

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
PANEL ON DEVELOPMENT**

**Enhancing Safety of Aged Lifts**

**Follow-up Actions Arising from the Discussion  
at the Meeting on 29 May 2018**

Supplementary information requested by the Panel on Development on 29 May 2018 is provided below.

**The Administration's measures to (i) address the manpower shortage problem in the lift maintenance industry; and (ii) enhance the monitoring of lift maintenance works, such as formulating guidelines to, among others, prescribe a limit on the maximum number of lifts that a maintenance worker could inspect per day.**

- (i) The Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (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 the "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 the 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.

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.

- (ii) 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.

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 Responsible Persons and Registered Contractors 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 Registered Contractors. In addition, the EMSD will study and improve the logbook format for recording Registered Lift Contractors' maintenance works, so that the EMSD, Registered Contractors' works supervisors and Responsible Persons can perform the supervision/inspections more effectively.

Regarding formulating guidelines to limit the maximum number of lifts that a maintenance worker could inspect per day, the EMSD discussed the issue with the trade in 2014. The trade generally agreed that Registered Lift/Escalator Contractors should allow sufficient time for workers to

carry out the maintenance works properly. After hearing opinions from the industry, the EMSD issued a notice to Registered Contractors in August 2014 to remind them to properly keep the daily work assignment records of Registered Workers. They were also reminded that if they were to allocate Registered Workers to handle maintenance works for more than six lifts/escalators on the same day, they should carefully consider the work allocation and ensure that the relevant work could be carried out safely and properly. The above measure provides a reference indicator for the industry and the EMSD will also make reference to this reference indicator in conducting inspections of contractors as to whether they have sufficient staff resources, technical ability and staff training, etc.

**“Whether the Administration would consider (i) imposing heavier penalties on cases of contravention of the Lifts and Escalators Ordinance (Cap. 618) and (ii) reviewing the Registered Lift/ Escalator Contractors' Performance Rating Scheme.”**

- (i) The Ordinance came into full operation on 17 December 2012 and repealed the Lifts and Escalators (Safety) Ordinance (Cap. 327). It has introduced a number of measures to enhance regulatory control, including raising the penalty levels of offences, with maximum fine at \$200,000 and maximum imprisonment of 12 months on contravention of the Ordinance. The EMSD will continue to listen to the views of various stakeholders on raising the penalty levels of offences and, where necessary, carry out review timely.
- (ii) The “Registered Contractors Performance Rating System” is an administrative measure to assist in enforcing the Ordinance. It is one of the reference indicators which aim to assist lift/escalator owners or their property management companies in selecting suitable contractors to carry out maintenance and repair for their lifts/escalators. During the daily surveillance checks and incident investigations, if the EMSD discovers that a contractor has performed unsatisfactorily, the contractor’s performance score will be deducted and the results will be uploaded to the department's website on a quarterly basis so that the public can know the performance of each contractor in a timely manner, thus enabling them to choose a suitable contractor to provide maintenance services for their lifts. The department will also make remarks in the said website promptly when a contractor is involved in a serious incident under investigation, so that the public can make a holistic assessment when choosing their lift contractors. After deducting the performance score, if there is contravention to the Ordinance, the department will take appropriate action according to the seriousness of the case, for example taking

prosecution action and/or referring the case to the Disciplinary Board Panel for hearing. The concerned contractor may eventually be subject to suspension or cancellation of registration.

The EMSD reviews and revises the “Registered Lift and Escalator Contractors’ Performance Rating System” from time to time. The last review on the system was completed in January 2018, and relevant amendments came into effect in February of the same year. The EMSD receives suggestions from various stakeholders from time to time, and will carry out a new round of review to further improve the system.

Development Bureau  
Electrical and Mechanical Services Department  
June 2018