

Minutes of the 1st Meeting of
the Lift and Escalator Safety Advisory Committee (LESAC)

Date: 12 July 2013 (Friday)
Time: 2:00 p.m.
Venue: Room 7102, EMSD Headquarters, 3 Kai Shing Street, Kowloon Bay

Present:	Dr. POON Lok-to, Otto	Chairman
	Mr. CHUNG Fuk-wai, Simon	Member
	Mr. LI Kwan-chi, Simon	Member
	Mr. KWOK Sai-wang	Member
	Mr. TSE King-wa	Member
	Mr. TO Wing, Christopher	Member
	Mr. WONG Kai-hon, Charles	Member
	Mr. YEUNG Man-kai, Gary	Member
	Mr. CHUI Chun-king, Simon	Member
	Mr. LEUNG Man-kwong	Member
	Ms. CHOI Ngar-chun, Ada	Member
	Mr. SIT Wing-hang, Alfred	Member
	Ms. WAN Siu-ling, Emily	Member
In attendance:	Mr. M.S. CHONG	for Mr. KUOK Hoi-sang
	Mr. C.S. WONG	for Mr. WAN Chun-wah, Martin
	Ms. Rossana WONG	for Ms. LI Tsau-ha, Jessica
	Mr. LAI Hon-chung, Harry	EMSD
	Mr. CHUI Wai-sing	EMSD
	Mr. CHONG Kwok-kee	EMSD
	Mr. NG Tak-hei	EMSD
Absent with Apologies:	Mr. KUOK Hoi-sang	Member
	Mr. WAN Chun-wah, Martin	Member
	Ms. LI Tsau-ha, Jessica	Member
	Mr. LUI Kam-tong	Member
	Mr. YU Siu-fai, Ivan	Member

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

- 1.1 The Chairman welcomed members to the 1st meeting of the Lift and Escalator Safety Advisory Committee (the Advisory Committee) as well as introduced members who were appointed from different sectors, including government departments, the lift and escalator trade, professional bodies, training institutions, the property and facility management sector, responsible persons for lifts and escalators, consumers, and the general public. Through the active participation of members and their sharing of know-how and experience, the Chairman hoped that the Advisory Committee could make useful recommendations on lift and escalator safety and give valuable advice on the long-term development of the trade.
- 1.2 The Chairman declared that he was Chairman of the Analogue Group of Companies, and the Anlev Elex Elevator Limited was a member of the Group and a registered lift and escalator contractor. As he was not involved in the day-to-day operation of the Anlev Elex Elevator Limited, there should not be any role conflict with his capacity as Chairman of the Advisory Committee. All members agreed with the Chairman on this.
- 1.3 Members unanimously agreed to have the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) providing administrative and secretarial support to the Advisory Committee. Besides, members could speak in Cantonese, Putonghua or English.

2. **Terms of Reference and Operation Arrangements of the Advisory Committee (Agenda Item 1)**

- 2.1 EMSD explained the terms of reference of the Advisory Committee as follows:
- (1) To advise the Director of Electrical and Mechanical Services (DEMS) on such matters relating to the administration and enforcement of the Lifts and Escalators Ordinance (the LEO);
- (2) To advise DEMS on matters referred to it by DEMS.

- 2.2 EMSD briefly introduced the main operation arrangements of the Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee comprises a Chairperson, 2 official members and 15 non-official members. The members are to attend the meetings in their personal capacity, and the required quorum is 8 non-official members. The Chairman is 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 is 3 non-official members.
- 2.3 The Advisory Committee discussed the arrangement for members' absence, and agreed that the absent member could assign a representative to sit in attendance.
- 2.4 The Advisory Committee agreed that the Chairman should act as spokesperson for the Advisory Committee. The Chairman would be accompanied by EMSD's representative(s) to attend the press briefing after the meeting.
- 2.5 The Advisory Committee discussed and agreed on the following arrangements for information disclosure:
- (i) The terms of reference, membership list, agenda and discussion items, and minutes of meeting of the Advisory Committee could be published on the EMSD website.
 - (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.
 - (iv) Closed-door meetings would be held to allow free expression of opinions on sensitive issues.
- 2.6 With respect to members' legal liability for the views they provided, the Chairman said that the Advisory Committee was to operate on a collective responsibility system to advise DEMS on relevant issues for reference. Before implementing any suggestions, EMSD is to give adequate consideration to other relevant factors and seek legal advice where necessary.

3. Regulatory Control over Lift and Escalator Safety and Overview of the Present Trade Situation (Agenda Item 2)

3.1 EMSD briefed members on the regulatory framework for lift and escalator safety:

- (i) Ensuring lift and escalator safety through the following four aspects:
 - All contractors, engineers and workers who carry out lift/escalators works must be qualified persons.
 - All lifts/escalators must obtain the relevant type approval given by EMSD before they can be installed.
 - Lifts/escalators must be regularly maintained and examined by qualified persons after they are installed.
 - EMSD conducts random inspections according to a risk-based approach, and regularly releases information on contractors' performance.
- (ii) The LEO was passed in April 2012 and put into full operation on 17 December 2012 to replace the Lifts and Escalators (Safety) Ordinance enacted in the 1960s. Its purpose is to further strengthen the regulatory control over lift and escalator safety in Hong Kong.
- (iii) The LEO introduced a series of measures 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 responsible persons who have the management or control of lifts and escalators, as well as other regulatory measures, such as conferring power on DEMS to issue Improvement Orders, introducing a new use permit, allowing flexible arrangement for the examination times for lifts and escalators, and empowering the Registrar to suspend or cancel the registration of registered persons, etc.
- (iv) To tie in with the changes brought about by the LEO, EMSD has issued a new Code of Practice for Lift Works and Escalator Works and Code of Practice on the Design and Construction of Lifts and Escalators, with a view to providing guidance for the trade.
- (v) Since the LEO was passed by the Legislative Council in April 2012, EMSD has conducted a series of publicity and promotional activities, including seminars

and goodwill visits, to facilitate public understanding of the requirements of the LEO. EMSD has also prepared a Guidebook for Responsible Persons for Lifts and a Guidebook for Responsible Persons for Escalators to help the owners and responsible persons of lifts and escalators understand their responsibilities under the LEO.

3.2 EMSD gave an overview of the trade. In Hong Kong, there are in total:

- (i) around 59 800 lifts and 8 400 escalators;
- (ii) 44 registered lift contractors and 33 registered escalator contractors;
- (iii) around 300 registered lift/escalator engineers; and
- (iv) around 5 000 competent lift/escalator workers, of whom around 2 500 have already become registered lift/escalator workers.

4. Report on Investigation Progress of the Recent Lift Incidents (Agenda Item 3)

4.1 Lift Incident at 480 King's Road, North Point

- (i) EMSD reported on the results of the technical investigation on the lift incident in North Point on 2 March this year. In this rare incident, all the 4 suspension ropes of the lift broke at the same time due to severe deterioration resulting from insufficient lubrication for a prolonged period. Moreover, because of the lack of proper maintenance, the overspeed governor failed to activate the safety gears to stop the lift car. A detailed report had been uploaded to the EMSD website. In addition, EMSD had completed the criminal investigation on the incident and was seeking advice from the Department of Justice on taking out prosecution action.
- (ii) Within 3 days after the incident, EMSD completed the inspection of 248 lifts maintained by the maintenance contractor involved in the incident. Eight of these lifts failed to comply with the requirements of the Code of Practice for Lift Works and Escalator Works and were therefore removed from services for repair. Currently, all of them had resumed services.
- (iii) DEMS, the Registrar under the LEO, was satisfied that the maintenance contractor did not carry out the lift works properly and safely, and exercised his power to suspend its registration for 6 months starting from 1

May.

- (iv) After the incident, EMSD stepped up the inspection on lifts in accordance with the risk-based approach. To date, over 3 000 inspections had been conducted and no similar situation was found.
- (v) After the incident, DEMS went to the hospital to visit the 7 injured passengers a number of times. All of them were now discharged.

4.2 Lift incident at Fu Wen House, Fu Cheong Estate, Sham Shui Po

EMSD reported on the lift incident at Fu Wen House, Fu Cheong Estate, Sham Shui Po on 16 June this year. Investigation results revealed that the lift did not have a rapid drop; instead, the lift stopped automatically due to failure of the landing door.

4.3 Lift incident at Leung Wah House, Leung King Estate, Tuen Mun

EMSD reported on the lift incident at Leung Wah House, Leung King Estate, Tuen Mun on 19 June this year. Investigation results revealed that the lift did not have a rapid drop; instead, the lift stopped automatically due to failure of the landing door.

- 4.4 EMSD agreed to release the investigation results of the above incidents, and would be ready to help explain the incidents to the parties concerned.
- 4.5 A member suggested that if it was ascertained that someone had contravened the legislation and failed to fulfill the required responsibility in an incident, the staff concerned should be prohibited from carrying out further lift works, so as to eliminate the safety risk.
- 4.6 In view of the lift incidents in recent years, EMSD had strengthened the requirements under the legislation and codes of practice. A member considered that this would put additional responsibilities and pressure on the trade practitioners. The Chairman agreed that it was more important to ensure that the relevant requirements are strictly implemented by the trade practitioners.
- 4.7 A member brought up the issue of manpower shortage in the trade. The Chairman said that the Construction Industry Council (CIC) was collaborating with the trade to implement a series of measures to attract newcomers to the trade. If members had any suggestion on manpower resources, the Advisory Committee

could reflect it to CIC.

5. Long Term Improvement Measures to Enhance Lift and Escalator Safety (Agenda Item 4)

5.1 EMSD proposed a series of long term improvement measures to enhance lift and escalator safety:

- (i) Review the risk factors used for the sampling of lifts for audit inspection to strengthen the inspection of lifts.
- (ii) Increase the frequency of audit visits to registered contractors with low ranking in performance rating, and require them to take improvement actions with regard to identified deficiencies failing which their registration might be suspended.
- (iii) Require the registered contractors and registered engineers to keep more detailed records of the examination results of the suspension ropes and, where necessary, take photos to record the condition of the ropes.
- (iv) Examine the feasibility of showing the name of the registered contractor responsible for maintaining the lift or escalator on the use permit of the lift or escalator to promote user surveillance of the performance of registered contractors.
- (v) Organise more briefings for responsible persons to enhance their knowledge of the daily management of lifts and selection of suitable registered maintenance contractors. EMSD was also planning to organise seminars and training courses for property management personnel in collaboration with the Hong Kong Association of Property Management Companies and Vocational Training Council. This is to enhance their knowledge of the routine lift and escalator maintenance work so as to monitor the registered contractors more effectively.
- (vi) Further refine the sample maintenance services procurement contract and provide more different versions for reference by responsible persons to better

serve their individual needs. To further assist responsible persons to assess reasonableness of contract prices of lift/escalator maintenance, EMSD was actively studying the feasibility of sharing price information of maintenance works for lifts belonging to the Government for reference by responsible persons.

5.2 EMSD, after gauging the views of the public and the trade, was currently conducting a comprehensive review on the existing Contractors' Performance Rating scheme. The purpose of the review was to enable the rating scheme to reflect contractors' performance in a more thorough and direct manner. Pending the completion of the review, EMSD had suspended the updating of the performance ratings of registered contractors. As an interim measure, EMSD had classified the performance of the contractors into the following three categories based on the inspection results of the past 12 months, and the relevant information was released in April 2013 for public reference.

- (i) Those showing good performance with a record of full compliance in both safety and maintenance aspects.
- (ii) Those with a record of full compliance in the safety aspect, but have room for improvement in the maintenance aspect.
- (iii) Those with a record of non-compliance in the safety aspect being served with a warning letter and under further investigation.

EMSD Having considered the possible public impact of suspending the release of performance rating information, it was agreed by the Advisory Committee that EMSD should continue to release information on contractors' performance in accordance with the above interim arrangement in July 2013.

6. Formation of Working Groups (Agenda Item 5)

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

escalator trade and responsible persons respectively:

(1) Working Group on Matters Relating to the Trade; and

(2) Working Group on Matters Relating to Responsible Persons.

The Advisory Committee agreed that Mr. CHUNG Fuk-wai should be the convener for the Working Group on Matters Relating to the Trade, whereas Mr. YEUNG Man-kai should be the convener for the Working Group on Matters Relating to Responsible Persons. Members may choose to join either working groups.

7. Any Other Business (Agenda Item 6)

7.1 A member commented on Contractors' Performance Rating, expressing the view that assessment criteria must be objective and unbiased, and should not impede fair competition. Another expressed the hope that service quality of contractors could be differentiated through Contractors' Performance Rating (such as adopting a star-rating scheme, with supplementary comments and information reflecting the fault rate and the availability rate, etc.). The Advisory Committee agreed to refer the suggestions to the Working Group on Matters Relating to Responsible Persons for detailed discussion.

7.2 A member suggested studying the feasibility of introducing new technology for the examination of ropes so as to enhance the accuracy of rope inspection. The Advisory Committee agreed to refer the suggestion to the Working Group on Matters Relating to the Trade for detailed discussion.

7.3 Enquiry was made by another member about the latest progress in releasing reference information on the pricing of lift maintenance works. EMSD indicated that it was looking into the form of publication. The Advisory Committee agreed to refer

it to the Working Group on Matters Relating to Responsible Persons for detailed discussion.

- 7.4 A member opined that it was very important to find ways to help every registered engineer and every registered worker understand his/her responsibilities under the Ordinance. The Advisory Committee agreed to refer the suggestion to the Working Group on Matters Relating to the Trade for detailed discussion.

8. Date of Next Meeting

- 8.1 The next meeting is scheduled for October 2013. Members will be informed of the exact meeting date in due course.
- 8.2 The meeting ended at 4:30 p.m.