

**Minutes of the 44th Meeting of
the Electrical Safety Advisory Committee (ESAC)**

Date : 7 March 2022
Time : 2:30 p.m.
Mode : Conducted on Zoom video conferencing platform

Present

Ir Professor CHAN Kwok-cheung, Thomas (Chairman)
Mr PANG Yiu-hung
Ms CHEUNG Hai-man, Flora
Ms LAU Wing-yan, Rikki
Mr TSE Chun-man
Ms YIP Kam-ye, Candy
Professor PUN Kong-pang
Ms SIU Zoe
Mr IP Sung-tai
Mr LEUNG Chun-kit
Dr LAM King-hang
Ir AU Tat-kay, Walter
Mr NG Lui-kai
Ir CHAN Chi-ming, Antonio
Mr CHEUNG Wing-ho
Mr LI Kin-shing
Professor OR Siu-wing
Ms YEE Sau-wah (Secretary)

In attendance

Mr POON Kwok-ying, Raymond	Deputy Director / Regulatory Services, EMSD
Mr CHU Kei-ming, Barry	Assistant Director / Electricity and Energy Efficiency, EMSD
Ms CHENG Pui-man	Chief Electrical and Mechanical Engineer / Electricity Legislation, EMSD
Ms SIT Kin-ka	Senior Electrical and Mechanical Engineer / Consumer Installations 1, EMSD
Mr LAU Kai-chung	Senior Electrical and Mechanical Engineer / Consumer Installations 2, EMSD
Mr KWAN Siu-kin	Senior Electrical and Mechanical Engineer / Electrical Products, EMSD
Mr WONG Tsz-chung	Senior Electrical and Mechanical Engineer / Nuclear and Utility Safety, EMSD

Absent with Apologies

Ir WAI Yip-kin

Representative of the Home Affairs Department

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Agenda Item 1: Opening Remarks

1. The Chairman welcomed members to the 44th meeting of the Electrical Safety Advisory Committee (ESAC). He introduced to members the officers of the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) in attendance at the meeting.
2. The Chairman stated that in view of the severe epidemic situation of COVID-19, the meeting was conducted via the Zoom video conferencing platform.
3. When briefing members on the meeting arrangement, the Chairman specially reminded them that they must observe the guidelines for a one-tier reporting system related to the declaration of interests by members of advisory 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 the meeting.

Agenda Item 2: Minutes of the 43rd Meeting Held on 1 November 2021

4. Members did not raise any amendment to the minutes of the 43rd meeting or matters for follow-up. The Chairman declared the minutes of the 43rd meeting confirmed. The Secretariat would arrange to upload the minutes of meeting to the EMSD website for public reference.

Agenda Item 3: Overview of Electrical Safety in 2021 (ESAC Paper 01/2022)

5. The EMSD briefed members on the above paper. The paper presented an overview of the enforcement and promotional work on electrical safety in 2021 and the way forward in 2022.

6. A member enquired whether the decrease in the number of prosecutions instituted for failure to submit periodic test certificates in respect of fixed electrical installations in 2021 was attributable to the epidemic. Besides, while a number of building owners as well as owners' corporations were unable to arrange periodic inspection and testing for fixed electrical installations in their buildings due to the epidemic, the member enquired whether the EMSD would exercise discretion with regard to the above situation.
7. The EMSD responded that the decrease in the number of prosecutions instituted for failure to submit periodic test certificates in respect of fixed electrical installations in 2021 was indeed due to the epidemic. The EMSD received many enquiries from owners' corporations and property management companies which were unable to convene a meeting on the periodic inspection and testing for fixed electrical installations due to the epidemic and they hoped that the periodic test certificates could be submitted later. In the light of the above situation, the EMSD conducted review case by case and deployed staff to inspect the actual condition of the fixed electrical installations concerned. Without prejudice to electrical safety, the EMSD would handle the cases flexibly, provided that the owners' corporations and property management companies guaranteed to complete the periodic inspection and testing for fixed electrical installations and submit the test certificates within a reasonable timeframe. In order to ensure the safety of electrical installations, the EMSD would timely review the progress of the cases concerned and take follow-up actions as appropriate.
8. A member invited the EMSD to report on the fatal incidents occurred in 2021.
9. The EMSD responded that two fatal incidents occurred in 2021, and one of which involved fire and another electrocution.

The incident involving fire occurred at a village house in July 2021. Upon investigation, the EMSD suspected that the fire involved a faulty extension unit in the house. An elderly person passed away in the incident.

In addition, the incident involving electrocution occurred at a pumping station in the rear lane of a building in August 2021. Upon investigation, the EMSD suspected that the fixed electrical installation at the premises was not compliant with the law, which caused a metal door thereat to carry electricity, and a security guard was electrocuted by touching the door at the material time of the incident.

It was learnt that apart from the EMSD, the Hong Kong Police Force and the Labour Department also conducted investigations into the incident.

10. Regarding the electrical safety of occupants of subdivided units (SDUs) and the sale of second-hand electrical products at the "Morning Bazaar" mentioned at the previous meeting, the Chairman said that the EMSD had taken follow-up actions proactively and stepped up relevant publicity and education efforts. The Chairman thanked the EMSD for working on the above matters and hoped that the EMSD would continue its efforts in this regard.
11. The EMSD responded that safeguarding electrical safety in Hong Kong had always been one of the priority tasks of the EMSD. Going forward, the EMSD would, as in the past, continue to push ahead with relevant work. As social welfare organisations visited for the homes of senior citizens and SDUs frequently, the EMSD believed that by liaising and co-operating more closely with such organisations and the trade to promote and educate the elderly, the grassroots and SDU occupants on electrical safety, greater synergy could be achieved and the work of each other could be complemented.

Agenda Item 4: Implementation of I&T Initiatives to Enhance Regulatory Services (ESAC Paper 02/2022)

12. The EMSD briefed members on the above paper. The paper reported the EMSD's use of innovation and technology (I&T) in streamlining the application procedures for registration regulated by the Electricity Ordinance in line with the "Be the Smart Regulator" initiatives of the Government in the past two years, which aimed to facilitate the trade, as well as enhancing the efficiency and performance of the EMSD's Regulatory Services.
13. On behalf of the trade, a member thanked the EMSD for the efforts put into the one-stop registration application services and going paperless. The member said that the one-stop registration application services were indeed a measure bringing convenience and benefits to the public. Registered electrical workers could then complete the relevant registration renewal procedures on the electronic platform without having to visit the Registration and Permit Office at the EMSD Headquarters in person, saving them a lot of time.

14. A member thanked the EMSD for its continued efforts for the trade, especially in streamlining the application procedures for registration of electrical workers. The member also wished to learn about the purpose of the EMSD in detecting solar power generating facilities (GFs) by an artificial intelligence (AI) system, and the source of the aerial photographs in the system.
15. The EMSD responded that if the electricity generated by a GF was not for private use by the facility owner but sold to a power company, the GF owner must register the GF with the EMSD and maintain it in proper condition, unless under certain circumstances specified in the Ordinance (e.g. the facility formed part of an electrical installation under a periodic test certificate), in order to prevent the GF from affecting the stability and reliability of the power company's electricity supply to other customers in case of its failure. To identify the locations of unregistered solar power GFs, the EMSD used an AI identification system together with aerial photographs provided by the Lands Department for effective follow-up on suspected solar power GFs not compliant with the law. If, after investigation and advice, a GF owner still failed to register his/her GF with the EMSD as required by the Ordinance, the EMSD would take corresponding enforcement action.
16. A member expressed interest in further knowing the scope of application of AI and big data technology by the EMSD for analytics. The member said that with the aid of AI, the EMSD could prevent certain recurrent technical problems or errors, thereby benefitting the trade as a whole and raising the standards of electrical safety.
17. The EMSD responded that at the moment, AI and big data analytics technologies had been applied in searching online shopping platforms for the supply of household electrical products not compliant with the safety requirements. By using the relevant technologies, the EMSD could identify shopping platforms supplying household electrical products suspected of not compliant with the legal requirements of Hong Kong in a more expeditious and effective manner, so that officers of the EMSD could carry out further investigation and take corresponding enforcement action.

Agenda Item 5: Any Other Business

18. No other business was raised by members.

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19. The Chairman said that this was the last meeting of the current term of the ESAC. He took this opportunity to thank all members for their active participation in the committee work and their valuable advice and suggestions. On behalf of the EMSD, Mr PANG Yiu-hung, Eric, Director of Electrical and Mechanical Services, also expressed sincere and profound gratitude to the Chairman and all members for their dedication and constructive advice on promoting electrical safety in Hong Kong all along, as well as their strong support to the EMSD in the relevant work.

20. 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.