

For information on
21 December 2006

Legislative Council Panel on Manpower

Hong Kong's Occupational Safety Performance in the First Half of 2006

PURPOSE

This paper briefs Members on Hong Kong's occupational safety performance in the first half of 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 the first half of 2006, both the number and the rate of occupational accidents showed a small rise as compared with the same period in 2005. The increase was largely attributed to the continued and sustained growth of the local economy in the period that generated more economic and business activities and boosted total employment.

RECENT STATISTICS

Occupational Injuries

4. The number of occupational injuries in all workplaces in the first half of 2006 stood at 22 195, an increase of 8.4% over the corresponding period in 2005, while the injury rate per 1 000 employees rose from 16.5 to 17.5, up by 5.9%. (**Table 1**)

Table 1: Occupational Injuries in All Workplaces

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2005 1st half	2006 1st half (Compare d with 2005 1 st half)
Fatal cases	176	210	171	187	187	77	93 (+20.8%)
Non-fatal cases	53 543	46 813	41 851	43 838	44 080	20 390	22 102 (+8.4%)
Total	53 719	47 023	42 022	44 025	44 267	20 467	22 195 (+8.4%)
Injury rate/ 1 000 employees	21.6	19.2	17.7	18.1	17.8	16.5	17.5 (+5.9%)

5. The catering industry, transport and related services, business services (including import and export trade), sanitary and similar services, amusement and recreational services and the wholesale and retail trade were identified to have major contribution to the increase. However, most of the accidents were of a minor nature and were mainly due to incorrect manual handling or carrying, slip or trip on same level, striking against objects, unsafe use of hand tools and accidental contact with hot surface or substance. A detailed breakdown of the occupational injuries in all workplaces in the first half of 2006 by major economic activities is at **Annex 1**.

Industrial accidents

6. The number of industrial accidents for all sectors in the first half of 2006 stood at 8 110, representing an increase of 3.5% over the corresponding period in 2005. The accident rate per 1 000 workers rose from 28.4 in the first half of 2005 to 29.5 in the same period of 2006, up by 4.1%. (**Table 2**)

Table 2: Industrial Accidents in All Sectors

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2005 1 st half	2006 1 st half (Compared with 2005 1 st half)
Fatal cases	34	25	28	24	29	9	11 (+22.2%)
Non-fatal cases	28 484	22 428	17 221	17 509	16 888	7 829	8 099 (+3.4%)
Total	28 518	22 453	17 249	17 533	16 917	7 838	8 110 (+3.5%)
Accident rate/ 1 000 workers	44.6	37.4	31.3	31.5	30.6	28.4	29.5 (+4.1%)

7. There were 11 industrial fatalities in the first half of 2006 and six of them occurred on construction sites, three in the manufacturing industry and two in the transport and related services, storage and communication sector. Their causes were fall of persons from height (4 cases), striking against or struck by moving object (2 cases), trapped by collapsing or overturning object (2 cases), trapped in or between objects (1 case), exposure to fire (1 case) and asphyxiation (1 case).

Accidents in the Construction Industry

8. The high-risk construction industry recorded 1 556 industrial accidents with an accident rate at 58.1 per 1 000 workers, a drop of 1.6% in the figure, but a rise of 15.4% in the accident rate. The increase of accident rate was mainly attributed to a substantial decrease (14.8%) in the construction workforce in the said period. Although the number of industrial fatalities had fallen from 9 in the first half of 2005 to 6 in the same period of 2006, it had still the highest number of fatalities and accident rate. (**Table 3**)

Table 3: Industrial Accidents in Construction Industry

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2005 1 st half	2006 1 st half (Compared with 2005 1 st half)
Fatal cases	28	24	25	17	25	9	6 (-33.3%)
Non-fatal cases	9 178	6 215	4 342	3 816	3 523	1 573	1 550 (-1.5%)
Total	9 206	6 239	4 367	3 833	3 548	1 582	1 556 (-1.6%)
Accident rate/ 1 000 workers	114.6	85.2	68.1	60.3	59.9	50.3	58.1 (+15.4%)

9. Of the six industrial fatalities which occurred on construction sites, their causes were fall of persons from height (2 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) and asphyxiation (1 case). The most common types of construction accidents are slip, trip or fall on the same level (19.9%), striking against or struck by moving object (18.8%) and injured whilst lifting and carrying (14.8%). A detailed breakdown by type of accident is at **Annex 2**.

10. It is worthwhile to note that there has been an increase in accidents in repair, maintenance, alteration and addition (RMAA) works over recent years. In the 1st half of 2006, there were 749 RMAA accidents that accounted for 48.1% of all construction cases, as compared to 607, or 38.4%, in the same period of 2005.

Accidents in the Catering Industry

11. The catering industry ranked the top among all industries in terms of the number of accidents. The number of industrial accidents increased from 4 191 in the first half of 2005 to 4 375 in the same period of 2006, up by 4.4%, whilst the accident rate per 1 000 workers decreased from 45.0 in the first half of 2005 to 44.8 in the same period of 2006, down by 0.3% (**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	2005 1 st half	2006 1 st half (Compared with 2005 1 st half)
Fatal cases	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (---)
Non-fatal cases	11 914	10 149	8 527	9 410	8 902	4 191	4 375 (+4.4%)
Total	11 914	10 149	8 527	9 410	8 902	4 191	4 375 (+4.4%)
Accident rate/ 1 000 workers	61.5	54.7	49.6	51.5	47.3	45.0	44.8 (-0.3%)

COUNTER MEASURES TAKEN

12. To combat the rising trend of accidents, LD has planned and implemented a series of counter measures in the form of enforcement campaigns, promotional visits, safety seminars and review of resources allocation.

Enforcement campaigns

13. In the first half of 2006, seven enforcement campaigns were launched, targeting at the safety of tower cranes, use of construction vehicles/mobile plant on construction sites, safe use of ladders, minor renovation and maintenance works with particular focus on truss-out scaffolds and cargo and container handling safety. During these safety campaigns, stringent enforcement actions were taken and improvement notices/suspension notices were issued whenever necessary to crack down on the offenders.

14. Out of these seven enforcement campaigns, the one targeting at minor renovation and maintenance works with particular focus on truss-out scaffolds was launched in April and May 2006. Throughout the campaign period, site inspections were proactively conducted on Saturday afternoons, 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, another special enforcement campaign was launched in September and October 2006. The campaign was mainly targeted at work-at-height and scaffolding safety. Strict enforcement action had been taken with 120 prosecutions, 74 improvement notices and 66 suspension notices initiated in the exercise.

16. Two enforcement campaigns targeting at safety of RMAA works will be conducted at the end of 2006 and in early 2007 to further enhance the safety awareness of the contractors and workers engaged in the trade.

Promotional visits and safety seminars

17. 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 newly created 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 advertisement on bus bodies;
- (h) staging roving exhibitions in shopping malls;
- (i) joining hands with the Provisional Construction Industry Co-ordination Board (“PCICB”), Occupational Safety and 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 seminar with OSHC and Hong Kong Industry Employees General Union for frontline workers;
- (k) publicizing two new posters and a “Case Book of Occupational Fatalities Related to Renovation and Maintenance Works” for reference by workers and members of the public; and

- (1) 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 recently launched.

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

18. 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.

19. 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 related OSHC safety training courses offered free of charge.

20. 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 have in October this year made a decision 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.

21. Since the scheme was launched, a total of 271 applications have been approved up to the end of November 2006 and the subsidy granted is about \$784,000.

SME Sponsorship Scheme for Safe Working in Confined Spaces

22. 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 appoint their employees to attend related OSHC training courses offered free of charge.

23. Since the scheme was launched, OSHC has approved 138 applications up to the end of November 2006 and the subsidy granted is about \$1,122,000.

THE WAY FORWARD

24. LD will continue to keep up its efforts to reduce the work accident toll and 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 strong safety culture in the construction and catering industries;
- (b) to launch publicity campaigns for the construction industry targeting at scaffolding safety and minor renovation and maintenance works with focus on the safe use of truss-out scaffolds;
- (c) to step up the promotion of safe use of heavy lifting equipment and loadshifting machinery on construction sites and industrial undertakings;
- (d) to step up safety publicity for operators of container yards and cargo handling areas;
- (e) to enhance the sponsorship scheme jointly launched with OSHC providing financial assistance to small and medium-sized enterprises to purchase suitable fall arresting equipment for use in renovation and maintenance works; and
- (f) to issue new safety publications including guidance notes on the safe use of elevated work platforms.

**Occupational Injuries in All Workplaces
in 1st Half of 2006
- analysed by Major Economic Activity -**

二零零六年上半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		1st Half of 2005 二零零五年上半年	1st Half of 2006 二零零六年上半年	Change 增減	Percentage Change 增減率
Agriculture and Fishing	漁農業	55 (1)	67	12	21.8%
Mining and Quarrying	採礦及採石業	0	0	---	n.a.
Manufacturing	製造業	1 895 (4)	2 009 (12)	114	6.0%
Electricity and Gas	電力及燃氣業	30	21	-9	-30.0%
Construction	建造業	1 617 (15)	1 602 (9)	-15	-0.9%
Wholesale & Retail Trades, Restaurants and Hotels	批發、零售、飲食及酒店業	6 416 (7)	6 874 (14)	458	7.1%
Transport & related services, Storage and Communication	運輸及有關行業、倉庫 及通訊業	2 255 (9)	2 623 (15)	368	16.3%
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)	2 535 (24)	2 829 (27)	294	11.6%
Community, Social & Personal Services	社區、社會及個人服務業	5 653 (17)	6 159 (16)	506	9.0%
Activities not adequately defined	未能介定之行業	11	11	---	---
TOTAL	總數	20 467 (77)	22 195 (93)	1 728	8.4%

Notes:

- Occupational injuries (including industrial accidents) are injury cases arising from work accidents, resulting in death or incapacity for work of over 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 September 2006.
- Employment Size was based on the *Quarterly Report of Employment and Vacancies Statistics* published by the Census and Statistics Department. Since 2006, the number of employees in Government Sector was provided by Civil Service Bureau.
- "n.a." means not applicable

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2006年9月29日所紀錄的數字。
- 就業人數資料源自政府統計處發表的**就業及空缺按季統計報告**。由2006年開始,政府部門的僱員數字資料是由公務員事務局提供。
- "n.a." 是指不適用

**Industrial Accidents in Construction Industry
in 1st Half of 2006
- analysed by Type of Accident -**

二零零六年上半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	1st Half of 2005 二零零五年上半年	1st Half of 2006 二零零六年上半年	Change 增減
Trapped in or between objects 受困於物件之內或物件之間	51	44 (1)	-7
Injured whilst lifting or carrying 提舉或搬運物件時受傷	244	230	-14
Slip, trip or fall on same level 滑倒、絆倒或在同一高度跌倒	288	309	21
Fall of person from height 人體從高處墮下	190 (4)	171 (2)	-19
Striking against fixed or stationary object 與固定或不動的物件碰撞	173	169	-4
Striking against or struck by moving object 被移動物件或與移動物件碰撞	297	292 (1)	-5
Stepping on object 踏在物件上	14	20	6
Exposure to or contact with harmful substance 暴露於有害物質中或接觸有害物質	6	13	7
Contact with electricity or electric discharge 觸電或接觸放出的電流	7	6	-1
Trapped by collapsing or overturning object 受困於倒塌或翻側的物件	5 (1)	5 (1)	---
Struck by falling object 遭墮下的物件撞擊	64	48	-16
Struck by moving vehicle 遭移動中的車輛撞倒	9 (2)	16	7
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	122 (2)	111	-11
Drowning 遇溺	0	0	---
Exposure to fire 火警燒傷	5	13	8
Exposure to explosion 爆炸受傷	2	1	-1
Injured by hand tool 被手工具所傷	75	85	10
Injured by fall of ground 泥土傾瀉受傷	0	0	---
Asphyxiation 窒息	0	1 (1)	1
Contact with hot surface or substance 觸及灼熱表面或物質	13	13	---
Injured by animal 被動物所傷	0	1	1
Injured in workplace violence 於工作場所暴力事件中受傷	0	0	---
Others 其他類別	17	8	-9
Total 總計	1 582 (9)	1 556 (6)	-26

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 September 2006.

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2006年9月29日所紀錄的數字。

**Industrial Accidents in Catering Industry
in 1st Half of 2006
- analysed by Type of Accident -**

二零零六年上半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	1st Half of 2005 二零零五年上半年	1st Half of 2006 二零零六年上半年	Change 增減
Trapped in or between objects 受困於物件之內或物件之間	51	42	-9
Injured whilst lifting or carrying 提舉或搬運物件時受傷	488	541	53
Slip, trip or fall on same level 滑倒、絆倒或在同一高度跌倒	634	717	83
Fall of person from height 人體從高處墮下	21	22	1
Striking against fixed or stationary object 與固定或不動的物件碰撞	360	372	12
Striking against or struck by moving object 被移動物件或與移動物件碰撞	347	348	1
Stepping on object 踏在物件上	5	5	---
Exposure to or contact with harmful substance 暴露於有害物質中或接觸有害物質	26	38	12
Contact with electricity or electric discharge 觸電或接觸放出的電流	0	1	1
Trapped by collapsing or overturning object 受困於倒塌或翻側的物件	0	1	1
Struck by falling object 遭墮下的物件撞擊	32	19	-13
Struck by moving vehicle 遭移動中的車輛撞倒	10	22	12
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	56	51	-5
Drowning 遇溺	0	0	---
Exposure to fire 火警燒傷	11	8	-3
Exposure to explosion 爆炸受傷	1	3	2
Injured by hand tool 被手工具所傷	1 067	1 127	60
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	1 034	1 001	-33
Injured by animal 被動物所傷	41	42	1
Injured in workplace violence 於工作場所暴力事件中受傷	0	0	---
Others 其他類別	7	15	8
Total 總計	4 191	4 375	184

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.
- The above accident figures are recorded as at 29 September 2006.

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。
- 上列意外數字為截至2006年9月29日所紀錄的數字。