

Assisting Young People in Establishing Career Plans and Seizing Future Opportunities in the Automotive Industry

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2-4. Assisting Young People in Establishing Career Plans and Seizing Future Opportunities in the Automotive Industry

The Vehicle Maintenance Registration Unit (VMRU) and the Training Unit of the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) have spared no effort to promote the development of the vehicle maintenance industry and have been committed to injecting new impetus to the industry by encouraging young people to join. The Hong Kong Vehicle Repair Merchants Association Limited (HKVRMA) held the Kick-off Ceremony for its 60th Anniversary at Caritas Yuen Long Chan Chun Ha Secondary School on 4 March 2023. Mr PANG Yiu-hung, Director of Electrical and Mechanical Services, was the guest of honour and gave a congratulatory speech at the ceremony. On the occasion of the ceremony coinciding the school's Parent's Day, the VMRU and the Training Unit seized the opportunity to organise a career talk, where they introduced to students and their parents the development of the electrical and mechanical (E&M) trade and the vehicle maintenance industry, as well as the Technician Training Scheme and the E&M Young Ambassador Scheme of the EMSD, to encourage young people to consider a career in the E&M trade when making future career plans.

At the ceremony, Mr PANG Yiu-hung, Director of Electrical and Mechanical Services, gave a speech to the guests about the latest trends and opportunities in the E&M trade, especially highlighting the development and prospects of the vehicle maintenance industry, as well as the relevant training in the E&M trade. He started with expressing gratitude to the trade and the education sector for their contribution to the development of the E&M trade. The HKVRMA has maintained close collaboration with the EMSD for years, aiming to unite the trade and collectively embody the spirit of craftsmanship, as well as promoting the Voluntary Registration Scheme for Vehicle Mechanics (VRSVM) and the Voluntary Registration Scheme for Vehicle Maintenance Workshops (VRSVMW) through the Vehicle Maintenance Technical Advisory Committee. In recent years, the HKVRMA has been actively involved in the formulation of the Practice Guidelines for Vehicle Maintenance Workshops and has assisted in the promotion of the VM Learning Station, an all-in-one online continuing professional development platform for technicians. These efforts have significantly contributed to enhancing the professionalism and image of the trade. In addition, Caritas Yuen Long Chan Chun Ha Secondary School has been proactively promoting automotive technology education. Three years ago, the school introduced a diploma programme in Automobile Technology in Practice accredited at the Qualifications Framework Level 3, as a pathway parallel to the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education curriculum, providing students with opportunities to gain theoretical knowledge and practical skills. The school's initiative not only helps explore and cultivate students' interest in automotive technology but also facilitates their early career planning.

When it comes to nurturing E&M talent, Mr PANG quoted a remark made by President Xi Jinping in the Report to the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China that “a nation will prosper only when its young people thrive”. Mr PANG also pointed out that the EMSD had been, in collaboration with various sectors, actively promoting vocational and professional education and training on many fronts, with the aim of nurturing E&M talent equipped with professional knowledge and advanced skills for society and the trade, leveraging Hong Kong’s advantages to contribute to the nation’s needs. He shared three achievements of the EMSD’s collaborations with different sectors. Firstly, in order to inspire young people’s interest in engineering and technology, the EMSD has made strenuous effort to promote popular science education with various sectors. Through the E&M Young Ambassador Scheme, which included guided tours, STEM workshops and creative thinking activities, knowledge on E&M safety and energy efficiency can be imparted to young people. Secondly, the EMSD has taken the lead in improving the Technician Training Scheme through innovation and technology (I&T), with the aim of nurturing more E&M young talent who will contribute to building a smart city and driving I&T development for the Government. Thirdly, the Government and the trade have constantly encouraged young people to participate in different competitions to enhance their skills. Several young colleagues from the EMSD achieved excellent results in the Outstanding Apprentice Award Scheme and the Best Apprentice Competition organised by the Vocational Training Council, as well as the Worldskills Competition, hailed as the “Skills Olympics”, which was held as a Special Edition. These awards recognised the efforts and dedication of each participant, affirming their exceptional craftsmanship.

In the future, with the advancement of technology, the E&M trade, particularly the automotive industry, is full of opportunities. The 2022 Policy Address stated that to reduce the total carbon emissions by 50% before 2035 (from the 2005 level) in order to achieve the goal of carbon neutrality before 2050, the Government must step up decarbonisation efforts, including promoting green transport and developing new energy vehicles, aiming to introduce about 700 electric buses and 3 000 electric taxis by end-2027. The EMSD is currently planning to add a dedicated service category related to electric vehicle maintenance under the VRSVM and the VRSVMW. We have been closely exchanging views with the trade and have conducted a consultancy study, with a view to proposing recommendations on registration requirements, detailed arrangements and launch schedules in the first quarter of next year. Furthermore, hydrogen fuel cell vehicles are expected to arrive in Hong Kong soon. With the electrification of vehicles and decarbonisation transformation, as well as the development of

big data and emergence of artificial intelligence, the automotive technology will move towards the field of high-tech intelligence. The automotive industry is expected to have more diverse development opportunities and will require a large pool of talent to join. The EMSD, together with the trade, will put more effort into promoting training in vehicle maintenance in the future, and encouraging more young talent to seize future opportunities and engage in the automotive industry, thereby enhancing the industry's development momentum.

After the Director's speech, colleagues from the EMSD introduced the training scheme designed for young people and shared their career journeys in the vehicle maintenance industry. It was hoped that through this presentation and career talk, young people would gain a better understanding of the E&M industry and the related career development pathways, as well as new insights into their career planning.

5. Upcoming Technical Seminar on Vehicle Maintenance (6)

The Vehicle Maintenance Registration Unit will hold the sixth technical webinar on vehicle maintenance on the evening of 23 September 2023 (Saturday), which will cover automotive tyres; development of electric vehicles in Hong Kong; and chassis control (electronic stability control and advanced driver assistance system). Each participant is eligible to earn three continuing professional development (CPD) hours. For details and the registration method, please refer to the information below.

6-7. The Labour Department Published the Guidance Notes on Prevention of Heat Stroke at Work and the Introduction to the Heat Stress at Work Warning

The Government is highly concerned about the risk of heat stroke of employees working in a hot weather. To strengthen the protection of employees' occupational health, the Chief Executive announced in the 2022 Policy Address that the Government would develop guidelines based on the Hong Kong Heat Index to require employers to take preventive measures in accordance with prescribed criteria to protect employees from heat stroke at work.

According to the Occupational Safety and Health Ordinance, an employer must, so far as reasonably practicable, ensure the safety and health at work of all his employees. It includes conducting risk assessment and taking appropriate preventive measures to protect employees from heat stroke at work.

To assist employers in fulfilling their responsibilities and strengthen the protection of employees' occupational health, the Labour Department (LD) has formulated the Guidance Notes on Prevention of Heat Stroke at Work (Guidance Notes) and the Heat Stress at Work Warning to remind employers and employees to take appropriate measures to prevent heat stroke of workers working in hot weather or high-temperature environments.

Main Content of the Guidance Notes

- Detailing the workplace heat stress risk assessment and the preventive and control measures for different risk factors;
- Setting out the Heat Stress at Work Warning issued based on the Hong Kong Heat Index as a tool for assessing heat stress; and
- Stipulating the criteria for work and rest arrangements in times of various levels of the Heat Stress at Work Warning.

Scope of Application of the Guidance Notes

- Work that needs to be carried out under hot weather or in high-temperature environments, such as:
 - Work in outdoor environments;
 - Work conducted in indoor locations without air-conditioning systems; and
 - Work conducted near heat sources or heat-generating facilities.

Heat Stress Risk Factors

- When conducting heat stress risk assessments at the workplace, employers should consider and identify various risk factors (including environmental, work and personal factors), and take corresponding and effective preventive and control measures (such as supplying cool drinking water, reducing heat absorption, increasing heat dissipation, reducing physical exertion, as well as arranging heat acclimatisation, working hours, rest time and places) to reduce the risk of heat stroke of employees at work.
- Employers may use the template of the Workplace Heat Stress Risk Assessment Form appended to the Guidance Notes to conduct assessments, for the purpose of developing for employees work and rest arrangements in times of the Heat Stress at Work Warning.




Work and Rest Arrangements in Times of the Heat Stress at Work Warning

- The Guidance Notes has listed out the recommended hourly rest periods for employees working outdoors at different levels of physical workload under different levels of the Heat Stress at Work Warning for employers' reference.

- The above recommended rest periods assume that the employees are working outdoors without any preventive measures. If the employer has conducted a risk assessment for employees in advance and has taken suitable preventive measures, the rest periods for employees can be adjusted accordingly.

Introduction to the Heat Stress at Work Warning

- The Heat Stress at Work Warning is classified into three levels: Amber, Red and Black, to make it easier for employers and employees to understand the level of heat stress when working outdoors or in indoor environments without air-conditioning systems. Please refer to the table below for details:

Hong Kong Heat Index	Heat Stress at Work Warning*	Warning Signs
30 to <32	Amber	
Amber Heat Stress at Work Warning indicates the level of heat stress in certain work environments is high.		
32 to <34	Red	
Red Heat Stress at Work Warning indicates the level of heat stress in certain work environments is very high.		
>=34	Black	
Black Heat Stress at Work Warning indicates the level of heat stress in certain work environments is extremely high.		

*The issuance, update or cancellation of the warning is automatically generated through a computer system based on the Hong Kong Heat Index data.

- The Labour Department will issue to the public different levels of the Heat Stress at Work Warning through the “GovHK Notifications” and “My Observatory” mobile applications, Government press releases, the website of the Hong Kong Observatory and the mass media, to remind them to take appropriate heat stroke preventive measures.
- The Heat Stress at Work Warning will remain in force for at least one hour after its issuance and will be automatically updated or cancelled each hour thereafter; if the Hong Kong Heat Index continues to rise during the period, a higher level of warning will be issued automatically by the computer system.

The above Guidance Notes and the Heat Stress at Work Warning have been implemented from 15 May 2023. For enquiries, please call the Occupational Safety and Health Enquiry Hotline of the LD on 2559 2297/2852 4041.

Website for downloading the Guidance Notes on Prevention of Heat Stroke at Work:

https://www.labour.gov.hk/common/public/oh/Heat_Stress_GN_en.pdf



The thematic webpage of the LD on prevention of heat stroke at work:

https://www.labour.gov.hk/eng/news/prevention_of_heat_stroke_at_work.htm



The thematic webpage of the Occupational Safety and Health Council on prevention of heat stroke:

www.noheatstress.hk/en/



8-9. Latest Updates of Vehicle Maintenance Registration Unit

The Voluntary Registration Scheme for Vehicle Mechanics Accepts Relevant Qualifications under the Vocational Qualifications Pathway as the Recognised Qualifications for Registration

To further enhance the professional standards of registered vehicle mechanics (RVMs) and meet the development needs of the industry, from 3 July 2023 onwards, the Hong Kong Qualification Framework (HKQF) Level 3 qualifications in the main service classes (i.e. Mechanical Services [M], Electrical Services [E], Body Repair [B1] and Body Painting [B2]) that are acquired under the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) mechanism of the automotive industry (the Recognition Mechanism) and acknowledged by the Vocational Qualifications Pathway are accepted as the recognised qualifications for registration in the relevant service classes under the Voluntary Registration Scheme for Vehicle Mechanics (the Scheme). RVMs of the four main service classes under the Scheme can obtain the Statement of Attainment at Level 3 in the service classes they registered in through the Recognition Mechanism without undergoing any tests. Other vehicle mechanics may also apply for registration as an RVM of a main service class by obtaining a Statement of Attainment at Level 3 in the relevant service class.

Routes to Apply for the Statement of Attainment

Route One: RVMs of the four main service classes

An RVM of any of the four main service classes (i.e. Mechanical Services [M], Electrical Services [E], Body Repair [B1] and Body Painting [B2]) may submit the completed application form for renewal of registration of vehicle mechanics and RPL application form for automotive industry issued by the Vocational Training Council (VTC) to the Vehicle Maintenance Registration Unit (VMRU) of the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department when applying for renewal of registration. Once the formalities for renewal of registration are completed, the VMRU will pass the application for Statement of Attainment of the RVM concerned to the VTC for processing. The RVM concerned can obtain a Statement of Attainment without undergoing an assessment test or paying any assessment fee.

Route Two: Other vehicle mechanics

Vehicle mechanics who have not yet registered and RVMs of Specific Services [S] may apply to the VTC for RPL. When submitting an application, a vehicle mechanic shall provide his proof of work experience (possessing a minimum of five years of work experience in vehicle maintenance, of which not less than three years of work experience should be in a main service class, i.e. M, E, B1 and B2). In addition, the vehicle mechanic shall pass the relevant assessment test. After passing the assessment test, the vehicle mechanic possessing the required work experience will be awarded a HKQF Level 3 Statement of Attainment in the relevant service class. A vehicle mechanic who has successfully obtained a Statement of Attainment through Route Two will receive full reimbursement of the assessment fee. For details, please visit the RPL website of the VTC.

A vehicle mechanic who has successfully obtained a Statement of Attainment may apply to the VMRU to register as an RVM of the relevant service class after obtaining sufficient work experience and continuing professional development training hours. For details about applying for registration as an RVM, please visit the VMRU website.

Enquiries

If you have any enquiries about the above arrangements, please contact the VMRU on 2808 3545 (for matters related to the renewal of registration of RVMs) or the VTC on 3907 6868 (for the RPL arrangements).

Application routes	Applicable targets	Application methods and assessment test	Qualifications upon successful application and assessment fees
Route One:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ RVMs of Mechanical Services [M], Electrical Services [E], Body Repair [B1] and Body Painting [B2] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Submit the completed RPL application form for automotive industry issued by the VTC together with the application form for renewal of registration of vehicle mechanics to the VMRU when applying for renewal of registration ✓ The assessment test is waived 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ A HKQF Level 3 Statement of Attainment will be awarded directly ✓ The assessment fee is waived
Route Two:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Other vehicle mechanics possessing a minimum of five years of work experience in vehicle maintenance, of which not less than three years of work experience should be in the relevant service class (including RVMs of Specific Services [S]) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Apply to the VTC for RPL ✓ Submit proof of work experience ✓ Pass the relevant assessment test (including a written test in the form of multiple-choice questions (about 20 minutes) and an interview assessment (about 20 minutes)) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ A Statement of Attainment at HKQF Level 3 will be awarded ✓ Application for full reimbursement of the assessment fee can be made



Application form for renewal of registration of vehicle mechanics issued by the EMSD



The RPL website of the VTC



RPL application form for automotive industry issued by the VTC



The website on the Voluntary Registration Scheme for Vehicle Mechanics of the EMSD

10. Latest Developments of the Registration Schemes

- 1 Registered vehicle mechanics who have switched to work in another vehicle maintenance workshop should notify the Vehicle Maintenance Registration Unit (VMRU) **by e-mail (vmru@emsd.gov.hk) or fax (3968 7646) the name, address and telephone number of the new workshop.**
- 2 If there is any change in the information of the vehicle maintenance workshop (such as name of the workshop, registration number of the workshop, address, contact number and business registration certificate, etc.) or alteration in the type of workshop being registered, the person-in-charge of the workshop must, **within 14 working days** of such change, notify the VMRU of the change in writing, and submit the relevant documents for processing.

Information on the Voluntary Registration Scheme for Vehicle Mechanics:

Total number of vehicle mechanics	10 303 ^{Note 1}
Number of registered vehicle mechanics (as at end-July 2023)	8 115

Information on the Voluntary Registration Scheme for Vehicle Maintenance Workshops

Total number of vehicle maintenance workshops	2 783 ^{Note 2}
Number of registered workshops (as at end-July 2023)	2 008

Note1: 2019 Manpower Survey Report (updated on 13 January 2020) by the Vocational Training Council and the Automobile Training Board

Note2: Database of the VMRU (updated in July 2019)

If you wish to help protect our environment by receiving electronic copies of the RVM Newsletter and other relevant leaflets, please send us the completed reply slip by e-mail (vmru@emsd.gov.hk) or WhatsApp (9016 3185). We will contact you by e-mail or mobile communication as far as possible.

Reply Slip

I/My company would like to receive the RVM Newsletter and other information leaflets by
 e-mail / WhatsApp. Please provide the relevant contact details for the above selected means of communication:



Name: _____ Vehicle Mechanic Registration No.: VM _____
E-mail address: _____ WhatsApp: _____

The electronic version of RVM Newsletters is also available on the EMSD website:









https://www.emsd.gov.hk/en/supporting_government_initiatives/registration_scheme_for_vehicle_maintenance/publications_and_circulars/rvm_newsletter/index.html

Note

1. Starting from 15 July 2018, new application for registration as Type Four workshop (i.e. a workshop situated at a residential building or a composite building with domestic part) is no longer accepted. Furthermore, requests for conversion from a registered Type One, Type Two or Type Three workshop to a Type Four workshop will not be entertained.
2. Applicants should affix sufficient postage and provide a return address when posting renewal application forms with envelopes not provided by the EMSD. If the postage is insufficient, the EMSD will not pay for any outstanding postage or accept the mail item concerned, which will be returned to the sender (if a return address is provided) or disposed of by the Hongkong Post.

12. Training Institutes

Providing Continuing Professional Development Courses for Vehicle Mechanics (in random order)

Name of Training Institute	Website/Contents	Enquiry Tel. No.	QR Code
Traffic Services Employees Association	http://www.facebook.com/tseahk	2575 5544	
Pro-Act Training and Development Centre (Automobile)	<p>http://www.proact.edu.hk/automobile</p> <p>Certificate in Vehicle Mechanical Repair#, a programme run by the Pro-Act Training and Development Centre (Automobile) may serve as another means for qualifying as registered vehicle mechanics. Mechanics who are interested in enrolling in the above programme may visit the website of the Centre.</p> <p># For details and latest developments of the programme, the information issued by the Pro-Act Training and Development Centre shall prevail.</p>	2449 1310	
The Institute of the Motor Industry Hong Kong	<p>http://www.hkimi.org.hk</p> <p>The Institute of the Motor Industry Hong Kong (IMIHK), formerly known as the Institute of the Motor Industry (IMI) - Hong Kong Branch, brings the mission and vision of the IMI to the Hong Kong automobile industry. After the reunification in 1997, the IMI - Hong Kong Branch applied to be renamed the IMIHK in Hong Kong. Eligible members of the trade are welcome to join the IMIHK or enroll in its courses or talks.</p>	2625 5903	
Hong Kong Vehicle Repair Merchants Association Limited	https://www.facebook.com/HKVRMA/	2399 7977	
Hong Kong Vehicle Repairing Industry Employee General Union	http://www.vrunion.hk	2393 9955	
Occupational Safety and Health Council	http://www.oshc.org.hk	2311 3322	
The Society of Operations Engineers (Hong Kong Region)	http://www.soe.org.hk	2617 0311	
Qualifications Framework recognised courses	http://www.hkqr.gov.hk	2836 1700	

Gentle Reminder

The contents in each issue help you catch up on the development of the registration schemes and enhance the quality of service. Please stay tuned! Each issue is available for downloading on the EMSD website:

http://www.emsd.gov.hk/en/supporting_government_initiatives/registration_scheme_for_vehicle_maintenance/publications_and_circulars/rvm_newsletter/index.html



For enquiries on the contents of the RVM Newsletter, please contact the VMRU of the EMSD.

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