

Minutes of the 15th Meeting of
the Lift and Escalator Safety Advisory Committee (LESAC)

Date : 22 January 2020 (Wednesday)
Time : 2:00 p.m.
Venue : Room ILC B, 4/F, EMSD Headquarters, 3 Kai Shing Street,
Kowloon Bay

Present:	Mr KO Chi-wai, Gary	Chairman
	Mr HO Sau-chiu	Member
	Mr KUOK Hoi-sang	Member
	Mr LAU Chun-ming	Member
	Mr POON Tai-fai	Member
	Mr TSE King-wa	Member
	Ms Esther CHEUNG	Member
	Mr WONG Kai-hon, Charles	Member
	Mr TING Tsan-kau, Chris	Member
	Mr KWOK Wing-yin	Member
	Mr CHAN Wai-tung, Tony	Member
	Mr WONG Chun-ho, Franky	Member
	Mr PANG Yiu-hung, Eric	Member
In attendance:	Mr LAI Chun-fai	Secretary/EMSD
	Ms CHIU Chi-san, Angela	Representative of WONG Hiu-kwan
	Ms CHAN Ka-man, Carmen	Representative of CHOI Wing-yee, Cornelia
	Ms HO Tai-yan, Angela	DEVB
	Mr POON Kwok-ying, Raymond	EMSD
	Mr LAU Lik-kee	EMSD
	Mr YIU Tak-tai, Boris	EMSD

	Mr CHAN Chun-wai	EMSD
Absent with apologies:	Mr CHANG Wai-ip, Daniel	Member
	Ms KI Ying-ying	Member
	Ms WONG Wai-ling	Member
	Ms WONG Hiu-kwan	Member
	Ms CHOI Wing-yee, Cornelia	Member

Action

1 Welcoming Members of the Lift and Escalator Safety Advisory Committee

- 1.1 The Chairman welcomed attendees to the 15th meeting of the Lift and Escalator Safety Advisory Committee (the Advisory Committee).

2 Committee Members, Terms of Reference and Operation Arrangements of the Advisory Committee (Agenda Item 1)

- 2.1 The Secretary introduced members who were appointed from different sectors. The fourth term of the Advisory Committee comprised a total of 17 members who represented the lift and escalator trade, professional bodies, training institutions, the property and facility management sector, responsible persons (RPs) for lifts and escalators, consumers, the general public, and government departments, etc.
- 2.2 The Secretary introduced the terms of reference of the Advisory Committee and explained its main operation arrangements. The Advisory Committee comprised a Chairman, two official members and 15 non-official members. The members were to attend the meetings in their personal capacity, and the required quorum was eight non-official members. The Chairman was empowered to set the procedure and rules of the meeting. In addition, working groups might be set up by the Advisory Committee and conveners appointed for the working groups. The quorum for the working group meetings was three non-official members.
- 2.3 The Secretary introduced the arrangements for information disclosure based on the operation of the Advisory Committee in the last term:
- (i) The terms of reference, membership list, agenda and discussion items, and minutes of meeting of the Advisory Committee would be published on the

website of the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD);

(ii) Views expressed by members would be recorded anonymously;

(iii) Except for names and represented trades, other personal information of the members would not be disclosed; and

(iv) Closed-door meetings would be held to allow free expression of opinions on sensitive issues.

The Advisory Committee agreed to continue with the above arrangements for information disclosure.

3 Confirmation of Minutes of the Last Meeting (Agenda Item 2)

- 3.1 Members did not raise any amendment to the minutes of the 14th meeting. The Chairman declared the minutes of the 14th meeting officially confirmed.

4 Matters on Declaration of Interests (Agenda Item 3)

- 4.1 The Secretary explained the reasons and mechanism for declaration of interests to members, and proposed to put in place the one-tier reporting system. If a member became aware of an actual or potential conflict of interests over a matter to be discussed, he/she should, as soon as practicable, make disclosure of his/her interests involved to the Chairman. The Chairman should decide whether the member might speak or vote on the matter, remain in attendance as an observer, or should temporarily withdraw from the meeting. If the Chairman had a conflict of interests over a matter to be discussed, the chairmanship might be temporarily taken over by another member during the course of discussion of that matter. As members usually came from different sectors, they were not required to declare their interests if a matter to be discussed only involved the overall interests of the sector. If a conflict of interests had been declared by a member, the Secretary could cease to distribute the relevant documents to him/her. If the member had already received a document for discussion, he/she must immediately inform the Secretary and return the document. All cases related to declaration of interests must be recorded in the minutes.

The Advisory Committee agreed with the proposed declaration mechanism. All attendees remarked that they did not have any conflict of interests over the matters to be discussed at this meeting.

5 Regulatory Control over Lift and Escalator Safety (Agenda Item 4)

- 5.1 The Secretary briefed members on the background of the Lifts and Escalators Ordinance (LEO) as well as a series of measures introduced by the LEO to enhance regulatory control, including strengthening the registration regime of lift and escalator contractors, engineers and workers; increasing the maximum penalty for offences; extending the scope of application to RPs who had the management or control over lifts and escalators; and other regulatory measures.
- 5.2 The Secretary reported that as at December 2019, the total number of registered lift/escalator workers was 5 735 and the number of registered lift/escalator engineers totalled 360. Besides, there were about 1 894 general workers in the trade to assist registered engineers/workers in conducting lift/escalator works. After receiving relevant training and accumulating sufficient experience, these general workers could apply to become registered lift/escalator workers.
- 5.3 The Secretary reported on the statistics on reportable incidents for every thousand lifts and escalators from 2015 to 2019:
- The total number of lift incidents was relatively stable and showed a falling trend. As the EMSD had introduced special maintenance and increased inspection frequency, the number of incidents involving uneven levelling and unintended movement of lift cars fell significantly in 2019; and
 - The total number of escalator incidents was relatively stable, with a slight increase. There was an increase in the percentage of escalator incidents involving equipment failure in the first half of 2019, but with the prompt action taken by the EMSD to step up the follow-up work, the situation was improved significantly in the second half of the year and no such incidents had been recorded since then. To further enhance public awareness of the safe use of escalators, the EMSD was producing a new series of TV APIs.

6 Formation of Working Groups (Agenda Item 5)

- 6.1 The Advisory Committee agreed to form the following two working groups to enable more in-depth discussion among members on matters of concern in relation to the lift and escalator trade and RPs respectively:

- (i) Working Group on Matters Relating to the Trade; and
- (ii) Working Group on Matters Relating to Responsible Persons.

The Advisory Committee agreed that Mr HO Sau-chiu should be the convener of the Working Group on Matters Relating to the Trade, whereas Mr TING Tsan-kau, Chris, should be the convener of the Working Group on Matters Relating to Responsible Persons. Members could choose to join either working group.

7 Progress Report on Matters Relating to Responsible Persons (Agenda Item 6)

As this was the first meeting of the new term of the Advisory Committee, the Secretary, on behalf of the Working Group on Matters Relating to Responsible Persons, reported on its work progress. The discussion on the progress report at the meeting was as follows:

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| EMSD | 7.1 | The EMSD organised/conducted 87 talks and promotional activities to promote the safety of lifts/escalators and the responsibility of RPs in 2019, with more than 4 500 participants attended. The EMSD also organised/conducted 272 outreach activities in kindergartens and elderly centres, with more than 20 000 participants attended, to enhance the knowledge of RPs about the management of lifts and escalators, promote lift and escalator safety, promote modernisation works for lifts and escalators, and introduce the Lift Modernisation Subsidy Scheme (LIMSS), etc. |
| EMSD | | The EMSD had continued to maintain regular and close liaison with major RPs for lifts/escalators (e.g. MTR Corporation Limited, Housing Department, etc.) to promote enhancement of lift and escalator safety, including discussing the stepping up of publicity and promotional work on the safe use of escalators, promoting modernisation works for lifts and escalators, etc. |
| EMSD | | The EMSD had also continued to publish the <i>Lift and Escalator Newsletter</i> to enhance communication and information exchange with the trade, RPs and the public. The fifth issue of the <i>Lift and Escalator Newsletter</i> was released in December 2019. |
| EMSD | | At the same time, the EMSD had also arranged to broadcast TV and radio APIs on the LIMSS to promote modernisation of lifts. To further enhance public awareness of the safe use of escalators, the EMSD was producing a new series of promotional videos and posters. |
| EMSD | 7.2 | The latest round of maintenance price survey on lifts at private residential and commercial premises (i.e. the second round of the price survey in 2019) was completed in November 2019, and the updated information was uploaded to the Responsible Persons' Corner on the EMSD website in November 2019. Maintenance price information would continue to be updated on a half-yearly basis, and the release date of the results of the next survey was tentatively scheduled for this May. |
| EMSD | 7.3 | To assist RPs in choosing registered lift/escalator engineers to provide relevant professional services, e.g. lift/escalator examination, maintenance audit and engineering consultancy services, the EMSD consulted registered lift/escalator engineers in the first half of 2019, and 48 of them agreed to publish their contact information so that members of the public could contact and consult them. In |

May 2019, the EMSD uploaded on the Responsible Persons' Corner web page the contact information of these registered lift/escalator engineers, including Chinese and English names, registration numbers, contact telephone numbers and e-mail addresses, and whether they were employed by registered lift/escalator contractors. The EMSD would also update the name list regularly for public reference.

- EMSD 7.4 To facilitate building owners in expediting lift modernisation with a view to enhancing the safety level of aged lifts and further safeguarding public safety, the Government had allocated \$2.5 billion to implement the LIMSS to subsidise modernisation works for about 5 000 lifts in private properties and commissioned the Urban Renewal Authority (URA) to administer the LIMSS. The first-round application closed on 1 August last year and a total of about 1 200 applications were received, involving about 5 000 lifts. In the first-round application, around 1 400 lifts with higher priority were selected for granting subsidy and all the applicants were notified of their application results. Besides, the URA had continually arranged for consultants to contact the applicants to organise lift modernisation works. The second-round application commenced on 6 January 2020 for closing on 30 June 2020.

Besides, the 2019 Policy Address had announced the injection of an additional \$2 billion (subject to funding approval by the Legislative Council) to expand the LIMSS, with the target of subsidising the modernisation works of an additional 3 000 lifts, providing outreach social services to owners in need during the course of lift modernisation works and subsidising the Intermediate Tradesman Collaborative Training Scheme to attract new blood to the lift engineering trade.

The EMSD called on the representatives to promote the LIMSS to owners in need through their channels and encouraged the trade representatives to actively participate in the training scheme which aimed to attract new blood to the trade.

8 Progress Report on Matters Relating to the Trade (Agenda Item 7)

As this was the first meeting of the new term of the Advisory Committee, the Secretary, on behalf of the Working Group on Matters Relating to the Trade, reported on its work progress. The discussion on the progress report at the meeting was as follows:

- EMSD 8.1 The EMSD published the latest Code of Practice on the Design and Construction of Lifts and Escalators (2019 Edition) by notice in the Gazette (G.N. 5428) on 30 August 2019 and the revision would take effect on 1 June this year.
- 8.2 With regard to improving workers' working environment, the Buildings Department issued the amended Code of Practice for Buildings Works for Lifts and Escalators (APP-29) in September 2019, which came into full operation in December 2019. The amendments included:

- The area of the ventilation openings of lift shafts was enlarged from 0.15 m² to 0.3 m²;
- An access door leading to a stair should be provided to pits exceeding the specified depth (2 m) to allow safe access and egress for workers; and
- A suitable and permanent working platform should be provided to pits exceeding the specified depth (3.5 m) to allow workers to carry out lift works.

EMSD 8.3 To strengthen safety training for workers, the EMSD had formed a working group with the Lift and Escalator Contractors' Association and the Vocational Training Council (VTC), which had completed the production of virtual reality (VR) safety training courses in respect of "entering and leaving lift car tops" and "working on lift car tops", and made the courses available to registered contractors for training of workers. The working group was currently developing VR training courses in respect of "entering and leaving lift pits" and "risk assessment of working in machine rooms". The VTC also planned to run related training courses later this year by using VR technology, which would enable workers to receive simulated training under different scenarios in a safe environment.

EMSD 8.4 The EMSD published in the Gazette on 10 August 2018 the Code of Practice for Lift Works and Escalator Works (2018 Edition) and updated the requirements for the log book format. The new edition of the Code of Practice set out the "special maintenance" requirements that lift contractors were required to conduct "special maintenance" twice a year for aged lifts that had not yet been equipped with ascending car overspeed protection device, unintended car movement protection device or double brake system, or to implement other solutions recommended by lift manufacturers so as to ensure safe operation of such aged lifts as well as enhance the maintenance and safety of aged lifts.

Contractors were required to record maintenance work in log books with an improved format to list the important protective components involved in each round of maintenance, and to submit to the EMSD the scheduled date, time, inspection results and data of the special maintenance via an online platform so as to step up the corresponding spot checks.

To allow the trade, building owners and stakeholders sufficient time for preparation and negotiation, there had been a grace period of about six months before the relevant measures came into full implementation on 1 February 2019. As at December 2019, the EMSD conducted more than 3 700 inspections on "special maintenance" work and about 15 000 inspections on log books with an improved format. It was found that the measures were smoothly implemented in general. The EMSD would continue to oversee the implementation and conduct follow-ups and reviews in a timely manner.

- 8.5 The enrolment of apprenticeship, certificate and diploma courses related to lifts and escalators had improved in recent years. According to the VTC, the number of new students admitted to such courses was more than 200 in 2015 and exceeded 250 from 2016 to 2019. In addition, the VTC launched a new evening certificate course on lifts and escalators in 2016, which had attracted an enrolment of more than 250 students so far.

The VTC had continued to organise activities such as Open Day and Info Day to disseminate information about the training courses. Besides, the VTC was promoting the recognition of vocational qualifications with a view to recognising the professional skills of workers in the trade in a more systematic manner. It also provided a roadmap for progression in learning and employment for related jobs, which helped attract talents to the lift and escalator engineering industry.

EMSD The EMSD had launched a new round of “Pilot Cooperative Apprentice Training Scheme” to recruit a new batch of technician trainees, who would then be deployed to participating contractors for training for a period of four years to enable them to acquire sufficient experience and qualifications for application as registered lift and escalator workers. The Secretary added that after review, the remuneration of technician trainees recruited by the EMSD would be significantly increased to attract more new blood to the trade.

9 Upcoming Work and Outlook (Agenda Item 8)

The Chairman hoped that members would actively participate in the matters relating to lift and escalator safety and provide valuable advice on the long-term development of the trade. He also briefed members on the highlights of the upcoming work as follows:

EMSD 9.1 The EMSD was reviewing the “Contractors’ Performance Rating System” and would consult the trade at different meetings in the hope that the system could more fully reflect contractors’ performance. The EMSD would also make adjustments to individual scoring items in tandem with the latest Code of Practice on the Design and Construction of Lifts and Escalators. Detailed recommendations would be submitted in due course to the working groups and the Advisory Committee for deliberation and follow-up.

EMSD 9.2 Regarding the Quality Lift Service Recognition Scheme, the EMSD held two training workshops in the fourth quarter of 2019 for professionals engaged in independent assessment of lift service, attracting more than 100 participants. It was expected that the list of the professionals who had successfully completed the training would be posted on the EMSD website in the first quarter of 2020.

EMSD 9.3 Currently, for workers in the trade who had acquired the qualifications required for registration, there was a lack of mechanism to recognise their other skill-

based professional qualifications. In view of this, the EMSD, together with representatives from the trade and the VTC, set up an ad hoc group to study the adoption of skill-based vocational qualifications (Lift Master) for lift/escalator workers to provide them with a promotion ladder, thereby fostering the healthy and sustainable development of the trade. Details would be submitted in due course to the working groups and the Advisory Committee for deliberation and follow-up.

EMSD 9.4 To further promote the modernisation works, the EMSD was conducting a study on the feasibility of mandating the lift modernisation works, and consultants had been engaged to study and compare the mandatory measures or other initiatives for modernising aged lifts in different regions and cities. The study was scheduled to be completed in the first quarter of 2020. The EMSD would not only make reference to the relevant experiences of other countries, but would also examine the implementation and enforcement of similar legislation in Hong Kong and take the impact on the community and the trade into consideration. Besides, the EMSD would consult the public, councillors and the trade in due course, and submit proposals to the relevant policy bureaux.

EMSD 9.5 Since the LEO came into effect in 2012, transitional arrangements for the registration of lift and escalator engineers and workers had been made so as to gradually raise the qualification requirements for registration, thereby enhancing lift and escalator safety. Regarding engineers registration, transitional arrangements for accepting higher certificates or higher diplomas as fulfilment of registration requirements were repealed on 1 May 2018. Currently, engineers applying for registration were required to obtain a relevant degree or to have been registered as registered professional engineers in the relevant discipline under the Engineers Registration Ordinance (Cap. 409), and possessed the necessary practical work experience. As for the repeal of the requirement that a bachelor's degree or equivalent qualification be obtained for registration as a registered engineer, a further review of the timetable for phasing out the transitional arrangements would be conducted in 2023. In the next two years, the EMSD would take forward the work to raise the qualification requirements for engineers to the level of registered professional engineers. A preliminary review on the repeal of relevant transitional arrangements would also be carried out.

10 Any Other Business (Agenda Item 9)

EMSD 10.1 The Secretary briefed members on the two mobile applications launched by the EMSD in December 2019 which enabled members of the public and the E&M trade to enjoy the convenience of electronic services and obtain the latest updates from the EMSD for strengthening communication anytime, anywhere with functions on their smart phones. The two mobile applications were “E&M Connect” and “E&M Trade App”:

- "E&M Connect" could show and compare the energy performance of different household electrical appliances and facilitate the search on map for nearby Registered Electrical Contractors and LPG Cylinder Distributors; and
- "E&M Trade App" provided E&M practitioners with information on training courses for the trade, codes of practice and other news, and allowed registered practitioners to save their records of training hours and receive push notification reminders on registration expiry through the mobile application.

11 Date of Next Meeting

- 11.1 The next meeting was scheduled for July 2020. Members would be informed of the exact meeting date in due course.
- 11.2 The meeting ended at 5 p.m.