

# Minutes of the 10th Meeting of the Lift and Escalator Safety Advisory Committee (LESAC)

Date: 7 July 2017 (Friday)  
Time: 2:30 p.m.  
Venue: Room 7102, EMSD Headquarters, 3 Kai Shing Street,  
Kowloon Bay

Present:	Dr POON Lok-to, Otto	Chairman
	Mr KUOK Hoi-sang	Member
	Mr LI Kwan-chi, Simon	Member
	Mr POON Tai-fai	Member
	Mr TSE King-wa	Member
	Ms YUEN Hou-yee	Member
	Mr WONG Kai-hon, Charles	Member
	Mr WONG Ying-kit	Member
	Mr LEE Man-kwong, Jonathan	Member
	Mr CHOW Siu-fai	Member
	Mr CHUI Chun-king, Simon	Member
	Mr LAI Hon-chung, Harry, JP	Member
	Ms CHOI Wing-yee, Cornelia	Member

In attendance:	Mr TING Tsan-kau, Chris	(Present on behalf of member Mr CHENG Kai-leung, Kevin)
	Mr Tong Wing-nin	(Present on behalf of member Ms KI Lai-mei)
	Mr LOK Chi-chung, Andy	Development Bureau
	Ms LAI Wai-man, Iman	Development Bureau
	Mr PANG Yiu-hung, Eric, JP	EMSD
	Mr CHEUNG Kim-ching	EMSD
	Mr SHUM Ngai-on, William	EMSD
	Mr LAI Chun-fai	EMSD
	Mr AU Tze-wai, William	EMSD
	Mr WONG Yin-kit, Jerry	EMSD

	Mr CHUI Ka-chun, Wallace	EMSD
	Mr Graham LUI	EMSD
Absent with	Ms CHENG Lai-chun	Member
apologies:	Mr LEUNG Man-kwong	Member
	Ms KI Lai-mei	Member

## Action

### 1. Welcoming Members of the Lift and Escalator Safety Advisory Committee

- 1.1 Chairman POON welcomed members to the 10th meeting of the Lift and Escalator Safety Advisory Committee (the Advisory Committee).

### 2. Confirmation of Minutes of the Last Meeting (Agenda Item 1)

- 2.1 Members did not raise any amendment to the minutes of the 9th meeting. The Chairman declared the minutes of the 9th meeting officially confirmed.

### 3. Matters on Declaration of Interests (Agenda Item 2)

- 3.1 The Chairman asked members to declare their interest first. All attendees of the meeting stated that they did not have any conflict of interests over the matters to be discussed at this meeting.

### 4. Progress Report by the Working Group on Matters Relating to Responsible Persons (Agenda Item 3)

Mr LEE Man-kwong, Jonathan, convener of the Working Group on Matters Relating to Responsible Persons, reported on the work progress of the Working Group. The discussion on the progress report at the meeting was as follows:

- 4.1 Publicity Work to Improve Responsible Persons' Understanding of Their Responsibilities
- The Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) had organised 81 publicity and education talks/exhibitions since 2013, with a total of over 14 000 participants. From March to June 2017, five publicity and education talks/exhibitions were organised.
  - EMSD had held meetings with key responsible persons (RPs) (e.g. MTR Corporation Limited, Link REIT, Housing Department, Ocean Park, etc.) to promote enhancement of lift and escalator safety.
  - EMSD planned to publish the third issue of the *Lift and Escalator Newsletter* in

the third quarter of 2017.

- EMSD's new promotional poster, "Stand Still and Hold the Handrail", had been launched and uploaded onto the Responsible Persons' Corner on the website of EMSD. Meanwhile, EMSD had also notified RPs of escalators and the relevant property management agencies of the launch of the poster via e-mails. On the other hand, when issuing use permits, EMSD would notify RPs of escalators who had not yet provided their e-mail addresses of the launch of the poster. Limited copies of posters were also available for collection by RPs of escalators.
- EMSD, the Water Supplies Department, the Buildings Department, the Fire Services Department, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department and the Home Affairs Department would jointly organise a "Building Management Week 2017" to enhance public awareness and knowledge of the importance of proper building management. The event, to be held from 21 to 24 September 2017, would include an opening ceremony, workshops, a symposium and a carnival. The organisers also co-organised a "Quality Management • Caring Buildings" Property Management Competition with the Hong Kong Institute of Housing and the Hong Kong Association of Property Management Companies to encourage property owners and property management companies to continuously improve various aspects of building management. Deadlines for registration and submission of supporting documents were 14 and 21 June 2017 respectively.

#### 4.2 Release of Maintenance Price Figures for Lifts at Private Residential and Commercial Premises

EMSD completed the latest round of survey on the maintenance contract price figures for lifts at private residential and commercial premises in March 2017. The updated information was uploaded onto the Responsible Persons' Corner on EMSD's website in May. Compared with the previous round of survey, there was a general increase in maintenance prices. The figures concerned were updated on a half-yearly basis, and the results of the next survey would be released in November this year.

#### 4.3 Quality Lift Service Recognition Scheme

EMSD

In view of the limited resources and in order to make the scheme sustainable in the long run, the Working Group on Matters Relating to Responsible Persons agreed and supported that the way forward for the development of the next round of the scheme should be allowing participants to engage their own qualified certification bodies to carry out assessments. The Working Group would continue to explore the details of the next round of the scheme as follows:

Working Group on Matters Relating to Responsible

- EMSD would engage a consultant to assist in the future work of the scheme, including drawing up details of the mode of operation, assessment criteria, time and deadline for application and certificate issuance; arranging briefings for RPs of lifts on the scheme; designing the recognised certificates of the

Persons

scheme; and promoting the scheme, etc.

- The Working Group recommended that when compiling the list of qualified certification bodies, EMSD should also explore how to reduce the fees to be paid by participants.
- The Working Group also recommended that EMSD should step up publicity for the next round of the scheme to attract more RPs of lifts to participate in it so as to encourage them to conduct modernisation works for lifts and enhance their lift management capability.

#### 4.4 Sample Specifications for Lift Modernisation Works

After having consulted the Working Group on Matters Relating to Responsible Persons, the Lift and Escalator Contractors Association, the Registered Elevator and Escalator Contractors Association Limited and the International Association of Elevator Engineers, EMSD launched the "Sample Specifications for Lift Modernisation Works" in July 2017 and uploaded it onto the Responsible Persons' Corner on the website of EMSD. The sample specifications, which included the seven items of lift modernisation works recommended in the Guidelines for Modernising Existing Lifts issued by EMSD, were intended to assist RPs in conducting lift modernisation works.

#### 4.5 Guideline on Maintenance of High Rise Escalators

Regarding the escalator incident at Langham Place, EMSD issued a guideline on maintenance to all RPs of "high rise escalators" (i.e. escalators with a vertical rise of 15 metres or above) on 23 May 2017, advising them to increase the frequency of maintenance works per month so that the works were carried out at an interval shorter than the statutory requirement of once per month, allow sufficient time for contractors to carry out maintenance works, and to strengthen supervision on contractors' maintenance and examination. EMSD would step up spot checks, and inspections to all high rise escalators would be conducted in 2017.

#### 4.6 Lift Modernisation Scheme

- EMSD published the Guidelines for Modernising Existing Lifts in 2011, featuring seven improvement solutions for enhancing the safety of old lifts.
- At present, about 27 000 old lifts were 25 years old or above. By the end of 2016, only about 5 160 old lifts would have been modernised, of which 4 800 were located in private buildings. As the progress of modernisation had not been satisfactory so far, EMSD would consider whether lift modernisation works should be made mandatory.
- Regarding the incidents involving unintended movement of lift cars in recent months, EMSD had issued a circular reminding registered lift contractors and registered lift engineers that proper maintenance, inspection, adjustment, testing or alteration of brakes should be carried out in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations in order to avoid accidents arising from unintended movement of lift cars due to failure of brake systems. The circular

also required registered lift contractors to conduct the relevant risk assessments for the lifts maintained by them and to advise RPs of lifts to carry out modernisation works accordingly.

## 5. Progress Report by the Working Group on Matters Relating to the Trade (Agenda Item 4)

Mr CHUNG Fuk-wai was unable to attend the meeting due to an urgent commitment and had asked Mr WONG Kai-hon, Charles, to report on the discussed issues and work progress of the Working Group. The discussion on the progress report at the meeting was as follows:

### 5.1 To Attract New Blood to the Trade

EMSD

- EMSD together with the Lift & Escalator Contractors Association took part in the 27th Education & Careers Expo held at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre as well as the Electrical and Mechanical Trades Expo 2017 at the Vocational Training Council (VTC)'s Youth College to promote the career prospects of the lift and escalator trade in order to attract young people to join the trade.
- The Working Group also planned to produce promotional clips featuring the development and career ladders of the industry.
- EMSD had added the lift and escalator trade to the Pilot Co-operative Apprentice Training Scheme. EMSD would employ apprentices and send them to receive four-year training at participating contractors so as to nurture lift and escalator workers.
- EMSD stated that the enrolment of apprenticeship, certificate and diploma courses related to lifts had also improved in recent years. Since VTC and the Construction Industry Council (CIC) jointly introduced the Earn & Learn Scheme in 2014, the number of new apprentices joining the industry had significantly increased from about 70 a year to over 250 in 2016. VTC and the School of Professional and Continuing Education of the University of Hong Kong also launched two different courses related to lifts and escalators in 2016 for the practising workers to acquire the necessary academic qualification for registering as registered workers.

### 5.2 Occupational Safety and Health of Workers

EMSD

- EMSD along with the trade regularly organised Work Safety and Conditions Improvement Suggestion Competition to enhance the level of occupational safety and health within the industry. A new round of competition was successfully completed on 10 March 2017. The winning entries were uploaded to EMSD's website and would be published in the next issue of the *Lift and Escalator Newsletter* for sharing.
- On the other hand, EMSD issued a circular to all registered lift contractors and engineers in June 2017, reiterating that retrofitting air-conditioning systems on existing lifts was considered lift works and must comply with

the relevant requirements in the current Code of Practice on the Design and Construction of Lifts and Escalators and Code of Practice for Lift Works and Escalator Works.

### 5.3 Lift and Escalator Trade Survey

The second Lift and Escalator Trade Survey, covering such aspects as salary and difficulties facing the trade, was completed in early 2017. A briefing session on the survey report was organised for members of the Advisory Committee and representatives of the trade in March 2017 to share the survey results.

### 5.4 Phasing Out the Transitional Arrangements in Respect of the Qualification Requirements for Registration of Registered Engineers and Registered Workers

EMSD

With the support of the Advisory Committee following a discussion at its meeting held on 6 February 2017, the following proposals for phasing out the transitional arrangements were submitted to the Legislative Council Panel on Development in June:

- Repeal of higher diploma, higher certificate or equivalent for registered engineers in Q1/2018;
- Repeal of recognition of sufficient experience and training by registered contractor for registered workers in Q1/2018; and
- Repeal of registration for one or more, but not all, kinds of works for registered workers in Q1/2023.

Such arrangements were proposed to be gazetted and tabled before the Legislative Council for negative vetting in the second half of 2017.

### 5.5 Matters on Renewal of Registration

EMSD

As the registration validity period of the first batch of registered persons, including registered contractors, registered engineers and registered workers, would expire at the end of 2017, EMSD organised a talk on the arrangements of registration renewal for registered contractors on 31 March 2017. VTC also offered related continuing professional development training courses to help registered workers renew their registration. EMSD planned to organise talks in the next few months to brief registered workers on matters related to registration renewal.

### 5.6 Follow-up on Escalator Incident at Langham Place

With regard to the escalator incident at Langham Place on 25 March 2017, EMSD released the technical investigation report on the incident and disclosed its follow-up actions at the media briefing on 9 June 2017.

Following the incident, EMSD carried out the measures below to strengthen the safety of escalators in Hong Kong:

- Registered escalator contractors were required to conduct special inspections for all the 64 escalators with a vertical rise of 15 metres or above in Hong Kong

(including the four escalators at Langham Place) to safeguard public safety. The special inspections were all completed within one week of the incident by 31 March 2017. All escalators were confirmed to be in safe working conditions. No anomaly was found during these inspections.

- OTIS Elevator Company (H.K.) Limited was required on 3 April 2017 to conduct special inspections on all its escalators in Hong Kong within one month. On completion of these inspections by 29 April 2017, the drive chain of one escalator was found elongated and slightly exceeding the manufacturer's recommended replacement criterion. The escalator in question resumed normal operation after replacement and checking of the main drive chain.
- A circular was issued to all registered escalator contractors and registered escalator engineers in Hong Kong, urging them to follow the manufacturers' instructions in respect of inspection, adjustment and tests of main drive chains and broken drive chain safety devices of escalators during their periodic maintenance and examination of escalators.
- In an effort to step up the monitoring of the condition of escalators' main drive chains, a letter was issued to all registered escalator contractors and registered escalator engineers on 29 May 2017, requesting that registered escalator contractors and/or registered escalator engineers submit information of the technical and operation condition of main drive chains through EMSD's electronic platform to ensure that the main drive chains were suitably monitored.
- Spot checks on the maintenance works of registered escalator contractors were stepped up and all high rise escalators would be inspected within 2017. EMSD would stringently enforce the law if any non-compliance was discovered.

EMSD

In addition, EMSD would request that all escalators be load tested periodically once every five years, with the first load test to be carried out within three years after such request was made.

#### 5.7 Special Meeting of Legislative Council Panel on Development

Two motions on the regulatory control over lift and escalator safety were passed at the Special Meeting of Legislative Council Panel on Development on 19 April 2017. EMSD's follow-up actions were as follows:

- Motion 1: "EMSD is requested to formulate codes of practice or guidelines to require lift and escalator manufacturers to provide spare parts to maintenance contractors who are not the original manufacturers at reasonable prices and within reasonable time, so as to facilitate market competition and improve maintenance quality."

With the assistance of the Competition Commission, EMSD drafted a circular aimed at encouraging the industry to supply spare parts on reasonable terms, of reasonable quality and in a timely manner. Registered lift and escalator contractors were also reminded to ensure that spare parts used were of at least equivalent material, strength, and design with the original ones. The circular

was issued on 30 June.

- Motion 2: "The Government is requested to review expeditiously the development of the lift and escalator maintenance industry, raise the levels of training allowances for attendees of apprentice training programmes and other relevant courses so as to attract young people to join the industry, and improve the remuneration packages for and working environment of lift and escalator maintenance technicians."

EMSD

EMSD had been monitoring the development of the industry together with VTC, CIC, trade associations and workers unions. Since VTC and CIC jointly introduced the Earn & Learn Scheme in 2014, the number of new apprentices joining the industry had significantly increased from about 70 a year to over 250 in 2016. Moreover, EMSD was currently working with VTC and CIC to review the training allowances of apprenticeships and other relevant courses to attract more young people to join the industry. They would also continue to explore with the trade ways to improve the remuneration packages and working environment for workers.

## **6. Latest Update on Registered Engineers and Registered Workers (Agenda Item 5)**

- 6.1 EMSD reported that as at June 2017, a total of 5 475 persons had successfully qualified as registered lift/escalator workers. According to the findings of a survey of registered contractors conducted in the first quarter of 2017, there were about 1 761 general workers in the trade.
- 6.2 As the registration validity period of the first batch of registered persons would expire at the end of 2017, EMSD appealed to the registered workers/engineers/contractors to arrange renewal as early as possible.

## **7. Statistics on Reportable Incidents (Agenda Item 6)**

EMSD

- 7.1 EMSD reported on the statistics on the number of reportable lift and escalator incidents from 2011 to 2016. There was a slight drop in the total number of reportable incidents. The cause for most of the incidents was improper use by passengers. EMSD would continue to carry out detailed analysis of the causes of the incidents and strengthen its targeted promotion and publicity efforts. On the other hand, EMSD would also advise RPs to conduct modernisation works for aged lifts and escalators to further enhance the safety of lifts and escalators in Hong Kong.
- 7.2 EMSD also reported on a comparison of the trends of the number of incidents between 2010-2012 (i.e. the period when the Lifts and Escalators (Safety) Ordinance (Cap. 327) was still in force) and 2013-2016 (i.e. the period when the Lifts and Escalators Ordinance (Cap. 618) was in force). The annual average number of incidents involving equipment fault had fallen by 71%.

## **8. Any Other Business (Agenda Item 7)**



- EMSD
- 8.1 After members had discussed the current problems in modernisation of lifts, including financial problems faced by old buildings and technical ones faced by RPs, the Chairman suggested that this issue be considered in depth by the Working Group on Matters Relating to the Trade of the next term for making recommendations to EMSD.
- 8.2 Since this was the last meeting of the second term of the Advisory Committee, the Chairman thanked all members for their participation and valuable advice to EMSD in continuously improving the safety of lifts and escalators in Hong Kong.

**9. Date of Next Meeting**

- 9.1 Members would be informed of the date of next meeting in due course.
- 9.2 The meeting ended at 5:00 p.m.