

For information on
18 November 2014

Legislative Council Panel on Manpower
Hong Kong's Occupational Safety Performance
in the First Half of 2014

Purpose

This paper briefs Members on Hong Kong's occupational safety situation in the first half of 2014.

Background

2. In the past decade, the number of occupational injuries¹ decreased from 44 025 in 2004 to 38 027 in 2013, representing a drop of 13.6%. The number of industrial accidents² also decreased from 17 533 a decade ago to 11 820 in 2013, down by 32.6%.

Recent Statistics

3. In the first half of 2014, there were 17 895 occupational injuries, among which 102 cases involved fatalities of employees at workplaces. These fatal cases included 15 industrial accidents, 7 non-industrial accidents and 3 accidents which happened on vessels. The remaining 70-odd cases were natural death cases (48 cases), cases that happened outside Hong Kong (12 cases), suspected suicides (3 cases) and others (including 8 cases pending autopsy reports).

4. The number of industrial accidents for all sectors in the first half

¹ Occupational injuries refer to injury cases in workplaces reported under the Employees' Compensation Ordinance, resulting in death or incapacity for work of over three days.

² Industrial accidents refer to injuries and deaths arising from industrial activities in industrial undertakings as defined under the Factories and Industrial Undertakings Ordinance.

of 2014 was 5 463, representing a drop of 3.6% over 5 669 in the same period of 2013. The accident rate per 1 000 workers also decreased by 4.5%, from 18.8 to 18 (**Table 1**). Most of the accidents, except those of the construction and container handling industries, were of a minor nature mainly due to “slip, trip or fall on the same level” and “incorrect manual lifting or carrying”.

Table 1 – Industrial Accidents in All Sectors

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2013 1 st half	2014 1 st half
Fatal	18	29	29	28	5	15 (+200%)
Non-fatal	13 997	13 629	12 518	11 792	5 664	5 448 (-3.8%)
Total	14 015	13 658	12 547	11 820	5 669	5 463 (-3.6%)
Accident Rate/1 000 workers	24.9	23.6	21.3	19.6	18.8	18 (-4.5%)

Note: 1. Figures in brackets denote % change of the 1st half of 2014 when compared with the same period of 2013.

2. The accident rates per thousand workers are rounded to one decimal place, whereas the relevant percentage change is calculated from unrounded accident rates.

5. There were 15 industrial fatalities in the first half of 2014, increasing by two times when compared with the same period of 2013, given that 10 construction fatalities occurred in the first quarter of 2014 which was unusually high when compared with the same period in recent years. A breakdown of the industrial accidents in all workplaces in the first half of 2014 by industry is at **Annex 1**.

Industrial Accidents in the Construction Industry

6. There were 1 533 accidents in the construction industry in the first half of 2014, up by 6.5% when compared with 1 439 in the same period of 2013. The accident rate per 1 000 workers was 38.7, up by 7.9% when compared with 35.9 in the same period of 2013 (**Table 2**). A

breakdown by type of accidents for the construction industry is at **Annex 2**. As at end-October 2014, there were 19 fatal accidents in the construction sector, compared with 12 in the same period of 2013.

7. There were 19 construction fatalities in 2014 as at end-October, most of which involved work-at-height (6 cases), lifting operation (3 cases) and electrocution (3 cases).

Table 2 – Industrial Accidents in the Construction Industry

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2013 1 st half	2014 1 st half
Fatal	9	23	24	22	3	12 (+300%)
Non-fatal	2 875	3 089	3 136	3 210	1 463	1 521 (+5.9%)
Total	2 884	3 112	3 160	3 232	1 439	1 533 (+6.5%)
Accident Rate /1 000 workers	52.1	49.7	44.3	40.8	35.9	38.7 (+7.9%)

Note: 1. Figures in brackets denote % change of the 1st half of 2014 when compared with the same period of 2013.

2. The accident rates per thousand workers are rounded to one decimal place, whereas the relevant percentage change is calculated from unrounded accident rates.

Industrial Accidents in the Food and Beverage Services Sector

8. The number of industrial accidents in the food and beverage services sector topped all industries. In the first half of 2014, the number of accidents decreased to 2 643, down by 7.1% when compared with 2 844 in the same period of 2013. The accident rate per 1 000 workers decreased from 23.9 to 21.9, down by 8.7% (**Table 3**). A breakdown of the accidents in the food and beverage services sector by type of accidents is at **Annex 3**.

Table 3 – Industrial Accidents in the Food and Beverage Services Sector

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2013 1 st half	2014 1 st half
Fatal	0	0	1	0	0	0 (N.A.)
Non-fatal	7 541	7 158	6 215	5 740	2 844	2 643 (-7.1%)
Total	7 541	7 158	6 216	5 740	2 844	2 643 (-7.1%)
Accident Rate/1 000 workers	34.7	30.9	26.4	24.2	23.9	21.9 (-8.7%)

Note: 1. Figures in brackets denote % change of the 1st half of 2014 when compared with the same period of 2013.

2. The accident rates per thousand workers are rounded to one decimal place, whereas the relevant percentage change is calculated from unrounded accident rates.

Industrial Accidents in the Container Handling Industry

9. In the first half of 2014, the number of industrial accidents involving container handling was 28, down by about 15.2% when compared with 33 in the same period of 2013. Common accidents included “slip, trip or fall on same level” (9 cases), “injured whilst lifting or carrying” (3 cases) and “striking against fixed or stationary object” (3 cases). There were 3 industrial fatalities involving container handling in the first half of 2014; whilst no industrial fatalities occurred in the same period of 2013.

Counter Measures

10. Labour Department (“LD”) continues to safeguard the safety and health of people at work through inspection and enforcement, publicity and promotion, as well as education and training, with a view to minimising hazards at workplaces. As the number of fatalities and accident rate in the construction industry topped all industries, the food and beverage industry recorded the highest number of industrial accidents

among all industries, and three fatal accidents occurred in the container handling industry in the first half of 2014, we are particularly concerned about the occupational safety situation of these three industries.

Measures to enhance Occupational Safety and Health (“OSH”)

(I) Construction Industry

11. With the commencement of mega works projects and a large number of maintenance works projects for old buildings, and in anticipation of the continuous construction boom, there are more and more job opportunities in the construction industry. The number of construction site workers has increased from over 50 000 in 2009 to 80 000 in the first half of 2014. These developments pose challenges to the occupational safety in the construction industry. LD has formulated a set of counter measures, including stepping up inspection and monitoring efforts, tackling systemic risks, enhancing the OSH merit and demerit system, and strengthening publicity and training.

Stepping up Inspection and Monitoring Efforts

12. Apart from conducting over 50 000 regular site inspections each year, LD will from time to time launch special enforcement operations targeting high-risk processes, such as work-at-height, electrical work, tunnelling works and lifting operations. In the past two years, LD has stepped up inspections to construction sites and taken rigorous enforcement action. In the special enforcement operations in 2013, LD conducted around 8 000 inspections, with over 640 prosecutions initiated and more than 340 suspension notices (“SNs”) and 570 improvement notices (“INs”) issued. The number of prosecutions taken and enforcement notices issued in 2013 increased by over 100% when compared with 2011. In the first nine months of 2014, LD has further stepped up special enforcement operations, with a total of over 360 SNs issued and more than 500 prosecutions to be initiated. LD will continue to conduct more special enforcement operations to deter work practices contravening work safety requirements.

13. In addition, through stepping up liaison with major works project proponents, LD urges the contractors concerned to, in respect of high-risk processes (such as operation of heavy machinery, tunnelling works, etc.), strengthen their site safety management systems, strengthen the participation of professional resident site staff in monitoring work safety, and step up safety audits for major works projects so as to eliminate potential work hazards. To curb systemic safety risks at source more effectively, LD will also continue to urge contractors and site management personnel to incorporate safety elements in their work method statements and designs in a timely manner during the project design, tendering and preparatory stages as well as the construction period.

14. As regards the work safety of marine construction works, the Marine Department (“MD”) will, pursuant to the relevant legislation regulating local vessels, require the responsible persons of such works to provide suitable protective clothing and equipment to workers working on vessels, and to ensure the provision of sufficient rescue equipment on board. In addition, under the relevant OSH legislation, LD would require proprietors/ employers to assess whether workers engaged in construction works adjacent to or over water are liable to fall with a risk of drowning, and provide secure fencing and rescue equipment for prevention of drowning at the workplaces with the associated risks; and require employers to ensure their employees wear lifejackets where there is a drowning hazard at work. MD and LD would conduct a joint special operation to inspect the safety condition of the workplaces carrying out marine construction works, and would take enforcement actions if breaches of safety legislation are discovered.

Tackling Systemic Risks

15. In view of the spate of serious incidents involving high-risk processes, such as lifting operations, work-at-height, tunnelling works and electrical work in recent years, LD has conducted in-depth work safety audits on these processes and analyses of the underlying systemic risks with a view to formulating relevant preventive measures. LD has conveyed the relevant systemic safety problems and preventive measures to construction contractors, and through issuing systemic safety alerts,

appealed to all registered safety officers (“RSO”) and registered safety auditors (“RSA”) to apply the safety management principles when discharging their statutory duties in advising their clients/ employers of the prevention measures. RSO and RSA are also reminded of the importance of taking proactive steps to ensure that their clients/ employers are fully aware of the adverse implications and potential consequences should the clients/ employers overrule or neglect their advice. To raise the industry’s awareness of these systemic safety problems and the proper implementation of preventive measures, LD from time to time organises thematic large-scale promotion and educational programmes, including safety seminars on lifting operations, tunnelling works and work-at-height held in April, August and September this year respectively, plus a safety seminar on electrical work held in early November this year. The aforesaid systemic safety alerts have also been uploaded onto LD’s website for reference by the industry.

16. In addition, LD has, in collaboration with the Construction Industry Council (“CIC”), published the “Guidelines on Planking Arrangement for Providing Working Platforms on Bamboo Scaffolds” in May 2014, to delineate the responsibilities among principal contractors and sub-contractors on planking arrangement for providing working platforms on bamboo scaffolds, with a view to ensuring that suitable working platforms are available for use by workers carrying out works at the external wall. LD also updated the “Code of Practice for Bamboo Scaffolding Safety” (“CoP”) in June 2014 accordingly. This CoP has a special legal status: although failure to observe any provision of this Code is not itself an offence, that failure may be taken by a court in criminal proceedings as a relevant factor in determining whether or not a person has breached the relevant safety and health legislation under the Factories and Industrial Undertakings Ordinance. LD will take into account the aforesaid Guidelines and CoP when enforcing safety regulations relating to the use of bamboo scaffolds for work-at-height.

Enhancing the OSH Merit and Demerit System

17. LD strives to enhance the OSH merit and demerit system for the construction industry. With a view to encouraging small-and-medium sized contractors to adopt safe working methods, LD

and the Occupational Safety and Health Council (“OSHC”) jointly launched sponsorship and safety accreditation schemes, including the “OSH Star Enterprise Safety Accreditation Scheme” for the repair, maintenance, alteration and addition (“RMAA”) industry. OSHC provides small-and-medium sized RMAA contractors with safety training, subsidies for the purchase of fall arresting devices and safety audits; and through collaboration with the insurance sector, offers premium discounts up to 50% to those contractors accredited under the Scheme. As at October 2014, 23 small-and-medium enterprises (“SMEs”) of the RMAA industry have been accredited, and the remaining 41 applications are being processed by OSHC.

18. In addition, among the fall-from-height fatal accidents, quite a number of workers involved were working on places of work that were just two to three metres above the ground, and some cases involved the use of unsafe ladders. LD, in collaboration with OSHC, launched a sponsorship scheme last year to encourage SMEs to purchase mobile working platforms as substitute for ladders to carry out work with a view to enhancing work safety in the industry. As at October 2014, OSHC had approved over 1 470 applications, and around 16 100 workers have benefitted from the scheme.

19. As regards the level of penalty for non-compliance with safety requirements, LD will submit to the court adequate information for reference in sentencing, including the serious consequences that may be incurred by the accidents in question, the upward trend of the types of accidents concerned, the highest fine imposed for similar cases in the past, etc, and will request the Department of Justice to consider filing a review or an appeal to the court in respect of the conviction and the penalty when necessary. It is noted that the fines imposed by the court on convicted cases related to fatal industrial accidents in the construction industry increased notably last year when compared with the past.

Strengthening Publicity and Training

20. Apart from the annual “Construction Industry Safety Award Scheme”, LD provides support for workers’ unions and organisations in organising site safety talks where family members of the victims of

industrial accidents share with the frontline workers the causes of accidents, the prevention measures as well as the grief suffered by the families with a view to heightening workers' vigilance on safety at work; staging roving exhibitions at locations near renovation and repair sites to directly promulgate safety knowledge of work-at-height, work in hot weather and electrical work to workers and the general public; and organising an on-going OSH promotional campaign for the electrical and mechanical sector, which consists of talks, seminars and outreach promotional visits to construction sites.

21. LD has enhanced the contents of the "Green Card" course by introducing case studies and analysis of serious accidents involving fall of persons from height, lifting operations, electrocution, etc., and will continue to discuss with workers' unions how to further enhance the safety awareness of workers through advice and training. In addition, LD has produced a new series of TV broadcast regarding improper use of ladders, which was launched in October this year; and the relevant radio broadcast was also launched in February this year.

(II) Food and Beverage Services Sector

22. LD, in collaboration with OSHC and the related organisations in the food and beverage services sector, launched the "Catering Industry Safety Award Scheme" in July this year. The scheme aims to reinforce OSH awareness of employers, employees and stakeholders in the industry as well as the general public. It also aims to inculcate OSH culture in the catering industry, and to commend catering establishments, supervisors and workers with good OSH performance.

23. Last year, OSHC completed a survey on the injured employees in the catering industry, which showed that a considerable number of injury cases happened in workplaces lacking good housekeeping. The safety awareness of frontline workers and safety management technique of managerial staff also required further enhancement. Moreover, a number of SMEs did not implement OSH measures owing to insufficient resources. In view of these, OSHC launched the "Outstanding OSH Restaurant – Pilot Scheme on Catering Safety Accreditation" for the catering industry in June 2013 to further improve the work safety of

catering industry practitioners, and encourage the industry to raise tidiness and cleanliness standards at workplaces. Relevant safety training will be provided to employees of the enterprises participating in the Scheme to enhance their OSH awareness. The enterprises may also participate in the “Accreditation Scheme for Catering Establishments with 5S Good Housekeeping” in order to improve the workplace safety and tidiness and cleanliness standards. Enterprises passing the audits would be awarded OSHC’s “Outstanding OSH Catering Restaurant Certificate”, plus a subsidy up to \$5,000 for the purchase of slip resistant shoes and cut resistant gloves in compliance with the safety standards. As at October 2014, there were more than 800 catering establishments participating in the Scheme.

24. In addition, LD has produced a new series of TV and radio broadcasts on work safety of the food and beverage services sector, which was launched in February this year. Besides, LD has been organising regular health talks for employers and employees of the industry to enhance their occupational health awareness. In 2013, LD organised 377 occupational health talks for employees of the catering industry. In the first half of 2014, 190 health talks were organised.

(III) Container Handling Industry

25. LD officers regularly conducted surprise inspections to container terminals, inspecting various operations at the terminals including operation of heavy machinery and equipment, cargo handling and other operations, in order to ensure compliance with OSH legislation. If breaches of law are discovered, LD will take enforcement actions including initiating prosecutions and issuing legal notices. As at September this year, LD conducted 824 inspections to container handling workplaces, with 58 SNs/INs issued and 11 prosecutions to be initiated.

26. In addition, LD has urged the relevant container terminal operators to improve the arrangements for meal break and toilet break as well as work arrangements during typhoons or under adverse weather conditions. A number of improvement measures were put in place as a result of LD’s intervention. LD will continue to follow up the implementation of these improvement measures, including monitoring the

relevant work safety arrangements of container terminals during typhoons.

27. For publicity and promotion, LD will from time to time organise OSH talks on container handling to enhance the OSH awareness of the industry stakeholders. LD organised an OSH talk for the industry on 29 April 2014, including topics on caring of new workers, traffic control, prevention of musculoskeletal disorders for operators of heavy machinery, analysis of accidents, etc.

Prevention of Heat Stroke

28. LD has in recent years strengthened inspections to construction sites and other workplaces with a higher risk of heat stroke during summer. Immediate enforcement actions will be taken particularly against contractors or employers who do not take appropriate heat stroke prevention measures, including not providing potable water for employees or not following the guidelines issued by CIC to provide an extra 15-minute rest break for workers. From April to September 2014, LD conducted over 30 000 inspections with 106 warnings and 2 INs issued. Over the years, LD, in collaboration with relevant organisations, has launched a series of publicity and educational activities, including organising health talks, publishing and distributing relevant publicity materials and conducting promotional visits to workplaces to introduce practical measures for preventing heat stroke to workers directly.

Way Forward

29. LD will continue to work in close partnership with related organisations, such as OSHC, CIC, trade associations, workers' unions, professional bodies, District Councils and other government bureaux/ departments, to foster OSH through enforcement, promotion and publicity.

Advice Sought

30. Members are invited to give views on the above measures.

Labour and Welfare Bureau
Labour Department
November 2014

**Industrial Accidents in All Workplaces in the 1st Half of 2014
- analysed by Industry Section**

二零一四年上半年所有工作地點之工業意外個案 - 按行業主類分析

Industry Section 行業主類	1 st Half of 2013 二零一三年 上半年	1 st Half of 2014 二零一四年 上半年	Change 增減	Percentage Change 增減率
Agriculture, forestry and fishing 農業、林業及漁業	0	0	---	n.a.
Mining and quarrying 採礦及採石業	0	0	---	n.a.
Manufacturing 製造業	850	828	-22	-2.6%
Electricity, gas and waste Management 電力、燃氣 及廢棄物管理	41	41	---	n.a.
Construction 建造業	1 439 (3)	1 533 (12)	94	6.5%
Import/export, wholesale and retail trades 進出口貿易、批發 及零售業	0	0	---	n.a.
Transportation, storage, postal and courier services 運輸、倉庫、郵政 及速遞服務	408 (2)	324 (3)	-84	-20.6%
Accommodation and food services 住宿及膳食服務	2 844	2 643	-201	-7.1%
Information and communications 資訊及通訊	4	3	-1	-25.0%
Financing and insurance 金融及保險	0	0	---	n.a.
Real estate 地產	0	0	---	n.a.
Professional and business services 專業及商用服務	0	0	---	n.a.
Public administration, and social and personal services 公共行政以及社會 及個人服務	83	91	8	9.6%
Other industries 其他行業	0	0	---	n.a.
TOTAL 總數	5 669 (5)	5 463 (15)	-206	-3.6%

Notes:

1. Industrial accidents refer to injuries and deaths arising from industrial activities in industrial undertakings as defined under the Factories and Industrial Undertakings Ordinance.
2. Figures in brackets denote the number of fatalities which has also been included in the number of accidents.
3. The above accident figures are recorded as at 29 September 2014.
4. The above statistics are compiled based on the Hong Kong Standard Industrial Classification Version 2.0.
5. "n.a." means not applicable.

註釋:

1. 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。
2. 括號內的數字顯示死亡人數，數字已包括在意外數目內。
3. 上列意外數字為截至 2014 年 9 月 29 日所記錄的數字。
4. 以上的統計數字是按《香港標準行業分類 2.0 版》編製。
5. "n.a." 是指不適用。

Annex 2
附件二

Industrial Accidents in Construction Industry in the 1st Half of 2014
- analysed by Type of Accident

二零一四年上半年建造業之工業意外個案 - 按意外類別分析

Type of Accident 意外類別		1 st Half of 2013 二零一三年上半年	1 st Half of 2014 二零一四年上半年	Change 增減
Trapped in or between objects	受困於物件之內或物件之間	52	82 (1)	30
Injured whilst lifting or carrying	提舉或搬運物件時受傷	208	205	-3
Slip, trip or fall on same level	滑倒、絆倒或在同一高度跌倒	366	388	22
Fall of person from height	人體從高處墮下	201 (2)	166 (4)	-35
Striking against fixed or stationary object	與固定或不動的物件碰撞	131	163	32
Striking against or struck by moving object	被移動物件或與移動物件碰撞	268	272 (2)	4
Stepping on object	踏在物件上	4	3	-1
Exposure to or contact with harmful substance	暴露於有害物質中或接觸有害物質	3	12	9
Contact with electricity or electric discharge	觸電或接觸放出的電流	5	2 (1)	-3
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	23	25 (3)	2
Struck by moving vehicle	遭移動中的車輛撞倒	9	7	-2
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	93	103	10
Drowning	遇溺	0	0	---
Exposure to fire	火警燒傷	3	3 (1)	---
Exposure to explosion	爆炸受傷	4	0	-4
Injured by hand tool	被手工具所傷	40	54	14
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	5	12	7
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	22 (1)	35	13
TOTAL	總數	1 439 (3)	1 533 (12)	94

Notes:

- Industrial accidents refer to injuries and deaths arising from industrial activities in industrial undertakings as defined under the Factories and Industrial Undertakings Ordinance.
- Figures in brackets denote the number of fatalities which has also been included in the number of accidents.
- The above accident figures are recorded as at 29 September 2014.

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。
- 括號內的數字顯示死亡人數，數字已包括在意外數目內。
- 上列意外數字為截至 2014 年 9 月 29 日所記錄的數字。

Annex 3
附件三

Industrial Accidents in Food and Beverage Services in the 1st Half of 2014
- analysed by Type of Accident

二零一四年上半年餐飲服務業之工業意外個案 - 按意外類別分析

Type of Accident 意外類別		1 st Half of 2013 二零一三年上半年	1 st Half of 2014 二零一四年上半年	Change 增減
Trapped in or between objects	受困於物件之內或物件之間	31	21	-10
Injured whilst lifting or carrying	提舉或搬運物件時受傷	413	430	17
Slip, trip or fall on same level	滑倒、絆倒或在同一高度跌倒	521	525	4
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	351	243	-108
Striking against or struck by moving object	被移動物件或與移動物件碰撞	160	143	-17
Stepping on object	踏在物件上	0	1	1
Exposure to or contact with harmful substance	暴露於有害物質中或接觸有害物質	27	32	5
Contact with electricity or electric discharge	觸電或接觸放出的電流	0	0	---
Trapped by collapsing or overturning object	受困於倒塌或翻側的物件	0	0	---
Struck by falling object	遭墮下的物件撞擊	11	16	5
Struck by moving vehicle	遭移動中的車輛撞倒	7	15	8
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	32	37	5
Drowning	遇溺	0	0	---
Exposure to fire	火警燒傷	4	2	-2
Exposure to explosion	爆炸受傷	1	0	-1
Injured by hand tool	被手工具所傷	610	547	-63
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	622	569	-53
Injured by animal	被動物所傷	6	5	-1
Injured in workplace violence	於工作場所暴力事件中受傷	0	0	---
Others	其他類別	27	35	8
TOTAL	總數	2 844	2 643	-201

Notes:

- 1 Industrial accidents refer to injuries and deaths arising from industrial activities in industrial undertakings as defined under the Factories and Industrial Undertakings Ordinance.
- 2 Figures in brackets denote the number of fatalities which has also been included in the number of accidents.
3. The above accident figures are recorded as at 29 September 2014.

註釋:

1. 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。
2. 括號內的數字顯示死亡人數，數字已包括在意外數目內。
3. 上列意外數字為截至 2014 年 9 月 29 日所記錄的數字。