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(15) in EMSD/LESD 7-2/4A Pt II

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24 September 2019

To: All Registered Escalator Contractors

Dear Sirs,

Circular No. 6/2019

Guidance on Incorporation of Handrail Cleaners into Escalators

This Circular serves to provide guidance on incorporation of handrail cleaners into escalators.

There are various types of handrail cleaners available in the market. An automatic handrail cleaner, no matter it is installed in the escalator machinery space (concealed type) or on the exposed handrail section (exposed type), is regarded as associated equipment of an escalator, the installation and upkeep of which is a kind of escalator works required to be undertaken by a registered escalator contractor (REC).

Choosing Suitable Handrail Cleaners

In advising responsible persons (RPs) for escalators who are interested in putting up automatic handrail cleaners for escalators, RECs are reminded to note the guidance covered in this Circular in addition to organising appropriate checking and servicing for the upkeep of the cleaners. Least to say, selection of cleaners should best be done by verification of their cleaning capability and effectiveness with due consideration of their cost for upkeep as well as suitability for the application. In-situ testing of the cleaning capability of escalator handrail cleaners supported by laboratory tests is always the best way to prove the versatility of such devices.

Prerequisites for Putting Up Handrail Cleaners on Escalator

Before a handrail cleaner is selected or installed, RP and REC should jointly carry out a thorough risk assessment to avoid inducing additional hazards due to integration of handrail cleaners to an escalator. The risk assessment should focus in particular on passengers' safety and come up with necessary mitigation measures in respect of varying risk levels of hazards, if any, induced. Countermeasures including modifications of the design or addition of facilities to reduce the risk level of hazards to an acceptable level may be required.

The common hazards with possible mitigation measures for an exposed type handrail cleaner are listed in the table below for reference:

Possible Hazards	Possible Mitigation Measures
1. Risk of pinching and trapping of fingers or clothing in the inlet area of the handrail cleaner.	The cleaner inlet be merged with the escalator handrail outlet and the escalator be locked to run in a uni-directional operation mode such that no other cleaner inlet point would be created.
2. Risk of trapping between the handrail cleaner and the balustrade of the escalator.	To have all trapping gap properly sealed or closed.
3. Risk of collision into the handrail cleaner by passengers.	Erect suitable barriers to divert passenger flow to form a straight-line pattern at the in-take of the escalator.
4. Possible hindrance to escalator emergency button.	Relocation of the escalator emergency button.
5. Possible breakage of the handrail cleaner and creation of cutting edges.	A proven impact test should be carried out by the supplier.

The hazard-mitigation measures mentioned in the above table are for reference only. Hazards could vary on the type of handrail cleaner, escalator configuration, installation method, etc. RPs and RECs should identify the actual hazards carefully with a risk assessment and ensure that all mitigation measures are fully executed before putting up handrail cleaners on any escalator.

Apart from the risk assessment, RECs should also check if a handrail cleaner to be put up is compatible with the escalator and it will not interfere with the operation and maintenance of the escalator.

Being a REC, you are expected to offer professional advice and liaison to help RPs to enhance the quality of escalator services. Please also help remind RPs that installation and upkeep of handrail cleaners is subject to control and should only be undertaken by RECs.

If you have any questions on the subject of this letter, please contact our officer on telephone number 2808 3117.

Yours faithfully,



(LAU Lik Kee)

for Director of Electrical and Mechanical Services