

Minutes of the 2nd Meeting of
the Lift and Escalator Safety Advisory Committee (LESAC)

Date: 10 October 2013 (Thursday)

Time: 2:30 p.m.

Venue: Room 7102, EMSD Headquarters, 3 Kai Shing Street, Kowloon Bay

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| Present: | Dr. POON Lok-to, Otto | Chairman |
| | Mr. CHUNG Fuk-wai, Simon | Member |
| | Mr. YEUNG Man-kai, Gary | Member |
| | Mr. KUOK Hoi-sang | Member |
| | Mr. LI Kwan-chi, Simon | Member |
| | Mr. KWOK Sai-wang | Member |
| | Mr. TSE King-wa | Member |
| | Mr. WONG Kai-hon, Charles | Member |
| | Mr. YU Siu-fai, Ivan | Member |
| | Mr. CHUI Chun-king, Simon | Member |
| | Mr. LUI Kam-tong | Member |
| | Mr. WAN Chun-wah, Martin | Member |
| | Ms. LI Tsau-ha, Jessica | Member |
| | Ms. CHOI Ngar-chun, Ada | Member |
| | Mr. SIT Wing-hang, Alfred | Member |
| | Ms. WAN Siu-ling, Emily | Member |
| In attendance: | Ms. Angela YUEN | On behalf of Mr. TO Wing, |
| | Mr. WONG Kam-hay, Arthur | Development Bureau |
| | Mr. CHEUNG Kwok-fai | EMSD |
| | Mr. CHUI Wai-sing | EMSD |
| | Mr. NG Tak-hei | EMSD |
| | Ms. FUNG Yin-suen, Ada | Housing Department (Agenda Item 1) |
| | Mr. WONG Wing-hung, Stephen | Housing Department (Agenda Item 1) |
| | Mr. WONG Pui-chun | Housing Department (Agenda Item 1) |
| | Mr. CHAN Ka-lai | Labour Department (Agenda Item 1) |
| | Mr. WAN Chi-ping | Labour Department (Agenda Item 1) |

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| | Mr WONG Wing-lok, Allan | Hong Kong Association of Property Management Companies (Agenda Member |
| Absent with Apologies: | Mr. LEUNG Man-kwong | Member |
| | Mr. TO Wing, Christopher | Member |

Action 1. **Introduction of the Guidelines on Safety of Lift Shaft Works, Volume 3 by the Construction Industry Council (CIC) (Agenda Item 1)**

1.1 The Chairman welcomed members to attend the 2nd meeting of the Lift and Escalator Safety Advisory Committee (Advisory Committee). He also welcomed those who were in attendance at the meeting, including the chairman of the Task Force on Site Safety of Working in Lift Shaft (Task Force) under the Committee on Construction Safety of the CIC, Ms FUNG Yin-suen and the other Task Force members, as well as Mr. WONG Kam-hay from the Development Bureau.

1.2 Ms. FUNG gave a slide presentation on the Guidelines on Safety of Lift Shaft Works, Volume 3 developed by the Task Force to enhance the safety of lift works. Volume 3 covered the works throughout occupation stage of a building, mainly making references to the provisions in existing relevant ordinance(s)/regulation(s), code(s) of practice/code(s) of safety and practice note(s). This guideline was expected to be issued in November 2013.

EMSD 1.3 Ms. FUNG had contacted various government departments, relevant organisations, property management companies, lift contractors and personnel engaged in lift works to coordinate the implementation of the safety guideline. CIC would also organise various types of technical seminars in early 2014 to introduce the guideline to personnel engaged in lift works and property management companies. Members suggested CIC conduct joint promotion activities on lift safety with EMSD to achieve a synergy effect.

1.4 The Chairman thanked the Task Force members for giving an introduction of the guidelines and their attendance at agenda item 1.

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

- 2.1 Members did not raise any amendment to the minutes of the 1st meeting. The Chairman declared the minutes of the 1st meeting officially confirmed.

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

Mr. YEUNG Man-kai, the convener for the Working Group on Matters Relating to Responsible Persons (Working Group on Responsible Persons), reported that two meetings were held on 26 August and 26 September respectively. Progress of work and the discussion at the Advisory Committee meeting were as follows:

3.1 Proposal for Improving the Contractors' Performance Rating Scheme

The Working Group on Responsible Persons agreed in its second meeting to simplify the Contractors' Performance Rating scheme. It was suggested that Category II of the three existing categories be further divided into four sub-categories, and the performance index be replaced by a star-rating scheme to indicate the performance of contractors, and explanatory notes on the rating standards of each star rating be added to the rating table. The new format of publication could facilitate members of the public an informed choice of contractors. EMSD had compiled September's data on contractors' performance rating in accordance with the proposal, and the draft was submitted for preview and comment by working group members prior to the 2nd meeting of the Advisory Committee. EMSD did not receive any comment before the meeting.

However, some members made the following remarks at the Advisory Committee meeting on the proposed star-rating scheme for Contractors' Performance Rating:

- The existing evaluation mechanism and rating system could only reflect the performance of contractors during inspections, but other aspects of

contractors' performance (e.g. technical support, quality management) were not assessed.

- The proposal did not take into account the number of inspections. Therefore, it would be easier for a large maintenance contractor, having more chance of being inspected, to accord point deduction because of an occasion of minor non-compliance, and consequently falling from 5-star rating to 4-star rating. This might cause public misunderstanding of the contractor's performance.

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- A contractor would be downgraded to the lowest "no star" level due to one occasion of safety non-compliance. This is too harsh. Members suggested that the items of point deduction should be further refined. EMSD responded that in order to reflect contractors' performance in greater detail, it was suggested that the existing three-tier scheme be replaced by a six-tier star-rating scheme. EMSD agreed that continuous improvement to the rating scheme should be made so as to reflect the performance of contractors more effectively. EMSD further explained that as an enforcement body, it could not tolerate non-compliances in safety. Therefore, it was considered that the points for safety items should not be averaged out by the number of inspections. It was hoped that this could serve as a warning to the contractors.

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- Members remarked that the Working Group on Responsible Persons had already agreed on adopting stars to evaluate contractors' performance. As for the deduction of points, it was agreed that further discussion was required. Another member pointed out that when selecting maintenance contractors for lifts, property owners would consider various factors, whereas Contractors' Performance Rating was only one of those factors. Therefore, the rating scheme should not cause unfairness for failing to give a comprehensive reflection of the performance of the contractors.

Since members could not reach an agreement on the new proposal, the Advisory Committee agreed that the matter be further discussed by the Working Group on Responsible Persons. With regard to the contractors' performance rating for October, EMSD would continue to adopt the three-tier scheme in publishing the results.

3.2 Review on the Format of the Use Permit

As it was already stipulated in the Code of Practice for Lift Works and Escalator Works that a label with the contractor's name and emergency contact telephone number should be displayed in the lift car or at the main landing of the lift, and as the adoption of the new use permits was still in the phasing-in stage, so the Working Group on Responsible Persons suggested maintaining the status quo for the time being, i.e., not adding the name and emergency contact telephone number of the registered maintenance contractor on the new use permits. Views of different parties would be collected again for discussion when the phasing-in of the new use permits was complete.

3.3 Publication of Pricing Data on Maintenance Services for Government Lifts

- The Working Group on Responsible Persons agreed to the proposal to publish price information of maintenance services for Government lifts. The pricing data (including the average price and the general price range of maintenance works) to be published was compiled on the basis of the current price of lift maintenance under the triennial term maintenance contracts signed after tendering by the Government. It was prepared according to the type of buildings, the number of floors and the rated speed of the lifts. The data was planned to be published officially in November as earliest and updated on a half-yearly basis.
- A member reckoned that the maintenance terms offered by the Government would be different from those offered in the private sector, so the prices published might not be directly comparable. EMSD stated that the publication of price information might serve as an additional reference by the public to guard against unreasonably low price being offered in the market.
- A member suggested the publication of the cut-off date of the pricing data and the provision of information on the annual price increase rate. In view of this suggestion, EMSD would revise the details of the pricing data, which would be presented for members' reference before publication.

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3.4 Publicity on General Duties of Responsible Persons

- EMSD, in collaboration with District Offices and professional bodies, organised talks for different sectors. The Lifts and Escalators Ordinance (the Ordinance) and duties of responsible persons as well as the ways of managing lifts and escalators were introduced, and the safe use of lifts and escalators and modernisation of aged lifts were also promoted. It served to enhance responsible persons' awareness on the management of lifts and escalators.
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- EMSD would publish a pamphlet titled "How to Manage Lifts and Escalators Maintenance Works", for which advice from the Working Group on Responsible Persons had been sought. The draft pamphlet, after revision, would be distributed to members of the public and uploaded to the Internet for reference.

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

Mr. CHUNG Fuk-wai, the convener for the Working Group on Matters Relating to the Trade (Working Group on the Trade), reported that meeting was held on 30 August, and their work progress was as follows:

4.1 Repeal of the "competent worker" related provisions

- In order to better regulate the operation of the trade, promote continuous self-development by trade members and enhance the safety of lift/escalator works, a registration system was introduced under the Ordinance to replace the employment-tied "competent worker" arrangement. The chairman of the Working Group on the Trade reported that the "competent worker" related provisions was expected to be repealed at the end of 2013. Upon repeal of the related provisions, persons who only qualified as competent lift/escalator workers would not be allowed to carry out lift/escalator works independently.
- As at 8 October, over 4 200 persons had qualified as registered lift/escalator workers, achieving the original target. .

- EMSD had consulted the trade, relevant bodies and members of the Working Group on the Trade on the repeal of “competent worker” related provisions, and received their confirmation that they had no alternative view or objection.

4.2 Technology for the Examination of Suspension Ropes of Lifts

- In regard to studying the feasibility of introducing new technology for the examination of ropes so as to enhance the accuracy of rope inspection, the Working Group on the Trade, after preliminary discussion, reckoned that the current examination method, which mainly was involved in visual inspection, was more feasible and practical. At present, visual inspection was the best practice worldwide while the non-destructive test was not a specified requirement for rope inspection.
 - At present, some lifts had installed mechanised detectors for the detection of broken wires of ropes. Once the detector was activated, the operation of the lift would automatically stop upon reaching the nearest landing floor for releasing passengers from the lift car. The Working Group on the Trade would continue to explore the relevant equipment and technologies for rope examination and report to the Advisory Committee.
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4.3 Survey on Maintenance Time for Lifts

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- To identify a reasonable and generally acceptable standard for required maintenance time and an appropriate ratio between worker and lift, EMSD conducted a preliminary analysis of the log-book records of 100 lifts. It covered the time required for daily maintenance, emergency repair and rescue works in respect of different lift models and contractors. EMSD was considering engaging a consultant to conduct a more detailed and in-depth analysis.

4.4 Strengthening Publicity on General Duties of Registered Engineers and Registered Workers

- To enhance registered engineers’ and registered workers’ understanding of their duties, EMSD had prepared promotional leaflets titled The Duties of Registered Lift and Escalator Worker and The Duties of Registered Lift and Escalator Engineer, and distributed copies to them.
 - Moreover, EMSD would organise briefing sessions for these registered
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personnel in order to strengthening their awareness on duties under the Ordinance through interactive exchange.

4.5 Matters on the Occupational Safety and Health of Workers

- In order to attract more new entrants to the trade, the Working Group on the Trade suggested that a two-pronged approach, viz. raising the image and remuneration of workers, should be adopted. Members of the working group considered that the collaboration of EMSD and the trade could enable government departments to better understand the actual situation of the trade, so that more suitable procedures and rules would be formulated to facilitate deployment of human resources within the trade, as well as improving safety and conditions of work.
- A member said that there was noticeable growth in the salary of new entrants this year. Apart from this, the Vocational Training Council would organise training courses on lifts and escalators to attract new entrants to the trade. The CIC was also planning to produce a feature programme on lift works in collaboration with a television station to attract new entrants to the trade.

5. Latest Progress on Registered Engineers and Registered Workers (Agenda Item 5)

- 5.1 EMSD reported that as at 8 October, over 4 200 persons had successfully qualified as registered lift/escalator workers. The number of registrants was expected to reach 4 500 by the end of October. Meanwhile, a total of 298 persons had successfully qualified as registered lift/escalator engineers.

6. Review on Incident(s) (Agenda Item 6)

- 6.1 EMSD reported that during the period from January to September 2013, there were 246 and 1 050 cases of lift incidents and escalator incidents respectively. The major cause of the incidents was improper use by passengers.

6.2 North Point Lift Incident

- EMSD reported that the Department of Justice had initiated prosecution against Shineford Engineering Limited (Shineford) and its two directors, the

registered lift engineer responsible for the examination of the lift in question in North Point, and the registered lift workers responsible for its maintenance. They would appear in Eastern Magistracy on 3 December.

- While EMSD was carrying out audits on Shineford, it received a request from Shineford for cancellation of its registration. After considering all the relevant information, the Registrar decided to cancel the registration of Shineford as a registered lift contractor and registered escalator contractor with effect from 16 October.

6.3 Change of Maintenance Contractor for Lifts at Tin Ping Estate

- EMSD reported on the takeover arrangements regarding the change of maintenance contractor for lifts at Tin Ping Estate (involving a total of 18 lifts in three buildings). These lifts were taken over from Lighthouse Elevator Engineering Limited for maintenance by Holake Hong Kong Lifts Ltd. (Holake) on 1 August 2013. Eight lifts were suspended the operation due to maintenance problems.
- On 14 August, staff of EMSD conducted a site inspection on these eight suspended lifts. They agreed with the testing results and findings of Holake. All the lifts had been rectified and resumed operation after testing and inspection in end of August.
- EMSD considered that the lift incidents at Tin Ping Estate were mainly due to maintenance problems, but it could not be ruled out that they might be related to the change of maintenance contractor.

7. Any Other Business (Agenda Item 7)

- 7.1 EMSD reported that after the 1st meeting of the Advisory Committee, an organisation made a request to the Advisory Committee for a meeting with EMSD representatives to offer suggestions on enhancing lift safety. EMSD met the said

organisation on 2 October and its requests were brought to members' attention at this meeting. As the views of the organisation were related to the work of the Working Group on Responsible Persons and the Working Group on the Trade, so members agreed that these should be discussed and followed up by the two working groups.

- 7.2 The Advisory Committee agreed that requests made by any groups or organisations to meet with the Advisory Committee to express their views could be handled henceforth by EMSD on behalf of the Committee.

8. Date of Next Meeting

- 8.1 Members would be informed of the date of the next meeting in due course.
- 8.2 The meeting ended at 5:45 p.m.