

**Minutes of the 37th Meeting of
the Electrical Safety Advisory Committee (ESAC)**

Date : 28 September 2018
Time : 2:30 p.m.
Venue : Room 7102, 7/F, EMSD Headquarters, 3 Kai Shing Street, Kowloon, Hong Kong

Present

Ir CHAN Kwok-cheung, Thomas (Chairman)
Mr SIT Wing-hang, Alfred
Ms CHOI Wing-yee, Cornelia
Miss CHEUNG Hai-man, Flora
Miss LAU Wing-yan, Rikki
Mr TSE Chun-man
Miss YIP Kam-yee, Candy
Dr PUN Kong-pang
Ms SIU Zoe
Mr IP Sung-tai
Mr LEUNG Kwok-kin
Dr LAM King-hang
Ir AU Tat-kay, Walter
Mr CHAN Chi-ming, Antonio
Mr CHEUNG Hung-kwan
Mr CHEUNG Wing-ho
Ms LAI Chui-yi, Annie
Ir WAI Yip-kin
Mr HO Wai-keung, Paul (Secretary)

In attendance

Mr LAI Hon-chung, Harry	Deputy Director/Regulatory Services, EMSD
Mr POON Kwok-ying, Raymond	Assistant Director/Electricity and Energy Efficiency, EMSD
Mr CHAN Ka-chung	Chief Electrical and Mechanical Engineer/Electricity Legislation, EMSD
Mr LAU Kai-chung	Senior Electrical and Mechanical Engineer/Consumer Installations, EMSD
Mr LAM Ping-wai	Senior Electrical and Mechanical Engineer/Electrical Products, EMSD
Mr CHENG Koon-man	Senior Electrical and Mechanical Engineer/Nuclear and Utility Safety, EMSD

Absent with Apologies

Dr CHAN Ka-wing

Action

Agenda Item 1: Opening Remarks

1. The Chairman welcomed members to the 37th meeting of the Electrical Safety Advisory Committee (ESAC). He introduced to members those who were in attendance at the meeting.
2. When briefing members on the meeting arrangement, the Chairman specially reminded them 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: Minutes of the 36th Meeting Held on 27 March 2018

3. The minutes of the 36th meeting (i.e. the last meeting of the former term) were sent to the Chairman and all members of the former term for perusal. The minutes of meeting, which had been revised by the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) based on the comments received, were confirmed by the Chairman and all members of the former term. EMSD had provided the minutes of meeting to the Chairman and members of the current term for reference, and would arrange to upload the minutes of meeting on its website for public reference.

Agenda Item 3: Overview of the Promotional Work on Electrical Safety in the First and Second Quarters of 2018 (ESAC Paper 03/2018)

4. EMSD briefed members on the above paper, which presented an overview of the enforcement and promotional work on electrical safety in the first two quarters of 2018.
5. A member stated that according to the information of EMSD, there were currently over 12 000 registered electrical contractors (RECs) in Hong Kong, which was quite a lot indeed. The member was concerned

that the requirements for becoming RECs were too loose, which would affect their professional quality.

6. EMSD responded that to apply for registration as RECs, applicants were generally required to have a valid business registration certificate, and the company concerned must also employ at least one registered electrical worker (REW) in order to be a qualified REC. At present, while a considerable number of companies (such as renovation companies) seemed to have nothing to do with electrical work, such work was indeed involved in quite a number of their actual work areas. According to the law, these companies were required to register as RECs. To this end, EMSD would continue to step up publicity, and it was expected that the number of RECs would further increase in the future.
7. A member said that many people would buy travel adaptors from some small shops or online before travelling abroad, and some organisations even gave out travel adaptors as gifts. However, the suppliers and most members of the public might be unsure of whether this type of electrical products complied with safety standards. In view of this, the member suggested that EMSD should strengthen the relevant promotional and educational work in the future.
8. EMSD thanked the member for her views. For the selling of such electrical products as travel adaptors in small shops mentioned by the member, EMSD had earlier taken a number of special operations to inspect whether and ensure this type of electrical products complied with safety standards. In fact, EMSD had earlier conducted a series of comparisons and tests on these electrical products in collaboration with the Consumer Council. The results, together with relevant information such as notes to purchase and use, were published in the CHOICE Magazine so that members of the public could learn more about the safety of these products.

As no international safety standards had ever been developed for this type of products, and new international standards only emerged in the past one or two years, EMSD had actively strengthened communication with the trade in this connection and urged the trade to follow the new international standards in order to enhance the safety of these electrical products.

Regarding publicity and education, EMSD had all along been committed to pursuing publicity and educational work for different groups in the society. Apart from producing different types of publicity publications, EMSD also organised carnivals and other activities from time to time so as to reach out to various sectors of the community. In order to further extend its reach to members of the public, EMSD was actively producing new television commercials and animated promotional videos, with a view to effectively enhancing the penetration of promotional efforts through multiple publicity channels.

As for the issue raised by the member that some people purchased electrical products online which did not meet safety standards, EMSD had been paying close attention to the situation. To address the above problem, EMSD had earlier produced an animated promotional video, which was disseminated through social media platforms to educate the public about things to take note of when purchasing electrical products online. In the future, EMSD would continue to carry out publicity and promotional work in various aspects through different channels and at different levels.

(Note: The links to the above-mentioned video on social media would be sent to members for reference via e-mail after the meeting.)

9. A member said it was understood that travel adaptors were not regulated under the Electrical Products (Safety) Regulation at present, and would like to know whether EMSD had any plans to put such products under regulatory control.

10. EMSD responded that the supply of household electrical products in Hong Kong did not require prior approval from the Government, but the products concerned must have passed the test, comply with relevant international/national safety standards, and have obtained relevant test reports. Giving out such products as gifts was also covered under the Regulation. In terms of travel adaptors mentioned by the member, generally speaking, if this type of electrical products was not designed to be engaged with mains sockets in Hong Kong but was instead designed to be connected to mains sockets in places outside Hong Kong, such products were not regulated under the Electrical Products (Safety) Regulation. EMSD would seek legal advice from the Department of Justice for the handling of individual cases when necessary.

11. A member said that when giving a brief account of the Feed-in Tariff Scheme, EMSD had mentioned that the installation of solar or wind power generating devices on the rooftops of buildings and their connection to power grids would undoubtedly be a new challenge for REWs. The member would like to know whether EMSD would provide REWs with more information and training on technical and safety measures in relation to these kinds of fixed electrical installations.

12. EMSD thanked the member for and agreed with his views. With the formal implementation of the Feed-in Tariff Scheme, EMSD anticipated that more and more people would be interested in it. In view of this, EMSD had in the past few months been working closely with the trade and conducted a series of promotional and educational work for REWs and RECs. Apart from including relevant contents in the Continuous Professional Development courses, a number of seminars were also held jointly with the trade to provide trade members with further information on technical and maintenance matters of solar power generating facilities.

EMSD had earlier issued guidelines on the Feed-in Tariff Scheme to the trade, which mainly covered safety requirements regarding the design and construction of relevant fixed electrical installations. In order to allow members of the public and the trade to have a better understanding of the safety requirements on such areas as fire protection and building structures under the Feed-in Tariff Scheme in addition to the specific requirements on electrical safety, EMSD was currently compiling a set of more detailed general guidelines, which was expected to be released online around October for reference of all sectors of the society.

13. Besides, a member suggested that when reviewing the Code of Practice for the Electricity (Wiring) Regulations in the future, matters requiring attention in the inspection of solar power generating facilities, etc. could be added to the checklist so as to provide clearer operational guidelines for frontline staff to follow. The member also opined that the checklist in the existing Code of Practice for the Electricity (Wiring) Regulations was more focused on installation aspect, and there was room for improvement in the section on annual inspection. He suggested that EMSD should amend the relevant contents as well when

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revising the Code of Practice for the Electricity (Wiring) Regulations.

14. A member said that in recent years, quite a lot of members of the trade, especially those practitioners engaged in simple wire connection work (such as for town gas water heaters or closed-circuit televisions), had expressed their hope that EMSD could issue them with Grade R(CD) cards to meet their actual daily operational needs.
15. EMSD responded that Grade R electrical work still existed under the existing legislation. EMSD would discuss the member's views with the trade, and continue to issue Grade R cards subject to actual demand from applicants. EMSD
16. A member said that as mentioned by EMSD, disciplinary actions would be taken against RECs or REWs who contravened the Electricity Ordinance. He would like to know what channels were available for the public to access the relevant information.
17. EMSD thanked the member for his queries, and stated that the public could browse the EMSD website for information on RECs or REWs who had been punished for contravening the Electricity Ordinance.
18. A member said that online shopping of electrical products had been very popular in recent years, but it brought about many safety problems. In particular, rechargeable batteries of rechargeable electrical products made in the Mainland, as well as issues regarding the size and quality of internal wires were most worthy of concern.
19. EMSD thanked the member for his views, and said that it had been closely monitoring the situation of online shopping of electrical products and had taken various measures to protect the safety of the public. EMSD would from time to time deploy staff to inspect both physical and online shops selling electrical products in Hong Kong. If any irregularity was found, EMSD would collect relevant evidence for prosecution.

As for overseas online shops selling electrical products, particularly online shops in the Mainland mentioned by the member, EMSD had in fact been maintaining close collaboration with the General Administration of Customs of the People's Republic of China (formerly

The General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine of the People's Republic of China) over the years regarding the import of electrical products from the Mainland for sale in Hong Kong. Apart from holding regular meetings and annual meetings for discussion and experience sharing on statutory requirements, enforcement measures, incident investigation, product certification and testing, etc., notification and investigation feedback mechanisms were also established for unsafe products. If any unsafe electrical product originating from the Mainland was found being sold in Hong Kong, EMSD would notify the enforcement agencies of the Mainland to take appropriate enforcement actions. EMSD would continue to maintain close contact with the General Administration of Customs of the People's Republic of China and seek opportunities for collaboration regarding promotion of electrical safety on relevant Mainland websites and ways to further protect the safety of electrical products in Hong Kong.

Regarding the rechargeable batteries mentioned by the member, the existing Electrical Products (Safety) Regulation mainly covered domestic electrical products involving 50V alternating current or 120V direct current (DC), and was thus not applicable to the regulation of electrical products relying on rechargeable batteries.

20. A member said that according to the report of EMSD, some of the incidents involving domestic electrical products were caused by improper use. As many people would employ local or foreign domestic helpers to assist with domestic work, the member would like to know whether EMSD would co-operate with relevant training organisations to provide electrical safety information to these domestic helpers.
21. EMSD fully shared the member's views. EMSD had all along been promoting safety information on proper use and maintenance of electrical products to owners of domestic electrical products. EMSD stated that promotional leaflets/publications in different languages had been produced in the past to cater for the needs of different people (e.g. foreign domestic helpers). EMSD would review the promotional leaflets/publications and reinforce the relevant messages when necessary.
22. The representative of the Occupational Safety and Health Council

(OSHC) added that the Government had always attached great importance to the safety of local domestic helpers and foreign domestic helpers working in Hong Kong. Both local and foreign domestic helpers would be provided with regular training courses on occupational safety and health, which were conducted bilingually (in English and Cantonese) and covered basic knowledge of electrical safety. In the future, OSHC would continue to communicate and co-operate with EMSD on publicity work as well as provide appropriate training, assistance and support to all domestic helpers.

Agenda Item 4: Work Plan for Reviewing the Guidance Notes for the Electrical Products (Safety) Regulation (ESAC Paper 04/2018)

23. EMSD briefed members on the above paper, which gave members an overview of the work plan formulated for the review of the Guidance Notes for the Electrical Products (Safety) Regulation.

24. A member said that as household dehumidifiers were getting more popular, the number of relevant accidents was also on the rise. Many of such accidents were a result of improper use or lack of maintenance of dehumidifiers, in particular that the general public were not fully aware of the need to clean the filters of dehumidifiers.

25. EMSD responded that there were relatively more accidents related to dehumidifiers around February and March each year. For this reason, EMSD had earlier collaborated with the Consumer Council to carry out tests on the more popular models of dehumidifiers in the market. It was found that all samples passed the relevant safety tests, and the results were already published in the February issue of the CHOICE Magazine.

EMSD shared the importance of disseminating information on the need to regularly clean the filters of dehumidifiers, and would therefore include this key point in the advertisements or leaflets to be produced. EMSD would also further educate the public through different channels on the safety tips to be mindful of when using and maintaining dehumidifiers.

26. A member was pleased to see that EMSD actively revised the Guidance Notes for the Electrical Products (Safety) Regulation and that the proposed amendments were solid, in particular the very good

suggestion to include the latest safety requirements on the new electrical products of sockets which were equipped with USB ports. However, since the main purpose of USB devices, when first invented, was for communication, it was not entirely ideal to use them for charging. The member enquired whether EMSD would make reference to the practice of foreign countries and introduce DC, low voltage and extra low voltage power distribution standards.

27. EMSD thanked the member for his comments. In fact, EMSD also noted that some places in foreign countries had started to use DC power to supply electricity. Though this was not very popular at present, EMSD would closely monitor its development trend. If new international standards were developed, EMSD would actively consider bringing in relevant technical documents and specific requirements.
28. A member said that earlier on, the contents of some food items were found to be inconsistent with the information on their food labels. He would like to know whether EMSD had identified any similar cases in electrical products and whether it would step up inspections in this regard in the future.
29. EMSD thanked the member for his queries, and stated that apart from random checks of electrical products carried out by EMSD staff during daily inspections of shops, suppliers would also be required to submit certificates of safety compliance. These certificates were generally issued by laboratories or registered authorised bodies to prove that the electrical products complied with relevant safety standards. Of course, EMSD would review their authenticity, and would immediately contact the enforcement agencies concerned for joint follow-up actions if any false documents or information were found.
30. A member was pleased to see the efforts made by EMSD all along in the area of electricity legislation. He would like to know whether EMSD would implement some regulatory measures (such as the introduction of a registration system) on the sale of small household electrical appliances by suppliers and shops.
31. EMSD responded that under the existing Electrical Products (Safety) Regulation, registration was not required for suppliers who sold electrical products in Hong Kong, and the supply of such products in

Hong Kong did not require prior approval from EMSD. However, any household electrical products supplied in Hong Kong must be tested, comply with relevant safety standards, and have obtained relevant test certificates. Suppliers being regulated included importers, shops and so on. EMSD noted that some places in foreign countries would implement a registration system for these suppliers, but there was no such registration system in Hong Kong for the time being. EMSD would monitor the market situation and consider introducing changes when necessary.

32. A member stated that while electrical products were closely related to different sectors of the community and people's daily life, the general public might not have professional knowledge on electrical safety. Electrical products were categorised into prescribed and non-prescribed products under the existing Electrical Products (Safety) Regulation, with specific safety requirements specified for prescribed products. He enquired whether EMSD would consider carrying out regular reviews on some of the electrical products with relatively high risk and enhance the relevant safety requirements, as well as list such products as prescribed products instead of non-prescribed ones to further enhance the electrical safety in Hong Kong in the future.

33. EMSD agreed with the member's views and stated that there were six types of prescribed products under the existing legislation in Hong Kong, while the rest were non-prescribed products. With continuous advancement of the society, new electrical products had continued to emerge. EMSD would keep abreast of the times, monitor the market development, and review the classification of electrical products in due course.

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Agenda Item 5: Any Other Business

34. No other business was raised by members.
35. The Chairman thanked members for their attendance and adjourned the meeting. Members would be informed of the date, time and venue of the next meeting in due course.