

For information on
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Legislative Council Panel on Manpower
Hong Kong's Occupational Safety Performance in 2006

PURPOSE

This paper briefs Members on Hong Kong's occupational safety performance in 2006.

BACKGROUND

2. The Labour Department ("LD") is committed to protecting the safety and health of people at work by ensuring that risks in workplaces are properly managed and controlled through legislation, law enforcement, promotion, education and training.

3. Through the concerted efforts of all parties concerned, including employers, employees, contractors, safety practitioners and the Government, Hong Kong's safety performance has been improving since 1998, with both the number and the rate of occupational accidents falling steadily. However, for 2006, both the number and the rate of occupational accidents showed a slight rise as compared with 2005.

RECENT STATISTICS

Occupational Injuries

4. The number of occupational injuries in all workplaces in 2006 stood at 46 937, representing an increase of 6% over 2005, while the injury rate per 1 000 employees rose to 18.4, up by 3.3%. (**Table 1**)

Table 1: Occupational Injuries in All Workplaces

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006 (Compared with 2005)
Fatal cases	176	210	171	187	187	187 (0.0%)
Non-fatal cases	53 543	46 813	41 851	43 838	44 080	46 750 (+6.1%)
Total	53 719	47 023	42 022	44 025	44 267	46 937 (+6.0%)
Injury rate/ 1 000 employees	21.6	19.2	17.7	18.1	17.8	18.4 (+3.3%)

5. In 2006, the sectors that had notable increases in accident figures as compared with 2005 include:

- (a) the business services (including import and export trade) that recorded 5 568 cases, up by 12%;
- (b) the transport and related services that recorded 5 134 cases, up by 11.5%;
- (c) the sanitary and similar services that recorded 2 366 cases, up by 19%;
and
- (d) the catering services that recorded 9 294 cases, up by 4.4%.

The above four sectors have accounted for 71% of the overall increase in occupational injuries. However, most of the accidents were of a minor nature and were mainly due to incorrect manual handling or carrying, slipping or tripping on same level, striking against objects, unsafe use of hand tools and accidental contact with hot surfaces or substances. A breakdown of the occupational injuries in all workplaces in 2006 by major economic activities is at **Annex 1**.

Industrial accidents

6. The number of industrial accidents for all sectors in 2006 stood at 17 286, representing an increase of 2.2% over 2005. The accident rate per 1 000 workers rose from 30.6 in 2005 to 31.5 in 2006, up by 2.7%. (**Table 2**)

Table 2: Industrial Accidents in All Sectors

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006 (Compared with 2005)
Fatal cases	34	25	28	24	29	26 (-10.3%)
Non-fatal cases	28 484	22 428	17 221	17 509	16 888	17 260 (+2.2%)
Total	28 518	22 453	17 249	17 533	16 917	17 286 (+2.2%)
Accident rate/ 1 000 workers	44.6	37.4	31.3	31.5	30.6	31.5 (+2.7%)

7. There were 26 industrial fatalities in 2006, representing a decrease of 10.3% over 2005. 16 of them occurred on construction sites, 6 in the manufacturing industry and 4 in the transport and related services, storage and other repairing services. Their causes were fall of person from height (11 cases), striking against or struck by moving object (3 cases), trapped by collapsing or overturning object (3 cases), asphyxiation (3 cases), trapped in or between objects (2 cases), struck by falling object (2 cases), drowning (1 case) and exposure to fire (1 case).

Accidents in the Construction Industry

8. The high-risk construction industry recorded 3 400 industrial accidents in 2006 with an accident rate at 64.3 per 1 000 workers, a drop of 4.2% in the figure, but a rise of 7.4% in the accident rate. The increase of accident rate was mainly attributed to a decrease (10.8%) in the construction workforce in the said period. The number of industrial fatalities had fallen from 25 in 2005 to 16 in 2006, a decrease of 36%. (**Table 3**)

Table 3: Industrial Accidents in Construction Industry

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006 (Compared with 2005)
Fatal cases	28	24	25	17	25	16 (-36.0%)
Non-fatal cases	9 178	6 215	4 342	3 816	3 523	3 384 (-3.9%)
Total	9 206	6 239	4 367	3 833	3 548	3 400 (-4.2%)
Accident rate/ 1 000 workers	114.6	85.2	68.1	60.3	59.9	64.3 (+7.4%)

9. Of the 16 industrial fatalities which occurred on construction sites, their causes were fall of person from height (9 cases), trapped in or between objects (1 case), striking against or struck by moving object (1 case), trapped by collapsing or overturning object (1 case), struck by falling object (1 case) and asphyxiation (3 cases). The most common types of construction accidents are striking against or struck by moving object (605 cases or 17.8%), slip, trip or fall on the same level (603 cases or 17.7%) and injured whilst lifting and carrying (536 cases or 15.8%). A detailed breakdown by type of accident is at **Annex 2**.

10. It is noteworthy that there has been an increase in accidents in repair, maintenance, alteration and addition (“RMAA”) works over the last few years. In 2006, there were 1 697 RMAA accidents that accounted for 49.9% of all construction accidents, as compared to 1 509 accidents and 42.5% in 2005.

Accidents in the Catering Industry

11. The catering industry continued to rank top among all industries in terms of the number of accidents. The number of industrial accidents increased from 8 902 in 2005 to 9 294 in 2006, up by 4.4%, whilst the accident rate per 1 000 workers decreased from 47.3 in 2005 to 47.2 in 2006, down by 0.2% (**Table 4**). A detailed breakdown of the accidents in the catering industry by type of accident is at **Annex 3**.

Table 4: Industrial accidents in Catering Industry

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006 (Compared with 2005)
Fatal cases	0	0	0	0	0	0 (---)
Non-fatal cases	11 914	10 149	8 527	9 410	8 902	9 294 (+4.4%)
Total	11 914	10 149	8 527	9 410	8 902	9 294 (+4.4%)
Accident rate/ 1 000 workers	61.5	54.7	49.6	51.5	47.3	47.2 (-0.2%)

PREVENTIVE MEASURES TAKEN

12. In 2006, LD has planned and implemented a series of preventive measures in the form of enforcement campaigns, promotional visits, safety seminars with a view to reducing the accident tolls.

Enforcement campaigns

13. In 2006, 17 enforcement campaigns were launched focusing on a wide range of safety issues, including safety of tower cranes, safety of construction vehicles/mobile plant, safe use of ladders, safety of RMAA works with particular attention on truss-out bamboo scaffolds, work-at-height safety, underground sewage pipe work safety, cargo and container handling safety, catering safety, and fire and chemical safety. During these safety campaigns, stringent enforcement actions were taken and improvement notices/suspension notices were issued whenever necessary to secure compliance.

14. Of these 17 enforcement campaigns, the one targeting at RMAA works focusing on truss-out bamboo scaffolds was launched in April and May 2006. Throughout the campaign period, site inspections were conducted on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays in addition to those made during normal office hours. Rigorous enforcement action had been taken with 30 prosecutions initiated and 22 improvement notices issued.

15. In the light of two fatal accidents involving bamboo scaffoldings that happened in August 2006, two further enforcement campaigns were launched in September and October 2006 respectively. These campaigns were targeted at work-at-height and scaffolding safety. Strict enforcement action had been taken with a total of 120 prosecutions, 74 improvement notices and 66 suspension notices initiated. Towards the end of the year, another round of enforcement campaign focusing on construction safety was launched in December 2006. 45 prosecutions were initiated with 37 improvement notices and 8 suspension notices issued during this exercise.

Promotion, Publicity and Safety Seminars

16. In the year 2006, we launched, among others, intensive publicity campaigns to arouse the safety awareness of all parties involved in RMAA works. These include:

- (a) broadcasting of TV and radio API on truss-out scaffold safety;
- (b) broadcasting of 2-minute RMAA-related safety documentaries on RoadShow and First Vision;
- (c) broadcasting of TV API on KCRC;
- (d) broadcasting of 8-second commercials on Commercial Radio;
- (e) broadcasting of mini-drama in RTHK radio programme;
- (f) displaying posters at escalator crowns of MTR and KCR stations;
- (g) placing advertisements on bus bodies;
- (h) staging roving exhibitions in shopping malls;
- (i) joining hands with the Provisional Construction Industry Co-ordination Board (known as Construction Industry Council from 1 February 2007), Occupational Safety & Health Council (“OSHC”), other government departments, trade associations and workers’ unions to launch a large-scale “work-at-height” safety campaign for the construction industry, targeting at scaffolding work, which also included an “Outstanding Scaffolder in Occupational Safety and Health” Award Scheme;
- (j) organising scaffolding safety seminars with OSHC and Hong Kong Construction Industry Employees General Union for frontline workers;

- (k) publicising two new posters, the “Case Book of Occupational Fatalities Related to Renovation and Maintenance Works” and the “Case Book of Occupational Fatalities Related to Truss-out Bamboo Scaffolding Works” for reference by workers and members of the public; and
- (l) introducing new categories of awards to contractors and sub-contractors undertaking RMAA works with outstanding safety performance in the large scale territory-wide Construction Industry Safety Award Scheme 2006/07 launched recently.

SME Sponsorship Scheme for Work-at-height Fall Arresting Equipment for Renovation and Maintenance Work

17. In view of the possible financial difficulties faced by small and medium-sized building contractors in purchasing safety equipment, LD and OSHC have jointly launched a subsidy scheme since October 2005 to help them purchase fall-arresting equipment for those working-at-height.

18. A subsidy of up to \$3,000 is offered to proprietors or contractors of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to purchase a Transportable Temporary Anchor Device, safety harness, fall arresting device and an independent lifeline. All subsidised SMEs must deploy their employees to attend the related OSHC safety training courses offered free of charge.

19. According to a study on the safety of truss-out scaffolds carried out by the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology and commissioned by OSHC, the use of T-shaped metal brackets could help overcome the difficulties in fixing and removing the expansion anchor bolts at lower positions. To encourage traders to use safety equipment of higher standard, LD and OSHC made a decision in October 2006 to increase the subsidy ceiling of the above-mentioned scheme by \$500 to \$3,500 to further assist applicants to purchase up to a maximum of five T-shaped metal brackets.

20. Since the scheme was launched, a total of 309 applications have been approved up to 31 May 2007 and the subsidy granted is \$934,290.

SME Sponsorship Scheme for Safe Working in Confined Spaces

21. OSHC has also launched a subsidy scheme since 2004 to enhance work safety in confined spaces, such as manholes, sewage pipes and water tanks. Under the scheme, OSHC offers a maximum grant of \$10,000 for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) with financial difficulties to purchase gas testing equipment. OSHC also offers financial assistance for SMEs to conduct

risk assessment. The subsidy ceiling for this purpose is \$3,000 and each SME could be subsidised up to a maximum of three times within the year. However, an SME is not entitled to get subsidies for procuring gas testing equipment and risk assessment service simultaneously. All subsidised SMEs must nominate their employees to attend the related OSHC training courses offered free of charge.

22. Since the scheme was launched, OSHC has approved 179 applications up to 31 May 2007 and the subsidy granted is \$1,464,379.

THE WAY FORWARD

23. LD will continue to keep up its efforts to reduce the work accident toll by working with all stakeholders, including OSHC, the Construction Industry Council, trade associations, workers' unions, professional bodies as well as other Government Bureaux/Departments. We will explore new ways to establish and maintain an effective occupational safety and health culture in a changing environment, so that both employers and employees can become increasingly aware of the importance of maintaining safety at work. The new initiatives include:

- (a) to step up promotional efforts to enhance safety and health awareness and foster a stronger safety culture in the construction and catering industries;
- (b) to step up promotional efforts to enhance safety and health awareness in other trades with notable increase of occupational accidents;
- (c) to launch a Customer Service Teams Project with the Social Welfare Department, through which volunteers will visit small and medium-sized establishments and provide them with essential occupational safety and health information;
- (d) to launch publicity campaigns for the construction industry targeting at scaffolding safety and RMAA works with particular emphasis on the safe use of truss-out scaffolds and ladders;
- (e) to step up the promotion of safe use of heavy lifting equipment and loadshifting machinery on construction sites and industrial undertakings;
- (f) to step up safety publicity for operators of container yards and cargo handling areas;

- (g) to continue the sponsorship schemes in collaboration with OSHC providing financial assistance to small and medium-sized enterprises to purchase suitable safety equipment;
- (h) to issue new safety publications including guidance notes on the safe use of chemicals in the catering industry and a new case book on analysis of occupational fatalities; and
- (i) to secure compliance by mounting enforcement campaigns the following high-risk industries and hazardous operations –
 - construction, in particular RMAA works, catering, container handling, business services and sanitary services; and
 - work-at-height, hazardous substances, ladders, heavy plant and equipment.

Labour Department
June 2007

**Occupational Injuries in All Workplaces
in 2006
- analysed by Major Economic Activity -**

二零零六年所有工作地點之職業傷亡個案以主要經濟行業分析

Major Economic Activity 主要經濟行業		2005 二零零五年	2006 二零零六年	Change 增減	Percentage Change 增減率
Agriculture and Fishing	漁農業	148 (1)	162	14	9.5%
Mining and Quarrying	採礦及採石業	2	0	-2	-100.0%
Manufacturing	製造業	4 110 (14)	4 228 (21)	118	2.9%
Electricity and Gas	電力及燃氣業	65	50	-15	-23.1%
Construction	建造業	3 667 (41)	3 499 (20)	-168	-4.6%
Wholesale & Retail Trades, Restaurants and Hotels	批發、零售、飲食及 酒店業	13 926 (15)	14 665 (26)	739	5.3%
Transport & Related Services, Storage and Communication	運輸及有關行業、倉 庫及通訊業	4 924 (33)	5 491 (29)	567	11.5%
Financing, Insurance, Real Estate and Business Services (including Import & Export Trade)	金融、保險、地產及 商用服務業（包括進 出口貿易業）	5 276 (52)	5 911 (55)	635	12.0%
Community, Social & Personal Services	社區、社會及個人服 務業	12 136 (31)	12 921 (36)	785	6.5%
Activities not adequately defined	未能介定之行業	13	10	-3	-23.1%
TOTAL	總數	44 267 (187)	46 937 (187)	2 670	6.0%

Notes:

- Occupational injuries (including industrial accidents) are injury cases arising from work accidents, resulting in death or incapacity for work for three consecutive days, and reported under the Employees' Compensation Ordinance. Since 1.1.1998, Labour Department has used the date of occurrence of an injury as the basis for computing work injury statistics instead of the date of reporting in order to reflect more accurately the number of work injuries occurring in the year.
- Figures in brackets denote the number of fatalities.
- The above injury figures are recorded as at 29 March 2007.

註釋:

- 職業傷亡個案是指根據《僱員補償條例》呈報由工作意外引致死亡或失去工作能力連續3天以上的受傷個案（包括工業意外個案由1998年1月1日開始，勞工處採用個案發生日期替代個案呈報日期作為編算工作傷亡統計數據的基礎，以便更準確地反映所述時段內發生的工傷個案。
- 括號內的數字顯示死亡人數。
- 上列傷亡數字為截至2007年3月29日所紀錄的數字。

**Industrial Accidents in Construction Industry
in 2006
- analysed by Type of Accident -
二零零六年建造業之工業意外個案以意外類別分析**

Type of Accident 意外類別		2005 二零零五年	2006 二零零六年	Change 增減
Trapped in or between objects	受困於物件之內或物件之間	113	99 (1)	-14
Injured whilst lifting or carrying	提舉或搬運物件時受傷	544	536	-8
Slip, trip or fall on same level	滑倒、絆倒或在同一高度跌倒	648	603	-45
Fall of person from height	人體從高處墮下	423 (14)	405 (9)	-18
Striking against fixed or stationary object	與固定或不動的物件碰撞	362 (1)	382	20
Striking against or struck by moving object	被移動物件或與移動物件碰撞	674 (1)	605 (1)	-69
Stepping on object	踏在物件上	39	37	-2
Exposure to or contact with harmful substance	暴露於有害物質中或接觸有害物質	21 (1)	20	-1
Contact with electricity or electric discharge	觸電或接觸放出的電流	20 (1)	14	-6
Trapped by collapsing or overturning object	受困於倒塌或翻側的物件	11 (3)	5 (1)	-6
Struck by falling object	遭墮下的物件撞擊	151	131 (1)	-20
Struck by moving vehicle	遭移動中的車輛撞倒	22 (2)	33	11
Contact with moving machinery or object being machined	觸及開動中的機器或觸及以機器製造中的物件	290 (2)	234	-56
Drowning	遇溺	0	0	---
Exposure to fire	火警燒傷	8	16	8
Exposure to explosion	爆炸受傷	2	3	1
Injured by hand tool	被手工具所傷	165	225	60
Injured by fall of ground	泥土傾瀉受傷	1	0	-1
Asphyxiation	窒息	0	3 (3)	3
Contact with hot surface or substance	觸及灼熱表面或物質	24	20	-4
Injured by animal	被動物所傷	2	3	1
Injured in workplace violence	於工作場所暴力事件中受傷	0	0	---
Others	其他類別	28	26	-2
Total	總計	3 548 (25)	3 400 (16)	-148

Notes:

- Industrial accidents refer to injuries and deaths arising from industrial activities in industrial undertakings as defined under the Factories and Industrial Undertakings Ordinance. Since 1.1.1998, Labour Department has used the date of occurrence of an injury as the basis for computing work injury statistics instead of the date of reporting in order to reflect more accurately the number of work injuries occurring in the year.
- Figures in brackets denote the number of fatalities.
- The above accident figures are recorded as at 29 March 2007.

註釋:

- 工業意外是指在《工廠及工業經營條例》所界定的工業經營內發生的受傷或死亡意外，而這些意外是因工業活動而引致的。由1998年1月1日開始，勞工處採用個案發生日期替代個案呈報日期作為編算工作傷亡統計數據的基礎，以便更準確地反映所述時段內發生的工傷個案。
- 括號內的數字顯示死亡人數。
- 上列意外數字為截至2007年3月29日所紀錄的數字。

**Industrial Accidents in Catering Industry
in 2006
- analysed by Type of Accident -**

二零零六年飲食業之工業意外個案以意外類別分析

Type of Accident 意外類別	2005 二零零五年	2006 二零零六年	Change 增減
Trapped in or between objects 受困於物件之內或物件之間	104	122	18
Injured whilst lifting or carrying 提舉或搬運物件時受傷	1 137	1 192	55
Slip, trip or fall on same level 滑倒、絆倒或在同一高度跌倒	1 255	1 443	188
Fall of person from height 人體從高處墮下	43	52	9
Striking against fixed or stationary object 與固定或不動的物件碰撞	757	810	53
Striking against or struck by moving object 被移動物件或與移動物件碰撞	683	637	-46
Stepping on object 踏在物件上	13	10	-3
Exposure to or contact with harmful substance 暴露於有害物質中或接觸有害物質	63	69	6
Contact with electricity or electric discharge 觸電或接觸放出的電流	0	4	4
Trapped by collapsing or overturning object 受困於倒塌或翻側的物件	2	0	-2
Struck by falling object 遭墮下的物件撞擊	58	44	-14
Struck by moving vehicle 遭移動中的車輛撞倒	36	40	4
Contact with moving machinery or object being machined 觸及開動中的機器或觸及以機器製造中的物件	98	110	12
Drowning 遇溺	0	0	---
Exposure to fire 火警燒傷	14	15	1
Exposure to explosion 爆炸受傷	1	3	2
Injured by hand tool 被手工具所傷	2 307	2 420	113
Injured by fall of ground 泥土傾瀉受傷	0	0	---
Asphyxiation 窒息	0	0	---
Contact with hot surface or substance 觸及灼熱表面或物質	2 216	2 213	-3
Injured by animal 被動物所傷	97	81	-16
Injured in workplace violence 於工作場所暴力事件中受傷	0	0	---
Others 其他類別	18	29	11
Total 總計	8 902	9 294	392

Notes:

- Industrial accidents refer to injuries and deaths arising from industrial activities in industrial undertakings as defined under the Factories Industrial Undertakings Ordinance. Since 1.1.1998, Labour Department has used the date of occurrence of an injury as the basis for work injury statistics instead of the date of reporting in order to reflect more accurately the number of work injuries occurring in the year.
- The above accident figures are recorded as at 29 March 2007.

註釋:

- 工業意外是指《工廠及工業經營條例》所界定的工業經營內發生的受傷或死亡意外，而這些意外是因工業活動而引致的。由1998年1月1日開始，勞工處採用個案發生日期替代個案呈報日期作為編算工作傷亡統計數據的基礎，以便更準確地反映所時段內發生的工傷個案。
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