

Minutes of the 47th Meeting of
the Gas Safety Advisory Committee (GSAC)
held on 6 December 2018 in Conference Room 7102,
7/F, EMSD Headquarters, 3 Kai Shing Street, Hong Kong

Present

Ir SIT Wing-hang, Alfred, JP	Chairman
Ir CHAN Hing-lung, Charles	
Ir CHEUNG Pak-kin	
Ms LAI Chi-wai, Julie	
Dr LI Chi-moon	
Ms LI Chun-chau	
Mr YANG Kwok-keung	
Ir CHAN Ip-kay, Danny	Secretary

In Attendance

Ir LAI Hon-chung, Harry, JP	EMSD
Ir CHEUNG Kim-ching	EMSD
Ir WONG Lap-chi	EMSD
Ir CHU Yu-sing, Frank	EMSD
Ir CHAU Shu-man	EMSD

Absent with Apologies

Ms KWAN Ching-yi, Miranda
Ms KWAN Yuen-tung, Yvonne
Mr LAM Yuk-ching, Samson
Ir LO Pak-cheong

07/18 The Chairman welcomed members to the 47th GSAC Meeting and reminded members to declare interest whenever there was a potential conflict.

08/18 **Confirmation of Minutes of the 46th Meeting**
The minutes of the 46th Meeting held on 13 July 2018 were confirmed without amendment.

09/18

Publicity Work on Gas Safety

(Minutes reference 03/18 referred.)

- (i) EMSD reported that the publicity work on gas safety had been carried out for different target groups such as the general public and the gas trade via various channels. Apart from regular promotion, specific publicity work had been carried out in areas with relatively high risk and on issues of public concern.
- (ii) From July to November 2018, EMSD conducted two safety talks and visited 64 construction sites to promote gas safety knowledge and raise the awareness of site contractors and construction workers on avoidance of damage to underground gas pipes.
- (iii) EMSD conducted five safety talks for various government departments, the gas trade and the public regarding the avoidance of damage to gas pipes and the associated statutory requirements. Also, EMSD conducted a seminar for competent persons of the LPG trade in July 2018 for experience sharing of good practices.
- (iv) EMSD collaborated with the Environmental Protection Department (EPD), the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD), the Fire Services Department (FSD), the Buildings Department and the Labour Department (LD) in jointly organising two seminars for the catering trade about the relevant statutory requirements.
- (v) EMSD reported that the 27th issue of the Gas Safety Bulletin was ready for publication by electronic means in December 2018.
- (vi) EMSD reached out to the foreign domestic helpers at their common gathering places to raise their awareness on safe use of gas appliances by distributing the newly produced safety leaflets in Thai and Bahasa Indonesia. Ms Lai suggested that promotion through domestic helper agencies could also be considered.
- (vii) With a view to tackling the problem of abandoned gas cylinders, EMSD, EPD, FEHD and FSD jointly developed in early 2018 a protocol in handling gas cylinders abandoned in public places and refuse collection points.

Subsequently, new posters and pamphlets on proper disposal of different types of gas cylinders had jointly been published for use in public education.

- (viii) In order to raise the awareness of the catering trade on gas safety, EMSD had issued more than 200 promotional letters and visited 50 individual restaurants from July to November 2018. Moreover, EMSD collaborated with large property management companies including Link Asset Management Limited and Kerry Properties Limited to promote gas safety for the catering tenants in their shopping malls.
- (ix) With a view to enhancing public awareness on gas safety when carrying out decoration work in domestic premises and the requirements of employing RGCs/RGIs to undertake gas installation work, EMSD participated in a seminar organized by District Council for property management companies and property owners in October 2018. Besides, the Gas Standards Office and the Electricity Legislation Division of EMSD jointly issued letters to Minor Works Contractors under the Register of Buildings Department to remind them on the protection of gas and electrical installations during decoration work in domestic premises.
- (x) EMSD briefed members on the general publicity plan in 2019 and highlighted that gas safety promotion would be focusing on decoration work in domestic premises, the catering trade, ethnic minorities, etc.
- (xi) Ms Li opined that the promotion of regular safety inspection (RSI) for aged single-block buildings or “three-nil” buildings should be enhanced. EMSD responded that the promotion of RSI for gas risers in aged buildings had been conducted in collaboration with the Urban Renewal Authority in some districts. Ir Chan recognised EMSD’s effort in promoting RSI for gas risers in the past and recommended to keep up the momentum. Ir Cheung opined that all stakeholders such as incorporated owners, management offices and decoration companies should be involved to enhance effectiveness.
- (xii) Ms Li raised concern on the gas safety issue arising from operation of LPG vehicle maintenance workshops located in residential buildings. EMSD replied that risk-based monitoring system was in place to regulate LPG

vehicle maintenance workshops through regular and surprise inspections of some 2 800 vehicle maintenance workshops scattered over the territory, with at least once every week for those in residential buildings. Besides, the long established control measures that required the repair and maintenance of LPG vehicle fuel system to be carried out by competent person (CP6) had also been enhanced since mid-2015. An identification signage scheme had been implemented for LPG vehicle maintenance workshops in residential buildings equipped with necessary safety tools and competent persons by granting “blue identification signage” for display at prominent location for easy identification by the public and the trade. Ms Li expressed her appreciation and suggested promoting and reflecting the above efforts to the public so as to ease their concern. EMSD agreed and would follow up accordingly.

10/18 Incident, Prosecution and Routine Inspection Statistics

(Minutes reference 04/18 referred.)

- (i) EMSD briefed members on the inspection, incident and prosecution statistics from January to November 2018. It was estimated that the annual target of around 5 000 inspections in 2018 would be met.
- (ii) In response to Ir Lo’s suggestion in the last meeting, EMSD analysed different kinds of operation to identify the main sources leading to prosecution. It was however revealed that the sources depended on the nature of contravention. For example, prosecution related to over storage of LPG was mainly originated from informed cases, third party damage of gas pipes was mainly originated from gas incidents, fuel tank of LPG vehicles was mainly originated from inspections. Mr Yang enquired and EMSD replied that special attention would be paid on recidivism and appropriate actions would be taken in accordance with the relevant statutory provision.

11/18 Code of Practice – Avoidance of Damage to Gas Pipes

- (i) EMSD briefed members on the 2nd Edition of Code of Practice (CoP) – Avoidance of Damage to Gas Pipes, which was gazetted on 31 August 2018. The purpose of the CoP was to provide practical guidance in respect of Regulation 23A of the Gas Safety (Gas Supply) Regulations, Cap. 51B for works in the vicinity of gas pipes. The CoP outlined the dangers which

could arise from works near gas pipes and provided guidance on how to reduce the risk.

- (ii) EMSD informed members that the CoP had been revised taking into account the common causes of past incidents and the changes in engineering and trade practices over the years such as the widely adoption of pipe jacking and the use of polyethylene gas pipes. Also, relevant stakeholders including registered gas supply companies, the construction industry, other utility companies and relevant government departments had been thoroughly consulted during the review exercise.
- (iii) EMSD gave an overview on the four basic steps of the safe system of work comprising 1) collection of plans; 2) underground utility survey; 3) digging of trial holes; and 4) safe excavation practices, and highlighted some major changes in the revised edition, in particular the importance of ascertaining frontline workers to be well aware of the survey results.
- (iv) With a view to promoting the revised CoP, EMSD had rolled out publicity work to a number of government departments as well as the project proponents, consultants and works contractors, etc.
- (v) EMSD presented a bar chart of the number of third party damage incidents to underground gas pipes over a 23-year span, showing that since the issuance of the 1st edition of the CoP in 1997, there had been a substantial decrease in the number of third party damage incidents to underground gas pipes. With the promulgation of the revised CoP, it was anticipated that the incident numbers would be maintained at a relatively low level with the concerted effort of all stakeholders.

12/18 Date of Next Meeting

The next GSAC meeting would be held tentatively in June 2019.

The meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m.

Secretary, GSAC
December 2018