informed members that Ir. YUEN Se-kit had passed away on 6 May 2011. The meeting then observed a minute of silence in memory of the late Ir. YUEN.

02/11 Confirmation of Minutes of the 31st Meeting held on 16 November 2010

The minutes of the 31st Meeting held on 16 November 2010 were confirmed without amendment.

03/11

Matters Arising

(a) **Safety Publicity**

(Minutes reference 3/10 (a) referred.)

- (i) Members were updated on the progress of gas safety publicity work as follows:

Target group: General public

- Gas safety promotion and distribution of E&M safety leaflets in respect of LPG installations were carried out during scheduled visits to squatter areas / villages.
- A short video on "Safe Use of Cylinder LPG and 18 monthly Regular Safety Inspections (RSI)" was arranged to broadcast on public transport.
- A short video on "Safe Use of Approved Domestic Gas Water Heaters" was uploaded to EMSD website.
- A new poster on "Regular Safety Inspections of Gas Installations" was issued to encourage domestic gas users to make use of regular safety inspection services to enhance gas safety.
- EMSD participated in the "Fire Prevention Carnival" organized by Tsuen Wan and Sai Kung District Council in December 2010 and February 2011 respectively to promote gas safety.
- New promotion initiatives
 - A new leaflet on "Safe Use of Cigarette Lighter, Beware of Accident Prone" would be released to promote the safe use of cigarette lighter.
 - The "General Household Gas Safety" leaflet in Thai was under preparation and would be released soon.
 - A new short video on "Avoid Damage to Concealed pipes and Conduits" to be shown on TV or public transport was under consideration.
 - Optimizing the "Gas Safety Tips to Users" in EMSD webpage by adding more pictures and animation was under consideration.

Target group: Commercial gas catering installation owners

- From December 2010 to April 2011, EMSD participated in 3 seminars organised by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department to promote gas safety on commercial catering installations.

Target group: Other government departments and private sectors

- A seminar was organized for the property management companies on 21 March 2011 to promote gas, lift and electrical installations safety.
- From January to April 2011, 5 briefing sessions on "Avoiding Danger from Underground Gas Pipes" were organized for public utilities and private roadwork contractors.

Target group: Registered Gas Contractors (RGC) and Registered Gas Installers (RGI)

- A seminar was organized for RGC and RGI on 23 February 2011 to promote gas safety and strengthen communication with the gas trade.

- (ii) Members were informed that the E&M Safety Carnival (**Carnival**) would be held biennially instead of annually after consulting the co-organizers of the Carnival through an opinion survey. The Carnival was the highlight of a host of safety promotion activities. However, since the scope of the safety activities was extended to cover a wide range of E&M regimes (i.e. gas, lift, railway, electrical safety and energy efficiency), stretched manpower was encountered for organizing all relevant promotional activities within a tight schedule. The new arrangement would certainly allow activities to be sequenced more evenly and systematically with a longer time span.
- (iii) Members supported the new arrangement and suggested EMSD to organize more events at different districts to enhance the effectiveness of the promotion scheme.

(b) LPG Vehicle Fuel Tank 5-Year Revalidation

(Minutes reference 3/10(b) referred.)

Members were informed that about 5,000 LPG vehicle fuel tanks were revalidated in 2010. It was estimated that another 3,900 tanks would require revalidation between May and December 2011. In 2012 and 2013, about 2,700 and 1,800 tanks would require revalidation respectively. EMSD said that the peak revalidation demand in 2011 tallied with the taxi replacement cycle. In light of the latest development, it was proposed and members agreed to delete this item.

(c) Code of Practice for LPG Distributors

(Minutes reference 03/10(c) referred.)

- (i) EMSD informed members that two working group meetings with the LPG supply trade were held on 21 January 2011 and 15 April 2011 respectively to discuss the proposed revision of Code of Practice (COP) for Cylinder LPG Distributors, including the LPG distributors' performance evaluation system under the "Safety Service Recognition Scheme" (**Proposal**). At the latter meeting, EMSD had addressed the concerns raised by the trade.
- (ii) At the meeting with the registered LPG supply companies on 5 May 2011, the proposed LPG distributors' performance evaluation system, associated audit training and issuance of certificate arrangement were discussed. On 18 May 2011, EMSD introduced an initial proposal to the LPG supply trade for consideration.
- (iii) EMSD informed members that the Proposal had been mainly designed to enhance gas safety through implementation of regular safety inspection (**RSI**) of LPG installations by cylinder LPG distributors in compliance with the safety requirements stipulated in the Gas safety Ordinance. An evaluation system to be operated by the trade would be used to measure the performance of distributors in meeting a set of prescribed criteria in a defined period. Evaluation would basically be made with reference to the service and safety performance of an LPG distributor. The service performance would be assessed by an independent auditing body to be appointed and overseen by the

registered LPG supply companies. Along with the service performance evaluation results, the independent auditing body would prepare a safety performance record of an LPG distributor and retrieve the conviction and disciplinary record from the Gas Authority so as to compile a report and prepare recommendations to a review board for endorsement. The board might comprise representatives of RGSCs led by their elected chairman with an EMSD representative in attendance. Details of the Proposal would further be discussed and refined among parties concerned. The Proposal was planned to be put on trial in end 2011.

- (iv) After thorough discussion, the meeting supported the Proposal with the following recommendations.
- Promotion exercises by both EMSD and the trade should be launched together with the Proposal to arouse public interest.
 - Level of award of an individual distributor should be published on the EMSD webpage and updated regularly for access by the public.
 - A fair mechanism should be established to assist the trade to improve and sustain their services.
 - A mechanism should be incorporated to review the effectiveness of the Proposal from time to time.
 - More resource should be deployed to strengthen the enforcement on lower performers.
 - Unsafe practice should be published on EMSD webpage for the trade's reference.
 - Each registered gas supply company (RGSC) might consider appointing an individual accredited body as the independent auditing body to audit their appointed distributors.
- (v) EMSD welcomed the recommendations and agreed the Proposal would be reviewed regularly at the quarterly liaison meetings between EMSD and RGSCs.

(d) Incident, Prosecution and Routine Inspection Statistics for 2009, 2010 and 2011

(January to April)

(Minutes reference 03/10(d) referred.)

- (i) EMSD briefed Members on the following:
- There were 5,089 inspections in 2009, 5,290 inspections in 2010 and 1,742 inspections from January to April 2011 respectively.
 - There were 259 incidents in 2009, 224 incidents in 2010 and 104 incidents from January to April 2011 respectively. Regarding the seemingly increase of certain types of gas incident, EMSD explained the possible causes of incidents and elaborated the strengthened follow-up actions being taken for members' information.
 - There were 63 prosecution cases in 2009, 31 cases in 2010 and 11 cases from January to April 2011.

(e) Report on LPG Vehicle Stalling Incident

(Minutes reference 03/10(e) referred.)

- (i) EMSD informed members that the code of practice for Maintenance of LPG Vehicle Fuel System was uploaded to EMSD webpage for vehicle owners and drivers' reference in December 2010. Briefing sessions were organized for the trade to promote the LPG vehicle maintenance requirements. A video namely "Summary on Repair and Maintenance" was also uploaded to the EMSD webpage for the trade's reference.
- (ii) Regarding the control on LPG quality, 200 LPG samples were tested up to May 2011. One sample collected in April was found not complying with the AutoLPG specification. The concerned registered gas supplier had taken follow-up action. EMSD had already reminded other RGSCs to review their gas quality monitoring system.
- (iii) EMSD reported that the last report on a vehicle stalling incident was on 24 February 2010 and the case was not related to vehicle gas quality.
- (iv) EMSD informed members that since the resolution of the issues related

to LPG vehicles maintenance and stalling incident needed contributions from different government departments, an interdepartmental working group chaired by the Environment Bureau had been established to handle the issue.

- (v) It was proposed and members agreed to delete this item.

04/11 Enhancement on Regular Safety Inspection of Domestic Gas Installations

- (i) EMSD briefed Members about the regular safety inspection (RSI) service on domestic gas installations in Hong Kong. The rates of access to town gas, piped LPG and cylinder LPG users for RSI were about 70%, 68% and 30% respectively.
- (ii) Ms. Anne YU supplemented that although the rate of access to cylinder LPG users was low, she deeply appreciated the LPG cylinder distributors' voluntary efforts and supported for further improvement.
- (iii) Regarding the actions on enhancing the RSI rate, EMSD briefed Members that:
- The RSI service would be incorporated in the "Safety Service Recognition Scheme" as a performance indicator of a cylinder LPG distributor.
 - EMSD had published new RSI poster and prepared relevant leaflets in five different languages to remind gas users of the RSI requirements.
 - EMSD said that RGSCs should visit the incorporated owners / building management offices regularly to promote the importance of RSI. RGSC should also consider extending the service to after office hours to meet their customer requirements.
 - EMSD would monitor the RSI rate and assist the RGSCs in following up on those cases which the premises were inaccessible.
- (iv) With a view to avoiding gas incidents resulting from poorly maintained gas installations and misuse, members suggested that a registered gas installer who conducted RSI should also explain to the gas users some basic maintenance requirements and demonstrate the safe use of the gas installations to them. EMSD noted the suggestions and would relay

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the message to the trade for necessary action.

05/11 **Any Other Business**

Since it was the last scheduled meeting of the GSAC 2009-2011 session, the Chairman thanked members for their contributions in the past two years and looked forward to their continuing support.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:30 pm.

YHCK/Secretary, GSAC
June 2011