

Legislative Council Panel on Development

The Administration's Responses to the Motion passed under agenda item VII "Regulatory control over lift safety" at the meeting on 29 May 2018

Regarding the motion moved by Hon LAM Cheuk-ting on regulatory control over lift safety and passed by the Legislative Council Panel on Development at its meeting on 29 May 2018, the Administration's responses are as follows:

“Introducing legislation to make it mandatory to install additional safety devices for aged lifts without sufficient safety devices” and “providing subsidies and professional advice to owners with financial needs, so as to assist owners to enhance the safety level of lifts”

1. As we briefed Members at the meeting of Legislative Council Panel on Development on 29 May 2018, the Development Bureau (DEVB) and Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) are actively formulating short-term, medium-term and medium to long-term measures to enhance the safety of aged lifts, thereby further protecting public safety:

- Short-term measures: The EMSD will step up its surveillance checks of the maintenance and examination of lifts, in particular those components that may affect the safe operation of lifts. At the same time, the department is also studying how the Responsible Persons and Registered Contractors can strengthen the maintenance of aged lifts that have not yet been modernised.
- Medium-term measures: The DEVB and the EMSD will consider the feasibility of allocating funding to subsidise those owners in need by making reference to the on-going “Operation Building Bright 2.0 Scheme” and “Fire Safety Improvement Works Subsidy Scheme”, and providing them with appropriate professional support, so as to encourage them to speed up the lift modernisation works.
- Medium to long-term measures: The DEVB and the EMSD will study the feasibility of mandating the lift modernisation works in phases. In

this regard, we will make reference to practices of other countries, and take into account the impact on the community and the trade.

2. We will brief Members on the details of the new measures as soon as possible, especially the subsidy scheme related to the medium-term measures.

“Strengthen the monitoring of the lift maintenance and repair industry and ensuring that there is sufficient manpower”

3. The Lifts and Escalators Ordinance (Cap. 618) (the Ordinance) stipulates the Responsible Person for a lift must ensure that the lift and all its associated equipment or machinery are kept in a proper state of repair and in safe working order. The Responsible Person shall engage a Registered Contractor to undertake the maintenance works of the lift and ensure that periodic maintenance is carried out in respect of the lift at intervals not exceeding one month. The Responsible Person shall also ensure that the lift should be thoroughly examined by a Registered Engineer at intervals not exceeding 12 months. The EMSD adopts a risk-based approach to strengthen the surveillance checks of those lifts with higher risk, such as those with longer in-service years and frequent complaints/failures, so as to monitor the maintenance works and check for contraventions of the Ordinance.

4. In 2017, the EMSD conducted about 11 200 inspections of lifts and escalators. In 2018/19, the EMSD has increased the manpower of a dedicated team to enhance efforts in the inspection of the maintenance and examination of lifts. It is expected that the number of inspections this year will increase to about 14 000, i.e. an increase of 25%. The EMSD is also studying how the Responsible Person and Registered Contractor can strengthen the maintenance of aged lifts that have not yet been modernised, in particular those components that may affect the safe operation of lifts. At the same time, the EMSD will increase surveillance checks of relevant maintenance items to ensure the quality of the maintenance works carried out by the Registered Contractors. In addition, the EMSD will study and improve the logbook format for recording Registered Lift Contractors’ maintenance works, so that the EMSD, the Registered Contractors’ works supervisors and the Responsible Persons can perform the supervision/inspection more effectively.

5. The EMSD has been closely monitoring the manpower situation of the market. Apart from maintaining close communication with the industry, the following series of measures have been implemented in recent years to attract more new bloods to join the industry:

- The Vocational Training Council (VTC) and the Construction Industry Council (CIC) jointly introduced “Earn & Learn” Scheme in 2014. The

number of new apprentices enrolled each year has increased remarkably, from about 70 in the past to more than 200 in 2015 and more than 250 in both 2016 and 2017;

- In 2016, the VTC and the HKU School of Professional and Continuing Education launched two different courses related to lift and escalator for the practicing workers to acquire the required academic qualifications to meet the registration requirements of Registered Workers;
- The CIC has implemented the “Contractor Cooperative Training Scheme” for Electrical and Mechanical (E&M) trades (including lift and escalator mechanics) to provide financial support to those who wish to join the lift and escalator industry;
- Since 2016, the EMSD has started to invest more than \$600 million in recruiting over 1 000 technician trainees in five years to provide new bloods for the entire E&M industry (including lift and escalator trade) to cope with future challenges; and
- In early 2018, the EMSD collaborated with the industry to produce a promotional video to attract newcomers to the industry. Production of the video has been completed, which has been uploaded onto the department’s website for public viewing.

6. In light of the fact that more new bloods have joined the industry in the past three years and most of them are still undergoing apprenticeship training, these apprentices are expected to be graduated in the next two to three years and join the industry.

Development Bureau
Electrical and Mechanical Services Department
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