

Minutes of the 29th Meeting of
the Electrical Safety Advisory Committee (ESAC)

Date : 19 September 2014
Time : 2:30 p.m.
Venue : Room 7102, 7/F, EMSD Headquarters, 3 Kai Shing Street, Kowloon,
Hong Kong

Present

Mr. CHUNG Fuk-wai, Simon (Chairman)
Mr. WOO Kin-ming
Ms. WAN Siu-ling, Emily
Mr. LOK Tat-hong, Howard
Mr. LOK Kwei-sang, Tandy
Mr. WAT Hon-keung
Mr. CHEUNG Hung-kwan
Mr. LIN Jian-hui
Mr. CHOI Wai-man
Dr. CHAN Ka-wing
Professor HUNG Yeung-sam
Mr. CHAN Chor-man, Chapman
Ms. LAM Lee, Alice
Dr. LIU Hong-fai, Dandy
Mr. YIP Ping-nam
Mr. YIU Tak-tai, Boris (Secretary)

In attendance

Mr. HO Wing-yiu	Acting Assistant Director/Electricity and Energy Efficiency, EMSD
Mr. LEE Chi-leung, Eric	E&M Engineer, EMSD
Mr. MA Chun-ho, Marco	E&M Engineer, EMSD
Mr. CHAN Wing-yip, John	E&M Engineer, EMSD

Absent with Apologies

Mr. YU Chen-on, Emil
Mr. TO Wang-kam, Albert
Dr. CHAI Ngai-chiu, Sunny
Ms. NG So-kuen

Agenda Item 1: Opening Remarks

1. The Chairman welcomed to the 29th meeting members who were serving the new term of the Electrical Safety Advisory Committee (ESAC). He then introduced the members to one another.
2. The Chairman reminded members that they must observe the guidelines on declaration of interests for members of public councils, boards and committees. If a member became aware that a conflict of interests might arise from his/her participation in the discussion of an agenda item, he/she must disclose full details of the interests involved accordingly. The interests declared would be recorded in the minutes of meeting.

Agenda Item 2: Matters Arising from the Minutes of the 28th Meeting held on 21 March 2014

3. With regard to the information requested by the members concerned arising from items 6 and 44 of the minutes of the last meeting, EMSD stated that the relevant information was forwarded to the former-term members via email on 10 April 2014.
4. With regard to the review of the Continuing Professional Development Scheme as mentioned in item 20 of the minutes of the last meeting, EMSD stated that a concrete proposal would be presented to the Committee in this meeting vide paper 4/2014.
5. With regard to the manufacture certificate of a particular brand of fire retardant cable mentioned in item 42 of the minutes of the last meeting, EMSD reported to members that it had followed up on the issue and learnt that the fire retardant cable manufactured by the new manufacturer had been issued with the relevant certificate confirming its compliance with the Electricity Ordinance.

Agenda Item 3: Review of the Continuing Professional Development Scheme for Registered Electrical Workers (ESAC Paper 4/2014)

6. EMSD briefed members on this paper, which reported on the review findings of the Continuing Professional Development Scheme for Registered Electrical Workers (the Scheme) with a proposed way forward for enhancing the Scheme.
7. A member enquired whether the similar Continuing Professional Development (CPD) training schemes provided by the professional organisations that were recommended for recognition covered the content of the two training modules, i.e., Legislative and Safety Requirements and Technical Knowledge.
8. EMSD stated in response that the similar CPD training schemes provided by the two professional organisations recommended for recognition in the paper actually covered the content of these two training modules.
9. A member asked whether EMSD would consider using video recording as a means to authenticate the identity of participants in online training.
10. EMSD thanked the member for his suggestion. It would continue to explore what suitable technology was available for identity authentication

in respect of online training.

11. A member enquired whether the CPD training schemes provided by the Hong Kong Institution of Engineers (HKIE) for its different classes of members would be recommended for recognition.
12. EMSD explained that according to the proposal in the paper, recognition would not be given unless the professional organisations concerned had similar, mandatory CPD training schemes with audit mechanism. As the CPD training schemes for some classes of members in HKIE were not mandatory, no recognition would be given to these schemes in accordance with the paper's proposal.
13. A member noted that enrolment in academic courses related to electrical engineering could be accepted as recognised CPD training. He was concerned whether the content of these academic courses were adequate in aspects of legislation and safety. In addition, a member remarked that there was a difference between "had been taken" and "were being taken" with regard to the electrical engineering related courses as mentioned in the enhancement scheme. He suggested that details should be drawn up so as to differentiate courses that "had been taken" and those that "were being taken".
14. EMSD stated in response that it strongly encouraged registered electrical workers (REWs) to enrol in academic courses related to electrical engineering. As the teaching hours of these courses were significantly more than the CPD training requirement of 2 to 3 hours and a wide range of topics would be covered, EMSD considered that the academic courses listed out in the paper, irrespective of their "had been taken" or "were being taken", could all be accepted as recognised CPD training with a view to encouraging trade members to enrol in relevant academic courses. (Post-meeting note: EMSD has again reviewed the academic courses listed out in the paper and confirmed that training on legislation and safety was also included in addition to technical content.)
15. For the proposal on "advance audit" of different programmes and training, EMSD was unable to conduct "advance audit" on the wide range of programmes or training except for the academic programmes stated in the paper, owing to administrative and resource considerations.
16. A member remarked that REWs and contractors were very supportive of the CPD Scheme because it enabled the trade to acquire new legal knowledge and understand professional conduct and social responsibility. The trade also supported that there should be more recognised ways for practitioners to acquire CPD training. Members also stated that some professional development schemes and academic programmes might be lacking in legal knowledge, and proposed that EMSD attach more importance to the content of legal knowledge in endorsing professional development schemes and academic programmes in the future.
17. A member asked whether REWs could report completion of the relevant training modules by means of "self-declaration".
18. For the proposal on "self-declaration", the Chairman stated in response that EMSD might conduct feasibility study on the proposal when appropriate.

19. Members did not propose any amendment to the refinements. The Chairman declared that the Committee agreed with the refinements stated in the paper.

Agenda Item 4: Overview of Household Electrical Products Incidents (ESAC Paper 5/2014)

20. EMSD briefed members on this paper, which gave an overview of household electrical product incidents in 2013 compared with the previous two years and related follow-up actions. The situation as at July 2014 was also included.
21. A member asked whether a recent incident involving a rechargeable fan was under the regulation of EMSD and how EMSD would regulate electrical products purchased on web-based platforms.
22. EMSD stated in response that the rechargeable fan involved in the incident was a current-using equipment of extra low voltage and therefore not regulated by the Electricity Ordinance. EMSD stated that electrical products purchased on web-based platforms might involve cross-border supply and transaction, so there would be difficulties in taking enforcement actions. EMSD considered that emphasis should be put on publicity and education while strengthening the relevant publicity with respect to web shopping. EMSD welcomed members' views on this to facilitate the formulation of the publicity plan and strategy.
23. A member asked whether suppliers of electrical products on web-based platforms were regulated.
24. EMSD stated in response that suppliers would be regulated by the Electrical Products (Safety) Regulation if they supplied electrical products covered by the ordinance in Hong Kong.
25. A member asked whether there would be criminal liability for a person who purchased products not complying with the safety requirements via the web or altered the purchased electrical products on his own.
26. EMSD stated in response that purchasing or using electrical products not complying with the safety requirements or altering the purchased electrical products on one's own were not acts of contravening the Electrical Products (Safety) Regulation.
27. A member would like to know whether legislation or other means would be used by EMSD to regulate products with USB sockets, e.g. extension units and adaptors.
28. EMSD stated that USB socket products had all along been regulated by the Electrical Products (Safety) Regulation. Under the regulation, electrical products must comply with the relevant international standards and be issued with certificates of safety compliance before they were allowed to be supplied and sold in Hong Kong.
29. A member suggested that, to specifically focus on electrical products with relatively higher incident rates and the causes of such incidents, publicity directed at housewives and senior citizens should be stepped up using

television as a medium. Production of cartoons could also be considered to engage more attention.

30. EMSD agreed with the member's suggestion, adding that it had produced lively and interesting promotional clips featuring its own home-made cartoon characters "e-Family" as well as broadcast promotional clips and advertisements on television and the radio. However, given that television air time for promotion was expensive, EMSD would continue to explore new ways and channels to convey the message of electrical safety in a bid to increase the coverage of its publicity. EMSD would also strengthen its co-operation with the trade and other sectors of the society in promoting electrical safety, and welcome any suggestions from members on publicity campaigns and forms of co-operation.
31. A member added that the two power companies in Hong Kong and EMSD had long been working closely together to promote electrical safety and energy conservation, such as in joint talks and distribution of promotional leaflets enclosed with electricity bills.
32. A member remarked that he agreed with the suggestion put forward in the paper that the proper operation and maintenance of washing machines, air-conditioners and electric fans should be the main focus of future public education and publicity campaigns. He considered it quite a good arrangement to give the publicity items a focus and an emphasis.

Agenda Item 5: Overview of Enforcement and Publicity of Electrical Safety in 2013 (ESAC Paper 6/2014)

33. EMSD briefed members on this paper, which gave an overview of the enforcement and publicity activities on electrical safety in Hong Kong in 2013.
34. A member remarked that as the number of prosecutions for "failing to arrange Periodic Inspection, Testing and Certification (PITC) for electrical installations" was proportionally significant in 2013, he asked for the proportions of similar prosecution cases in 2011 and 2012. He suggested that EMSD should carry out publicity work targeted at relevant persons who were required to arrange PITC for electrical installations, such as property management companies and owners' committees.
35. EMSD stated in response that the proportional distribution among the breakdowns of different prosecution cases was similar over the past three years. The number of prosecutions for "failing to arrange PITC for electrical installations" had dropped from over 1 000 in 2011 to 519 in 2013. Relevant publicity work targeted at property management companies, owners' corporations and property owners had all along been carried out. The drop in prosecution numbers over the past three years demonstrated that the publicity work was effective. EMSD further explained that some buildings in Hong Kong had management problems which required the assistance of various parties. For cases involving this type of building, EMSD would refer them to the Home Affairs Department(HAD) to enable these buildings to form owners' corporations and have access to information on building management and financial support in building repair, etc.
36. A member further enquired about the number of prosecutions involving

- “failing to arrange PITC for electrical installations” up to August 2014 and whether the number of prosecution cases was on a continuous downward trend.
37. EMSD stated that the latest information on prosecution was not available. However, the trend was now stabilising after the sharp drop in the number of prosecutions in the past three years. All the cases being handled now were relatively difficult. EMSD would continue to make an effort to follow up on the cases and strengthen publicity work in the hope of further reducing prosecutions.
 38. A member asked whether some of the 10 RECs and 20 REWs against whom disciplinary actions were taken in 2013 involved employer-employee relationship.
 39. EMSD stated in response that if an REC and the REW(s) it employed were both involved in disciplinary action and convicted of contravening the Electricity Ordinance, disciplinary action would be taken against the REC and the REW(s) respectively.
 40. A member asked whether warning would be given before initiating prosecution.
 41. EMSD explained that, for cases involving “failing to arrange PITC for electrical installations”, EMSD would issue notices to the persons concerned repeatedly. Prosecution would be taken against the persons concerned after ascertaining that they had not carried out PITC as required under the ordinance. As for other types of cases, e.g. incident investigation and complaint investigation, etc., EMSD would take prosecution actions against the persons concerned if there was evidence of contravention of the Electricity Ordinance.
 42. With regard to the management problems that existed in some buildings in Hong Kong, representative of HAD added that some buildings in the territory were known as “three nil” buildings because they had no owners’ corporations, residents’ organisations or property management companies. “Three nil” buildings had management problems with respect to building maintenance and PITC for electrical installations. To help the owners of these “three nil” buildings to resolve the management problems, HAD launched the Building Management Professional Advisory Service Scheme (the Scheme) in 2011. The two property management companies engaged by the Scheme would offer professional advice and follow-up services on building management to the participating owners of buildings and assist them in forming owners’ corporations or other residents’ organisations, improving management, and handling the issues of building maintenance. After three years of its implementation, the first phase of the Scheme had been completed with some initial success. The second phase of the Scheme had also commenced, providing services for owners and residents of the other 1 200 private buildings. In addition, the Community Care Fund had set aside \$60 million to subsidise owners’ corporations to undertake building management work (including PITC for electrical installations) subject to approval of HAD. Representative of HAD stated that there had been ongoing communication and collaboration between EMSD and HAD in handling cases of buildings with management problems.

43. A member suggested that disciplinary cases and the relevant analyses should be discussed with the trade, so that one could learn from experience to prevent the accidents from happening again.
44. EMSD stated in response that it had always shared and discussed with the trade issues such as the causes of disciplinary cases and the correct practices.
45. A member pointed out that his organisation attached great importance to the disciplinary cases and their penalties as these could make them more alert. He stated that the relevant messages should continue to be communicated to the other REWs through the CPD Scheme. He also noted that since owners of buildings were now subsidised to conduct PITC for electrical installations, the problem of PITC not being carried out for electrical installations had already been greatly alleviated.

Agenda Item 6: Any Other Business

46. Members would be informed of the date, time and venue of the next meeting in due course.