

**Minutes of the 46th Meeting of
the Electrical Safety Advisory Committee (ESAC)**

Date : 24 March 2023
Time : 2:45 p.m.
Venue : Rooms A & B, Interactive Learning Centre, 4/F, EMSD Headquarters, 3 Kai Shing Street, Kowloon, Hong Kong

Present

Ir Professor CHAN Kwok-cheung, Thomas (Chairman)
Mr PANG Yiu-hung
Miss LEUNG Wai Chun, Karmen
Ir AU Tat-kay, Walter
Miss CHEUNG Hai-man, Flora
Mr CHOI Kan-man
Dr LAM King-hang
Ms LEE Wing-han, Susanna
Mr LING Ming-lun
Mr NG Lui-kai, Brian
Mr TSE Chun-man
Ir YAN Ka-wing
Ms YIP Kam-yee, Candy
Ms YU Hoi-kuen
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
Mr CHAN Chi-kin	Acting Senior Electrical and Mechanical Engineer / Consumer Installations 1, EMSD
Mr LAU Kai-chung	Senior Electrical and Mechanical Engineer / Consumer Installations 2, EMSD
Mr SZE Chung-tak	Acting Senior Electrical and Mechanical Engineer / Electrical Products, EMSD
Mr WONG Yee-ching	Acting Senior Electrical and Mechanical Engineer / Nuclear and Utility Safety, EMSD

Absent with Apologies

Ir CHAN Chi-ming, Antonio

Mr CHEUNG Wing-ho
Ms LAU Wing-yan, Rikki
Professor OR Siu-wing
Professor PUN Kong-pang

Action

Agenda Item 1: Opening Remarks

1. The Chairman welcomed members to the 46th meeting of the Electrical Safety Advisory Committee (ESAC).
2. When briefing members on the meeting arrangement, the Chairman specially reminded them that they should observe the guidelines on the one-tier reporting system related to the declaration of interests by members of advisory boards and committees. Under the system, 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 should 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 45th Meeting Held on 7 October 2022

3. Members did not raise any amendment to the minutes of the 45th meeting or matters for follow-up. The Chairman declared the minutes of the 45th meeting confirmed. The Secretariat would arrange to upload the minutes of the meeting to the website of the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) for public reference.

Agenda Item 3: Overview of Electrical Safety for 2022 (ESAC Paper 01/2023)

4. The EMSD briefed members on the above paper, which presented an overview of the enforcement and promotional work of the EMSD on electrical safety in 2022 and the way forward in 2023.
5. A member recommended that the EMSD could make use of various social media platforms such as WeChat to strengthen promotional efforts to reach the general public. The EMSD welcomed the recommendation and would explore the use of more platforms for promoting electrical safety messages.

Agenda Item 4: Measures for Improving Electrical Safety of Subdivided Units (ESAC Paper 02/2023)

6. The EMSD briefed members on the above paper, which provided background information and summarised the existing measures as well as the new initiative to improve the electrical safety of subdivided units (SDUs).
7. In addition, the Secretariat received an e-mail with a report on the installation of individual electricity meters for SDUs attached from Mr CHEUNG Wing-ho to all members on 15 March 2023.
8. A member thanked the EMSD for its efforts put into improving the electrical safety of SDUs, which included promoting the installation of individual electricity meters in the common areas of SDUs by the power companies. The member opined that the EMSD still had to continue its efforts to further enhance the electrical safety of SDUs, so as to prevent the occurrence of electrical incidents.
9. The EMSD thanked the member for the support and said that not many applications for the rewiring subsidy programmes of the two power companies were received in the past. As these subsidy programmes required SDU landlords to make application in person or SDU tenants to obtain the consent of their landlords before applying, the EMSD would step up promotional efforts to disseminate the relevant message to SDU landlords and tenants, so as to boost the number of applications. The EMSD hoped that these efforts would not only further improve electrical safety in SDUs but also ensure fair treatment for SDU tenants in terms of the payment of electricity charges.
10. A member asked whether the EMSD and the two power companies allowing the installation of individual electricity meters in the common areas of SDUs would encourage non-SDU households or developers to follow suit and apply for meter installation inside individual units. The member wished to know whether those were special arrangements for SDUs under the existing mechanism.
11. The EMSD thanked the member for the questions and said that it had discussed the relevant technical issues with the two power companies before implementing such arrangements. The two power companies would assess each case in accordance with the requirements of the Supply Rules. If there were special circumstances in individual applications, such as installing electricity meters in the common areas of the buildings was not possible due to opposition from the owners' corporations (OCs) or other flat owners concerned, resulting in the need to install electricity meters in the common areas within the SDUs, the two power companies would consider exercising their discretion in handling such applications provided that installing meters in the common areas of SDUs was feasible from a technical and safety perspective. The EMSD considered that installing meters in the common areas of SDUs was merely a discretionary approach. In

general, users' electricity meters were required to be installed according to the meter position as specified in the Supply Rules of the two power companies.

12. A member expressed understanding that the installation of individual electricity meters would likely be hindered by opposition from the OCs or other flat owners if no discretion was exercised in addressing the special circumstances in SDUs. Therefore, in handling these issues, the principles of safe supply and use of electricity should be prioritised.
13. A member said that such approach was reasonable and safe. However, the member was concerned that developers might use the treatment of SDUs as an excuse to request for meter installation inside the units, even in other circumstances.
14. The Chairman said that the situations faced by SDUs and developers were different. SDUs were mostly found in old buildings that were often lack of common areas. On the contrary, developers were involved in new construction projects and should be able to allocate sufficient space for the installation of electricity meters. Therefore, the two power companies would need to consider exercising discretion only in cases involving the installation of electricity meters for SDUs. Due to the high level of societal concern about the safety of SDUs, it was necessary to address the electrical safety issues of SDUs in the way of taking exceptional measures for exceptional circumstances.
15. A member requested the EMSD to provide the number of SDUs for which applications for installation of individual electricity meters are being processed, the number of SDUs that have had individual electricity meters installed, and the number of SDUs in Hong Kong at present.
16. The EMSD thanked the member for the enquiry. Currently, the EMSD did not have information on the number of SDUs in Hong Kong. According to the data provided by the two power companies, there were over 100 applications for installation of individual electricity meters under the rewiring subsidy programmes of the power companies. In addition, there was one successful case of installation of individual electricity meters in the common areas of a SDU. The EMSD would continue to collaborate with the two power companies to step up promotional efforts, so that more SDU landlords and tenants would learn about the rewiring subsidy programmes.
17. A member thanked the EMSD and the two power companies for their proactive efforts to promote improving electrical safety. However, the member believed that there were still SDU households who had not been able to install individual electricity meters or carry out rewiring works. The member wished to know the current law enforcement mechanism targeting the electrical safety of SDUs and the relevant improvement

measures.

18. The EMSD thanked the member for the enquiry. Currently, the EMSD conducted inspections to check the condition of fixed electrical installations in SDUs. If any problems were identified, the EMSD would urge the persons concerned to make improvements. Despite the multiple inspections conducted in the past, the EMSD was only able to enter the SDUs in around 30% of the inspections. Recently, the EMSD had participated in the inspections conducted by the District Service Teams, which were set up by non-government organisations, and had successfully entered 90% of the inspected units. In approximately 150 recent inspections of SDUs, the EMSD found only a few cases where the fixed electrical installations had minor irregularities, but none of them posed an immediate electrical hazard. The EMSD had already issued improvement notices to the SDU landlords and tenants concerned, requesting them to take follow-up actions. Moreover, the EMSD had produced a pamphlet for volunteer groups as reference, facilitating their simple inspection of the electrical installations using the provided pamphlet during their visits to SDU households. They could notify the EMSD for further follow-up should any questions arise.

19. The Chairman said that the past few terms of the ESAC had been highly concerned about the electrical safety and the arrangement for electricity charges of SDUs. As at today, improvements had been observed. The Chairman appreciated the efforts made by the EMSD and the two power companies. In addition, according to the report of Mr CHEUNG Wing-ho, the Hong Kong & Kowloon Electrical Engineering & Appliances Trade Workers Union was also actively assisting in improving the electrical safety of SDUs, which was indeed a good start.

Agenda Item 5: Any Other Business

20. No other business was raised by members.

21. 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.