

(Translation)

Minutes of the 20th Meeting of
the Lift and Escalator Safety Advisory Committee (LESAC)

Date: 30 September 2022 (Friday)
Time: 2:30 p.m.
Venue: Room 7102, 7/F, EMSD Headquarters, 3 Kai Shing Street, Kowloon Bay

Present:	Ir KO Chi-wai, Gary	Chairman
	Ms CHIU Chi-san, Angela	Member
	Ms CHAN Nga-yan	Member
	Mr CHAN Wai-tung, Tony	Member
	Ms CHAN Wing-yan	Member
	Ir HO Sau-chiu	Member
	Mr KUOK Hoi-sang	Member
	Mr LAI Ka-kui	Member
	Mr LAU Chun-ming	Member
	Sr LEE Man-kwong	Member
	Mr LEE Ling-kit, Anka	Member
	Ms LEUNG Wai-chun, Karmen	Member
	Mr POON Kwok-ying, Raymond	Member
	Mr THONG Wang-fai, William	Member
	Mr TSE King-wa	Member
In attendance:	Mr WONG King-wai	Secretary/EMSD
	Mr CHOW Hau-keung, Vincent	EMSD
	Mr LAU Lik-kee	EMSD
	Mr LEE Chi Leung, Eric	EMSD
	Mr NG Siu On, Francis	EMSD
Absent with apologies:	Mr CHAN Chun-wai	EMSD
	Mr KWOK Wing-yin	Member
	Mr LEUNG Chun-pong, Maverick	Member
	Ms MAN Wing-po	Member

- Action
- 1 Welcoming Members of the Lift and Escalator Safety Advisory Committee
 - 1.1 The Chairman welcomed attendees to the 20th 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 19th meeting. The Chairman declared the minutes of the 19th meeting confirmed.
 - 3 Matters on Declaration of Interests (Agenda Item 2)
 - 3.1 The Chairman asked members to declare their interests. If a member became aware that there might be a conflict between a matter to be discussed and his own interests, he should declare his interests. If the matter to be discussed only involved the overall interests of his sector, no declaration was required.

No attendees declared interests with the matters under discussion at this meeting.
 - 4 Thematic Presentation – Uplifting the Professional Qualifications of Registered Engineers (Agenda Item 3)
 - 4.1 The Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) briefed the meeting on the background of uplifting the professional qualifications of registered engineers (REs), and explained the decision made during the drafting stage of the Lifts and Escalators Ordinance (LEO) that the registration requirements of personnel engaged in lift and escalator examinations should be uplifted in the long run.

The objective of the LEO was to uplift the professional qualifications of REs ultimately to the level of registered professional engineers¹ in a progressive manner. That objective, which was in line with the qualification requirements of registered persons prescribed under other legislations regulating building safety, could help raise the status of the trade and quality of works, and thereby enhancing the safety level of lifts and escalators.

Regarding the supply and demand of REs, there were 375 REs in Hong Kong at present. On the basis of about 100 000 examinations being carried out in about 250 working days each year, demand could be met by about 100 REs, indicating that the trade had sufficient manpower to overcome short-term demand volatility. Regarding manpower supply and demand in the future, the projection based on a retirement age of 65 and the future growth of demand for lifts/escalators suggested that 12 additional REs were needed per year in the next 5 to 10 years to cover the natural wastage of REs and new workload arising from the growing number of lifts/escalators.

Among the 42 registered lift/escalator contractors, there were five contractors currently providing Graduate Scheme “A” Training of the Hong Kong Institution of Engineers (HKIE). The EMSD was collaborating with HKIE to provide appropriate assistance for trade practitioners in obtaining the professional engineer qualification. The EMSD would also encourage and review registered contractors’ participation in and provision of Graduate Scheme “A” Training, so as to nurture new blood to be qualified as professional engineers. In particular, the Mechanical Discipline and Control, Automation and Instrumentation Discipline of the HKIE had respectively issued in January 2022 their guidance notes on professional assessment, which were specifically prepared for trade practitioners. Online briefing sessions were also held by the two disciplines respectively to introduce the guidance notes and the professional assessment process undertaken by the disciplines. Both sessions were attended by more than 300 participants. The HKIE had also launched a mentorship programme in April 2022 to provide trade practitioners who were aspired to become professional engineers with assistance and support by well-experienced institution members.

¹ Registered professional engineer – refers to a person whose name is currently entered in the register established under section 7 of the Engineers Registration Ordinance (Cap. 409).

In view of various factors including the currently stable and robust manpower situation of the trade, as well as the availability of a clear and feasible pathway for obtaining the professional engineer qualification, the EMSD considered that it was a suitable time to take forward upgrading of the professional qualification of registered engineers. Taking into account the livelihood of existing practitioners and the needs of new entrants to have sufficient time to obtain registered qualification through the existing arrangement, the EMSD proposed to implement the relevant proposal in 2027. The EMSD had conducted a consultation with the trade on the proposal in August 2022 and received a reply of no objection to the proposal.

The EMSD proposed to report to the Panel on Development of the Legislative Council in 2023 the proposal of upgrading the professional qualification of registered engineers to registered professional engineer and the plan to implement the proposal in mid-2027. After deliberation, members unanimously supported the Department's proposal and timetable to upgrade the professional qualification of registered engineers.

5 Feature - Lift Modernisation Subsidy Scheme (Agenda Item 4)

- 5.1 The EMSD briefed members on the details of the latest progress of the Lift Modernisation Subsidy Scheme (LIMSS). Regarding the progress of the LIMSS, successful applicants have started to recruit registered lift contractors, commence works and apply for subsidy through the electronic tendering platform of the Urban Renewal Authority (URA). As at mid-August 2022, under the Scheme, 201 lifts were in the tendering stage, 611 lifts undergoing modernisation and 329 lifts with modernisation works completed.

In view of the fact that some owners' corporations were unable to arrange tender opening meetings under the epidemic, the URA has implemented online tender opening through live broadcast so that owners' representatives could choose to monitor the tender opening sessions from home. The URA also attempted to assist owners in organising online management committee meetings, which allowed them to discuss tender details while maintaining social distance. Owners' response to such arrangements was generally positive. Applicants under the LIMSS could make enquiries with or apply to their case officers for arrangements regarding online tender opening through live broadcast or online management committee meetings.

Modernising lifts could not only enhance lift safety, but also save energy. The two power companies had subsidy programmes respectively to

subsidise owners to replace their lifts with more energy-efficient ones. As it took time for the two power companies to grant approval with regard to the energy-efficient subsidy programmes, in order to avoid unnecessary delays in the progress of lift modernisation, the EMSD suggested that applicants who also participated in these programmes should be aware of the eligibility and application procedures of the energy-efficient subsidy programmes and submit their applications as early as possible.

The EMSD also shared with members lift modernisation cases under the two subsidy programmes. It would step up publicity efforts to promote the modernisation of aged lifts and the energy-efficient subsidy programmes of the two power companies so as to encourage more lift owners to modernise aged lifts as soon as possible.

6 Progress Report of the Working Group on Matters Relating to Responsible Persons (Agenda Item 5)

Sr LEE Man Kwong, 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:

EMSD 6.1 As for publicity and promotion, the EMSD held a total of 10 face-to-face or online briefing sessions on knowledge related to lift and escalator safety for responsible persons (RPs) from January to June 2022, with a total attendance of over 800 people. The EMSD also conducted 173 face-to-face or online outreach activities at schools and elderly centres from January to June 2022 to provide the tips on safe use of lifts and escalators, with a total attendance of over 6 000 people.

The EMSD told the meeting that the 10th issue of the Lift and Escalator Newsletter had been published in June 2022 and its 11th issue was expected to be published in December 2022. The EMSD welcomed members' contributions or suggestions on topics for reference.

EMSD 6.2 The results of the latest round of maintenance price survey on lifts at private residential and commercial premises were uploaded to the Responsible Persons' Corner on the EMSD website in May 2022. Information on the maintenance price survey results would continue to be updated on a half-yearly basis, and the results of the next survey were tentatively scheduled to be released in November 2022.

EMSD 6.3 The EMSD launched the Quality Lift Services Recognition Scheme to encourage RPs to carry out lift modernisation and raise their capability

to manage and provide quality lift services. As at July 2022, the EMSD received 140 applications, involving more than 1000 lifts. The EMSD was promoting the scheme to RPs through various channels, including conducting publicity and promotional activities in individual districts, and producing short videos of awardees sharing their insights.

EMSD 6.4 The EMSD remarked that RPs should pay regular attention to the operation of lifts and escalators, and checked their operation before they were opened to passengers. To facilitate lift and escalator RPs' early identification of common problems affecting lift and escalator safety, the EMSD specially compiled a checklist for the use of frontline staff. Frontline staff could conveniently find potential problems by following the instructions of the checklist, and then seek professional advice from registered contractors in a timely manner. The checklists were being distributed to PRs as attachments to the renewed use permits.

EMSD 6.5 The EMSD planned to enhance its collaboration with RPs to strengthen the promotion of lift and escalator safety. The plan included joint seminars on safety promotion, RPs' responsibility and the Quality Lift Services Recognition Scheme, joint meetings on technological exchanges and site visits, the sharing of innovative technologies for improving lift and escalator safety, as well as the dissemination of promotional messages via the Lift & Escalator Newsletter, the EMSD's social media platforms, instant messaging software, digital logbook and so on.

7 Progress Report of the Working Group on Matters Relating to the Trade (Agenda item 6)

Ir HO Sau-chiu, Convener of the Working Group on Matters Relating to the Trade, reported on the work progress of the working group. The discussion on the progress report at the meeting was as follows:

EMSD 7.1 The EMSD and the trade continuously reviewed the paths of training of registered workers, with a view to refining their progression ladders. Some registered contractors were organising certificate programmes in mechanical/electrical engineering accredited at level 2 or 3 under the Qualifications Framework to provide tailor-made content and flexible learning environment, with a view to enhancing the skills and knowledge of the staff to meet the actual needs and working conditions of their companies and the trade. At present, two registered contractors had submitted applications to the Hong Kong Council Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications regarding the relevant programmes. These qualifications would become recognised as the required qualification concerning the application for worker registration.

7.1 Also, the Vocational Training Council (VTC), in collaboration with the trade and the EMSD, launched the first programme of “Professional Diploma Meister in Lift and Escalator Engineering” successfully in June 2022. The programme was the first professional-qualification-based programme which was pitched at level 5 under the Qualifications Framework (i.e. degree level) in Hong Kong. As for the future direction in this regard, the Working Group agreed that they should consider organising a certificate programme for lift workers of supervisory level which was to be pitched at level 4 under the Qualifications Framework. Apart from meeting industry needs, the certificate programme could serve as a bridging course to the Professional Diploma Meister programme and further improve the career progression pathway. The VTC would begin to study the feasibility of organising a certificate programme for lift workers of supervisory level to be pitched at level 4 under the Qualifications Framework.

EMSD 7.2 The EMSD had engaged the Department of Electrical Engineering of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University to conduct a technical study on parts and components of lifts, with a view to formulating measures on the inspection and monitoring of the condition of the parts and components and relevant maintenance and replacement strategies. The scope of the study included the service life spans and premature ageing of major electrical parts and components of lifts such as timers, levelling sensors and speed sensors. The study was aimed at understanding the factors affecting the reliability and service life spans of the parts and components concerned and the basic requirements for proper maintenance of electrical parts and components.

When basic tests had been carried out on the parts and components identified by the study team, the team would study the service life spans of various major electrical parts and components in accordance with the international standard IEEE 1205-2014. So far the study had been making good progress and the EMSD would present the findings in due course.

EMSD 7.3 The EMSD was actively exploring the feasibility of carrying out lift maintenance with the use of remote monitoring system, in response to challenges posed by ageing population and business growth for registered lift contractors. The EMSD planned to invite lift contractors to join a six-month pilot scheme which was aimed at evaluating the effectiveness of remote monitoring system in the areas of lift fault diagnostic, emergency plan, etc. Also, comparative field tests would be conducted to make comparison between the maintenance results of remote monitoring system and that of routine maintenance works. The EMSD would draw up guidelines according to the tests results, grant approval-in-principle on a case-by-case basis regarding the use of remote monitoring system for enhancing the monitoring of the condition and usability of lifts, and allow contractors to reduce the maintenance

frequency without compromising safety.

- EMSD 7.4 To enhance RPs' understanding about the risks of their aged lifts so as to promote lift modernisation works, the EMSD engaged a consultant to carry out an on-site risk assessment for 27 aged lifts during the period from January to March 2022. The 27 pilot cases were assessed based on the newly established standard applicable to the Greater Bay Area. It took around half a day on average to complete the on-site assessment for each of the lifts. The risk assessment included reviewing the operational management, maintenance status, configuration and the availability of relevant safety devices of the lifts. The EMSD would present the results of the pilot assessment exercise in due course.

8 Recent Trade Matters (Agenda Item 7)

The EMSD briefed members on recent trade matters as follows:

- EMSD 8.1 The EMSD reported on the changes in the number of practitioners from 2018 to 2022. From 2020 up to the present, the number of registered engineers recorded a net increase of 7 persons, accounting for about 1.8% of the total number of registered engineers, and the number of registered workers recorded a net increase of 237 persons, accounting for about 4% of the total number of registered workers. The number of general workers slightly dropped from 2 143 persons in 2020 to 2 109 persons as at June 2022. The EMSD said that number of general workers would rise back to above the original level after the intake of apprentices in the next quarter.
- EMSD 8.2 The EMSD reported on the numbers of reportable incidents for every thousand lift and escalator incidents from 2016 to August 2022.
- The total number of lift and escalator incidents remained low. Public education and publicity activities conducted by the Government and the trade helped enhance the awareness of safety on lifts/escalators and reduce incidents.

In respect of lift equipment fault incidents, most incidents were related to uneven levelling of lift cars. The EMSD would continue to step up inspection against incidents relating to uneven levelling of lift cars. For escalator equipment fault incidents, the commonest causes for the incidents included unsynchronised handrail operation and sudden stop of handrail resulting in passenger injury. The EMSD would continue to step up inspection against incidents relating to the operation of handrails.

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| EMSD | 8.3 | The EMSD reported that during March to August 2022, 10 summonses were issued in relation to the prosecution of persons/companies that were suspected of having contravened the LEO. The suspected contraventions mainly included failure to obtain the type approval relevant to the lift before installation, failure to ensure that the lift works were carried out properly and provision of information that a person ought reasonably to have known to be false or misleading in a material respect. |
| EMSD | 8.4 | The EMSD introduced the review on the fees for various items under the Lifts and Escalators (Fees) Regulation. Based on the preliminary review, there might be room for 10-15% increase for the fees of the listed items. The Government would take an overview on socio-economic situation and affordability before making a decision, and would consult the trade in due course. |
| EMSD | 8.5 | The EMSD briefed members on the work related to the implementation of the Digital Logbook for Lifts and Escalators. The Digital Logbook was currently put on trial run at different lifts/escalators and would officially be launched in the fourth quarter of 2022. Members generally expressed support for the Digital Logbook for Lifts and Escalators. |

9 Any Other Business (Agenda Item 8)

- 9.1 No other business was raised at the meeting.

10 Date of Next Meeting

- 10.1 The meeting ended at 4:30 p.m. The date of next meeting was to be confirmed.