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4 February 2014

Clerk to Panel on Development  
Panel on Development  
Legislative Council Complex  
1 Legislative Council Road  
Central  
Hong Kong

(Attn: Ms Sharon Chung)

Dear Ms Chung,

**Design of New Buildings and  
Occupational Safety of Work-at-height on External Walls**

Thank you for your referral of Hon KWOK Wai-keung's letter of 9 January 2014 to the Chairmen of the Panel on Manpower and the Panel on Development in respect of the captioned subject. The consolidated response of the Development Bureau and the Labour and Welfare Bureau to the concerns raised by Hon KWOK is as follow.

The Government attaches great importance to the occupational safety involving work-at-height. While the Labour Department ("LD") has all along been promoting occupational safety through enforcement, it has also issued work safety guidelines for various high-risk processes (including maintenance of external walls of buildings), and will update the guidelines from time to time in order to meet changes in the working environment.

On the other hand, safety of work on the exterior of buildings would be enhanced if the design of building projects could take thorough consideration of the need for inspection and maintenance of the facilities and building components

on external walls of buildings. In this connection, the Buildings Department (“BD”) has issued relevant Practice Note for Authorized Persons, Registered Structural Engineers and Registered Geotechnical Engineers to provide technical guidelines and promote adoption of the recommendations by the building industry.

For the purpose of enhancing the safety of work-at-height on the external walls of buildings, the Committee on Construction Site Safety (“Committee”) of the Construction Industry Council has set up two working groups under its Task Force on Work Safety of Repair, Maintenance, Alterations and Additions Sites to follow up on the related issues. Members of the working groups encompass various stakeholders of the construction industry, as well as representatives of occupational safety and health associations, property management and the relevant Government departments, including the LD and BD. As regards the design of new buildings, a working group would explore how the element of “Design for Safety” can be incorporated in the design stage, and would study the arrangement for implementing the safe design. The other working group would explore remedial measures with a view to enhancing the safety of repair, maintenance, alteration and addition works carried out in existing buildings. The above working groups have convened the first meetings recently. The Government will endeavour to facilitate the work of the Committee with a view to safeguarding the occupational safety of workers engaged in related work.

Thank you for the Members’ interest in the above matters.

Yours sincerely,



for Secretary for Development

c.c. Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Attn: Mr Francis Cheng)  
Director of Buildings (Attn: Mr TC Yu)  
Commissioner for Labour (Attn: Mr CL Li)  
SEO(A)