

## LegCo Panel on Manpower

### Follow-up to meeting on 20 May 2004

At the LegCo Manpower Panel meeting held on 20 May 2004, during the discussion on Hong Kong's Occupational Safety Performance in 2003, the Administration undertook, at Members' requests, to provide:-

- (a) information on victims of occupational injuries in all workplaces;
- (b) case analyses of fatal industrial accidents in 2003;
- (c) information on the causes for 71 cases of natural deaths in workplaces in 2003; and
- (d) response on whether the Employees' Compensation Ordinance will be amended to cover cases of natural death at work, in the light of the practice on the Mainland.

### Information on victims of occupational injuries in all workplaces

#### *Sex and age*

2. Out of the 42,022 occupational injuries in 2003, 28,187 victims were men and 13,835 were women, and the distribution by age group is shown in the table below.

Age Group	No. of Occupational Injuries	Percentage of Total (%)
< 15 - 19	1,305	3.1
20 - 24	4,464	10.6
25 - 29	5,183	12.3
30 - 34	4,846	11.5
35 - 39	5,059	12.0
40 - 44	6,383	15.2
45 - 49	6,337	15.1
50 - 54	4,747	11.3
55 - 59	2,490	5.9
60 - 64	832	2.0
65 or over	376	0.9
Total	42,022	100

### ***Illegal Worker***

3. According to the record of the Labour Department, out of all the injuries reported under the Employees Compensation Ordinance (“ECO”), only one case involved illegal worker. The worker concerned, a Vietnamese, held a forged Hong Kong Permanent Identity Card.

### **Case analyses of fatal industrial accidents in 2003**

4. In 2003, 28 workers were fatally injured as a result of industrial accidents. Of these, 25 fatalities occurred on construction sites. The most common causes of the accidents were fall of person from height, accounting for 32.1%, struck by falling objects, accounting for 10.7%, and contact with electricity or electric discharge, accounting for 10.7%. A breakdown of the cases by type of accident is shown in the table below.

Type of Accident (2003)	No. of cases	Percentage of Total (%)
Trapped in or between objects	1	3.6
Slip, trip or fall on same level	2	7.1
Fall of person from height	9	32.1
Striking against or struck by moving object	2	7.1
Contact with electricity or electric discharge	3	10.7
Trapped by collapsing or overturning object	2	7.1
Struck by falling object	3	10.7
Contact with moving machinery or object being machined	1	3.6
Drowning	2	7.1
Exposure to fire	1	3.6
Injured by fall of ground	1	3.6
Asphyxiation	1	3.6
Total	28	100

5. For worthy cases, we will publish details of the accidents as well as the necessary preventive measures for reference by the industry upon completion of investigations and the ensuing legal proceedings. A set of our fatal accident casebooks for cases before 2003 is forwarded herewith for Members’ information.

## **Causes for 71 cases of natural deaths in workplaces in 2003**

6. In 2003, 71 persons died of natural causes such as cardiovascular disease, cerebrovascular disease, etc. A detailed breakdown is shown in the table below.

Cause	No. of cases
Cardiovascular disease e.g. ischaemic heart disease	37
Cerebrovascular disease e.g. cerebrovascular accident	22
Respiratory tract disease e.g. asthma, chronic bronchitis	4
Others: e.g. nephropathy, haemoperitoneum due to ruptured hepatic tumour, acute alcohol intoxication	8
Total	71

### **Response on whether the Employees' Compensation Ordinance will be amended to cover cases of natural death at work**

7. We understand that the work injury insurance legislation (《工傷保險條例》) implemented on the Mainland on 1 January 2004 covers, among other things, sudden deaths due to acute illness happening during working hours and while the employed was on duty. However, it is important to note that this legislation evolves from a social insurance system that encompasses a whole range of social benefits, including benefits for illness or injuries unrelated to employment. It is therefore inappropriate to draw direct comparison between the employees' compensation benefits on the Mainland and in Hong Kong.

8. Under the ECO of the HKSAR, if personal injury is caused by accident arising out of and in the course of the employment of an employee, his employer shall be liable for compensation. As far as we know, the court has awarded compensation in cases where there is expert medical evidence that the performance of the work arising out of employment has aggravated the deceased's pre-existing disease or generated the disease resulting in his death. As in all other claims under ECO, whether or not an employee's injury or death arose out of, and in the course of, his employment depends on the facts and circumstances of the case.

Labour Department  
June 2004

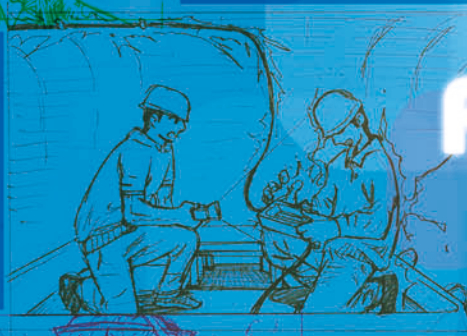
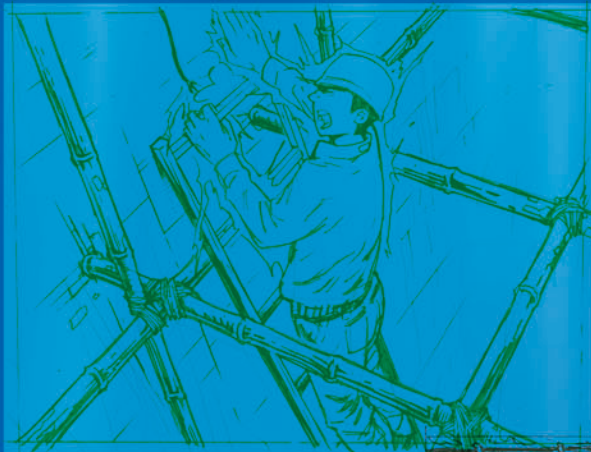
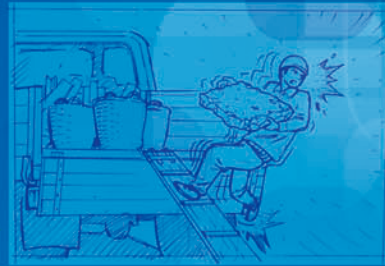
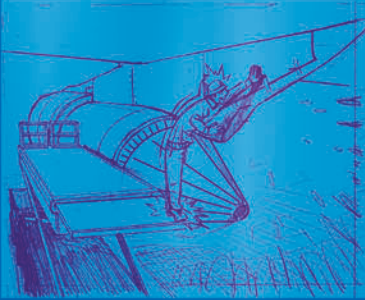
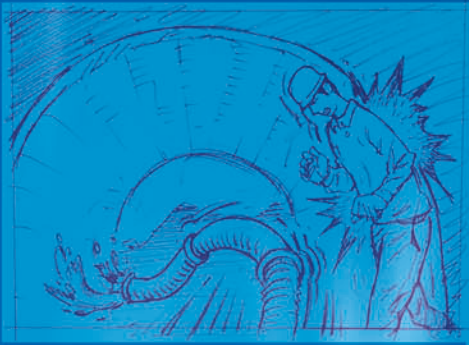
# An Analysis on

# Occupational

# Fatalities

# Casebook

# Volume 1



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Safety Safety  
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## **F O R E W O R D**

**W**orkplace accidents are not just causing sufferings to the victims and their families. They also incur costs arising from work stoppage, insurance claims, medical and rehabilitation expenses.

It is recognized that most workplace accidents are preventable. Very often, the scenarios and causes have common phenomena. Unless the causes of workplace accidents are properly understood, lessons will not be learned and suitable improvements will not be made to secure the future safety and health protection of those who may be affected by a work activity. The responsible persons of workplaces need to understand why events happened, and act to make sure that they do not happen again.

This casebook gathers a collection of fatal accident at work cases edited in a way for experience sharing on accident prevention. It aims at providing precious lessons to those who are exposed to work activities and the management personnel, as well as case studies for safety training institutes.

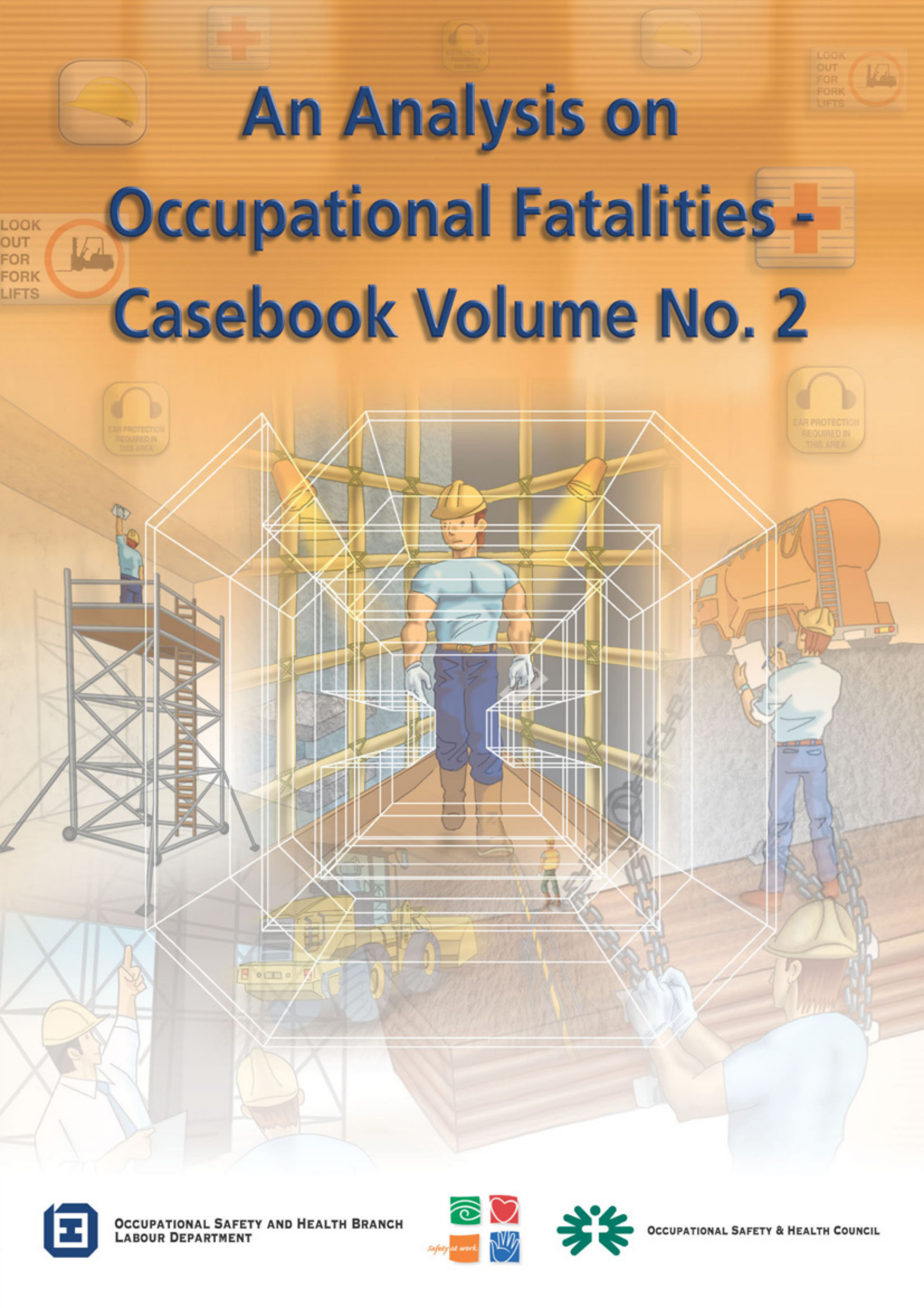
**Occupational Safety and Health Branch  
Labour Department  
August 2003**



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# Occupational Fatalities - Casebook Volume No. 2



OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH BRANCH  
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This edition      December 2003

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**Occupational Safety and Health Branch**  
**Labour Department**  
**December 2003**



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