

**Minutes of the 30th Meeting of
the Electrical Safety Advisory Committee (ESAC)**

Date : 20 March 2015
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 CHAN Fan
Ms WAN Siu-ling, Emily
Mr LOK Tat-hong, Howard
Mr LOK Kwei-sang, Tandy
Mr WAT Hon-keung
Mr CHEUNG Hung-kwan
Mr YU Chen-on, Emil
Mr LIN Jian-hui
Mr CHOI Wai-man
Mr TO Wang-kam, Albert
Professor HUNG Yeung-sam
Dr LIU Hong-fai, Dandy
Mr YIP Ping-nam
Mr YIU Tak-tai, Boris (Secretary)

In attendance

Mr SIT Wing-hang, Alfred Deputy Director/Regulatory Services, EMSD
Mr HO Wing-yiu Chief E&M Engineer/Electricity Legislation, EMSD
Ms SIT Kin-ka E&M Engineer, EMSD
Mr TSE Wing-keung, Ricky E&M Engineer, EMSD
Mr NG Hin-yeung, Kenneth E&M Engineer, EMSD
Mr HO Wai-keung, Paul E&M Engineer, EMSD

Absent with Apologies

Ms LAM Lee, Alice
Mr CHAN Chor-man, Chapman
Dr CHAN Ka-wing
Dr CHAI Ngai-chiu, Sunny
Ms NG So-kuen

Agenda Item 1: Opening Remarks

1. The Chairman welcomed members to the 30th meeting of the Electrical Safety Advisory Committee (ESAC). He introduced to members those who were in attendance at the meeting.
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: Confirmation of Minutes of the 29th Meeting Held on 19 September 2014

3. Members did not raise any amendment to the minutes of the 29th meeting. The Chairman declared the minutes of the 29th meeting confirmed. The Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) would arrange to upload the minutes of meeting on its website for public reference.

Agenda Item 3: Overview of Electrical Safety in 2014 (ESAC Paper 1/2015)

4. EMSD briefed members on the above paper, which presented an overview of enforcement work including the related incident statistics for fixed electrical installations, electrical products and electricity supply lines in 2014.
5. A member asked about the specific problems commonly found in the fixed electrical installations at subdivided units.
6. EMSD stated in response that the fixed electrical installations at subdivided units should, same as those at other types of domestic premises, comply with the safety requirements of the Electricity Ordinance, and be designed, installed and tested by registered electrical contractors (RECs) and workers (REWs) to ensure safety of the electrical installations.
7. A member remarked that quality uncertainty of old extension units and improper use of extension units by users might be the causes of fire. He hoped that EMSD would take note of these factors.
8. EMSD thanked the member for his view and pointed out that it would continue its publicity and education efforts in enhancing public awareness of repair, maintenance and proper use of extension units. EMSD also stated that product test on extension units was conducted in collaboration with the Consumer Council in 2012 and no electrical safety problems were detected in the test.
9. With regard to component fault being one of the causes of electrical product incidents, a member asked if EMSD could make further analysis of the components involved so as to take follow-up actions and carry out publicity work.
10. EMSD stated in response that since the electrical products involved would

have usually been destroyed, it would therefore be difficult to determine which specific component caused the incident. In carrying out public education and publicity work, EMSD would focus on the domestic electrical products with higher rates of incidents and remind the public of the safety issues to note in using these electrical products.

11. A member noted that equipment failure and poor contact of cable terminations were the two main causes of incidents involving electrical installations. He suggested that EMSD should conduct targeted publicity campaigns and that it should educate and publicise to the trade the causes of the two fatal incidents involving electrical work. The member also asked whether batteries were regulated under the Electricity Ordinance.
12. EMSD stated in response that it had always been sharing information with the trade about the causes of incidents involving electrical installations through different channels, such as continuing professional development courses and *Electricity News* in the hope that the trade would stay alert and recurrence of similar incidents could be prevented. Besides, EMSD pointed out that batteries were not electrical products regulated by the Electricity Ordinance.
13. A member asked how EMSD would handle electrical incidents involving non-registered contractors or workers.
14. EMSD stated that it would conduct follow-up investigation into all electrical incidents or reported cases. Where there was evidence that non-registered contractors or workers were involved in the relevant electrical work, EMSD would prosecute the persons concerned. In addition, if there was evidence that an REC or REW failed to carry out electrical work in accordance with the Electricity Ordinance, disciplinary action would be taken against the REC or REW.
15. A member remarked that publicity and education work was crucial in promoting electrical safety. He suggested that EMSD could consider incorporating topics related to electrical safety in the primary or junior secondary school curriculum.
16. EMSD stated that it had made use of different channels, such as television, radio and newspapers to convey the message of electrical safety to the general public. For publicity and education work targeted at primary or junior secondary students, EMSD on the one hand directly deployed staff to primary schools through its outreach programme to impart knowledge of electrical safety and energy efficiency to students while on the other hand, it had produced teaching materials on electrical safety and energy efficiency for the subject of Liberal Studies for secondary education to enhance the knowledge of secondary students in this regard. Besides, EMSD also organised activities such as E&M Safety Carnival to attract participation of students with a view to promoting to them E&M safety.
17. A member remarked that subdivided units might cause the total electricity consumption of a whole building to increase, so the total electricity consumption of the building should be noted during inspections to subdivided units. He also stated that the trade organisation he represented had made analysis of the accidents involving extension units and would brief the public on the safe use of extension units and various types of electrical products on television. For example, a household

electrical appliance with high power consumption should receive power supply from a single socket outlet instead of using an extension unit for prolonged use.

18. EMSD thanked the member for his view and efforts in enhancing electrical safety.

Agenda Item 4: Progress on Reviewing the Code of Practice for the Electricity (Wiring) Regulations (ESAC Paper 2/2015)

19. EMSD gave members a brief introduction of the above paper, which briefed members about the progress on reviewing the Code of Practice for the Electricity (Wiring) Regulations (CoP).

20. A member asked when the new edition of the CoP would be launched for sale.

21. EMSD stated in response that the new edition of the CoP was expected to be launched for sale in the third quarter of 2015 and there would be a two-year grace period before the new CoP completely superseded the current edition.

22. A member pointed out that the British Standard BS 7671 had been updated recently with newly revised information on electrical wiring work. He suggested that EMSD should include the relevant new information in the new edition of the CoP.

23. EMSD stated in response that it would examine the relevant information and follow-up actions would be taken by the Working Group for Reviewing the Code of Practice for the Electricity (Wiring) Regulations.

EMSD

24. A member expressed the wish to know the availability of lockable miniature circuit breaker or moulded case circuit breaker products on the market and asked whether different brands of circuit breaker products required different types of locks or even patented locks.

25. EMSD stated in response that, according to the discussion content of the Working Group, it was feasible for the circuit breaker products on the market to switch to a lockable design and the locks available were just ordinary types involving no patented designs.

26. A member indicated that he hoped the CoP would not impose too many specific requirements on the locks so as to avoid a situation where only a few types of locks could meet the requirements, thus causing difficulties in carrying out work or inconvenience to workers.

27. EMSD stated that it understood the trade's concern and would continue to discuss with the trade with respect to each specific requirement that required revision or update in the CoP before finalisation.

28. A member pointed out that should the new CoP require risk assessment forms and permits-to-work be issued by a registered safety officer, the trade might find it difficult to implement the requirement as not every work site had a full-time registered safety officer. He suggested that the relevant work should be carried out instead by the foreman charged with ensuring safety. In addition, the member also expressed concern about

the new requirement that risk assessment forms should be jointly issued by an REW and a registered safety officer where electrical work was to be conducted on the false ceiling.

29. EMSD stated in response that permits-to-work should be handled by REWs charged with the electrical work. As far as risk assessment was concerned, the proposed revision was to allow registered professional engineers, in addition to RECs, REWs, or registered safety officers, to issue risk assessment forms for electrical work. (Post-meeting note: That risk assessment forms should be jointly issued by an REW and a registered safety officer where electrical work was to be conducted on the false ceiling was not a requirement of the CoP.)

Agenda Item 5: Any Other Business

30. A member suggested that, to avoid misunderstanding among trade members, EMSD could explain more to the trade under what circumstances the work of switching on and off protective devices should be carried out by REWs. The member also urged members of the trade to promote the work safety culture of “switching off electricity supply before electrical work” together.
31. Members would be informed of the date, time and venue of the next meeting in due course.