

Construction Industry Council

Committee on Construction Site Safety

Meeting No. 004/09 of the Committee on Construction Site Safety was held on Friday, 13 November 2009 at 2:30 pm at Room 1201, Murray Building, Garden Road, Central.

Present:	Thomas HO	(TH)	Chairman
	AU Choi-kai	(CKA)	
	KO Jan-ming	(JMK)	
	WAN Koon-sun	(KSW)	
	James BLAKE	(JB)	Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation
	Anthony CHAN	(AnCN)	Hong Kong Construction Association
	Philip CHAN	(PhCN)	Hong Kong Institute of Architects
	LEUNG Chi-kai	(CKaL)	Buildings Department
	LEUNG Man-ho	(MHL)	Development Bureau
	William SIU	(WS)	Hong Kong Bar-Bending Contractors Association
	TSANG Chiu-kwan	(CKT)	The Hong Kong Federation of Electrical and Mechanical Contractors
	TSO Sing-hin	(SHT)	Labour Department
	TSUI Wai	(WT)	Drainage Services Department
	Francis WONG	(FW)	Hong Kong Polytechnic University
In Attendance :	Terry CHING	(TCG)	Housing Department
	WONG Chi-lap	(CLW)	Construction Industry Council Training Academy
	YU Pak-kuen		Occupational Safety and Health Council (OSHC)
	Alex LEUNG	(AL)	Senior Manager (Council Services) 1
Raymond KWOK	(RKK)	Manager (Council Services) 3	
Apologies :	Thomas KWOK	(TK)	
	CHOI Chun-wa	(CWC)	
	Stanley HUI	(SH)	
	Ada FUNG	(AF)	Housing Department
	Dominic LAM	(DL)	Hong Kong Federation of Insurers
	Ros LAM	(RL)	Office of the Commissioner of Insurance
	LAU Chi-keung	(CKeL)	Real Estate Developers Association of Hong Kong

NG Kwok-kwan	(KwKN)	Hong Kong Construction Industry Employees' General Union
PANG Long	(LP)	Construction Site Workers General Union
TANG Wah-shing	(WST)	Occupational Safety and Health Council (OSHC)
Charles WONG	(CWG)	Construction Industry Council Training Academy
YU Koon-ching	(KCY)	Hong Kong Safety Supervisors Association

PROGRESS REPORT

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4.1 Confirmation of the Progress Report of the Com-CSS Meeting No. 003/09 held on 25 September 2009

Members took note of Progress Report CIC/CSS/R/003/09 and approved the progress report of the last meeting held on 25 September 2009.

4.2 Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting

Agenda item 3.3(a) Progress of Meeting No. 001/09 of the Task Force on Site Safety of Working in Lift Shaft would be discussed at agenda item 4.4.

Agenda item 3.3(b) The CIC Secretariat reported that following the presentation of OTIS at the last Com-CSS meeting, a site visit to the new extension of the Institute of Vocational Education (IVE) Tuen Mun campus was organized on 13 November 2009 to study the scaffold-less lift installation system. Details of the site visit would be reported at agenda item 4.10.

Agenda item 3.4(b) The proposed reactivation of the Task Force on Hot Weather for the updating of the Guidelines on Site Safety Measures for Working in Hot Weather would be discussed at agenda item 4.7.

Agenda item 3.13 The CIC Secretariat was in discussion with the Real Estate Developers Association (REDA) and the Hong Kong Construction

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Association (HKCA) for the organization of an award scheme for the promotion of the Pay for Safety Scheme. Progress of discussion would be reported in the next Com-CSS meeting.

4.3 Progress of Activities of the Task Group on the Design, Installation and Maintenance of Cast-in Anchor Devices

Members took note of the Paper CIC/CSS/P/031/09. JMK reported that Meeting No.003/09 of the Task Group was held on 4 November 2009 to discuss the provisions and standards to be covered by the Guidelines. After deliberation, the Task Group agreed that only the requirements of embedded rod anchors would be specified in the Guidelines. The Task Group would revise the Guidelines and submit them to the Task Force on Permanent Safety Features and Com-CSS for approval accordingly. The finalized Guidelines would eventually be submitted to the CIC for endorsement. Upon agreement by the CIC, the CIC Chairman would then be invited to send a request to the Director of Buildings for the formulation of practice notes based on the Guidelines prepared by the CIC.

Members agreed that measures facilitating the safety of RMAA works carrying out at existing buildings would also be studied by the Task Group after completion of the Guidelines.

4.4 Progress Report of Meeting No. 001/09 of the Task Force on Site Safety of Working in Lift Shaft

The CIC Secretariat introduced the Paper CIC/CSS/P/032/09. AL reported that Meeting no. 001/09 of the Task Force was held on 28 October 2009 with representatives from HKCA, the Lift and Escalator Contractors Association (LECA), Labour Department (LD) and Housing Department (HD) presenting the site safety related issues of working in lift shaft from different perspectives. The Task Force agreed that immediate focus should be put on the safety improvement for works carried out in the lift shaft before handing over of it to the lift installation contractor (i.e. Stage 1). A Task Group was therefore formed to prepare guidelines on the safety precautions for lift shaft construction works (the

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Guidelines). The CIC Secretariat had prepared the first draft of the Guidelines and the 1st Task Group meeting was held on 9 November 2009 to review and discuss the preparation of the Guidelines. It was targeted to complete and publish the Guidelines, together with the possible arrangement of a media conference, by the first quarter of 2010.

4.5 Final Revision of the Guidelines on Safety of Tower Cranes

The CIC Secretariat briefed Members the Paper CIC/CSS/P/033/09 requesting for the approval of the final revision of the Guidelines on Safety of Tower Cranes.

CKaL recommended some minor amendments to the Guidelines for clarity purpose. (Post meeting note: the proposed amendments from BD was received by the CIC Secretariat via email on 16 Nov 2009). Subject to the incorporation of the revision proposed by the Buildings Department, the Com-CSS approved the revised Guidelines and agreed to submit it to the next CIC meeting (scheduled on 9 Dec 2009) for endorsement and publication accordingly.

4.6 Progress of Activities of the Task Force on the Application of Mediation on Construction Injuries Dispute

Paper no. CIC/CSS/P/034/09 was tabled at the meeting for reference by the Com-CSS Members. AnCN reported that subsequent to the decision of establishment of the Task Force on the Application of Mediation on Construction Injuries Dispute in the last Com-CSS meeting, draft Guidelines on Compensation Settlement for Construction Work-related Injuries were under preparation by the CIC Secretariat. The CIC Secretariat had also started consultation with industry stakeholders on the drafting of the Guidelines. Those major areas to be covered by the Guidelines including the general procedures in handling construction work-related injuries, statutory requirements for compensation settlement and the application details of mediation were also introduced to Members.

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4.7 Progress of Activities of the Task Force on Working in Hot Weather

JB briefed Members the Paper CIC/CSS/P/035/09 and explained the action plan for the updating of the Guidelines on Site Safety Measures for Working in Hot Weather. The Task Force on Working in Hot Weather would be reactivated to take lead in the revision of the Guidelines. Members also noted the preliminary research conducted by the CIC Secretariat on the overseas experience of working in hot weather.

AnCN agreed that while the contractors would continuously support and follow the recommendations of the CIC in promoting the site safety for working in hot weather, it would be more favourable if any new safety measures could be implemented on a step-by-step basis to allow reasonable time for the contractors and any other site personnel to comply with the new requirements. To facilitate the revision exercise, a separate meeting for experience sharing between the HKCA and the Task Force Chairman together with the CIC Secretariat would also be arranged in due course.

**JB/ HKCA/
CIC
Secretariat**

4.8 Year Plan 2009/2010 – Progress Review

The CIC Secretariat introduced the Paper CIC/CSS/P/036/09. Members noted that all of the prioritized tasks as identified under the Year Plan 2009 were generally in-line with the scheduled programme. The Chairman supplemented that with regards to the preparation of CDM guidelines, the funding request for the proposed consultancy service had been reviewed by the Committee on Administration and Finance (Com-ANF). The Com-ANF considered that for the long-term benefits of the CIC, it should establish an internal team to deal with similar research issues. Initially, a senior manager and a manager for research would be recruited. It was targeted that the drafting of the CDM Guidelines could be commenced when the new staff were on-board.

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4.9 Proposed Way Forward for the Com-CSS in 2010-2011

The CIC Secretariat introduced the Paper CIC/CSS/P/037/09 to facilitate discussion on the way forward for the Com-CSS in 2010-2011. A letter from the Lighthouse Club addressed to the Commissioner for Labour copied to the CIC was annexed to the Paper for reference by the Members. In the letter, the Lighthouse Club suggested that 50% reduction in construction works related fatalities by 2015 and zero fatalities in 2020 would be an achievable goal for Hong Kong construction industry, as agreed by the participants at one of its workshops. The Lighthouse Club had also identified five priority areas including 'Safety in Design', 'Worker Engagement', 'Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Competence Matrix', 'OHS in tertiary education' and 'Safety Leadership' were the critical keys which demand immediate attention of the industry in order to achieve such goal.

Members noted the opinions from the Lighthouse Club and agreed that their advice would be useful in determining the future direction of the works of the Com-CSS for continual improvement of site safety performance. It was also suggested that a representative from the Lighthouse Club should be invited to participate in a new Task Force focusing on the strategic development of construction site safety. (more discussion about the proposed Task Force in agenda item 4.10 (d))

4.10 Any Other Business

(a) Site Safety of Repair, Maintenance, Alteration & Addition (RMAA) Works

The Chairman led the discussion of a fatal accident involving the death of a construction worker killed by a piece of fall-off concrete at a building in Tai Hang under major renovation. Members agreed that concrete repair was a common activity in RMAA works. It was noted that proper fencing and installation of safety measures such as safety nets and catch fans would be crucial for the site safety of RMAA works. The CIC Secretariat demonstrated a series of photos provided by the Chairman showing some scaffolders, without equipping any safety measures, who were erecting a truss-out scaffold at the external wall of more than 20-storey high at a residential building in Tai Po. Members agreed that despite tremendous guidelines and

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codes of practice related to scaffolding works had been published, some of the workers still risked their lives in carrying out the works. SHT supplemented that the LD had closely cooperated with the Hong Kong Association of Property Management Companies (HKAPMC) on the voluntary referral mechanism about reporting mal-practice of contractors to the LD. Besides, the LD had also co-ordinated with some District Councils to promote the importance of site safety among owners, contractors and workers. Members requested the LD to take an even more pro-active role in taking action against the erection of sub-standard scaffolding, such as the use of “plastic sheet” as the toe board.

The Chairman requested all Members of the Com-CSS to notify their respective organizations the importance of following the standards of scaffolding to ensure the safety of works. He also hoped that the Task Force on Work Safety of RMAA Sites could review the lesson learnt from the accident in Tai Hang.

All

SHT

(b) Site Safety of Site Vehicles and Mobile Plant (SVP)

Members discussed another fatal accident involving the fall from height of a “farmer truck” during the refuse disposal process at a construction site. The accident implied that there were safety problems in relation to the operation of small- to medium- sized trucks. Members agreed that it would be worthwhile to reactivate the Task Force on SVP to review the issue and to consider expanding the Guidelines published in 2008 to cover that particular area of site vehicles and plant.

Members also suggested that special trainings or licenses might be required for operating those vehicles/ plant that were not covered by the current safety regulations.

The CIC Secretariat reminded that a letter had been received previously from a workers’ union requesting the extension of a sponsorship scheme jointly organized by the LD, OSHC and HKCA to cover 24-tonnes dump trucks for the installation of reversing video device which was under the review of OSHC. The issue would also be discussed at the Task Force meeting.

**LD/OSHC/
HKCA**

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(c) Problems of Refuse Disposal at Construction Sites

In view of the recent accidents related to refuse disposal at construction sites, the Chairman and PhCN shared some of the overseas experience of good housekeeping management adopted in the UK, Australia and Japan with Members.

In those countries, either the subcontractors or the construction workers were responsible for clearing refuse daily from site. Similar practice could also be implemented in Hong Kong by encouraging workers to remove refuse during lunch hour or after work by using bags provided by the main contractors. Incentive measures such as free drinks or lunch coupons could be provided to workers for their participation.

CKT suggested that a scheme titled “Pay for Cleanliness” (similar to the Pay for Safety Scheme) might be considered so as to encourage and recognize the efforts of the contractors in upkeeping the construction site through contractual arrangements. JB concurred with the suggestion and opined that an item of site cleanliness might also be introduced to the preliminaries of the construction contract.

In view of the importance of construction site cleanliness and the safety implication of refuse disposal, it was agreed that a Task Force should be established to explore the potential safety hazards and identify measures for the enhancement of the safety of refuse disposal at construction sites. It was proposed that FW would be the chairperson of the Task Force while the Terms of Reference and the proposed Membership List would be discussed in due course.

FW

(d) Regional Comparison of Workplace Fatality Rates

The Chairman tabled a paper on the comparison of workplace fatality rates in countries/regions including Sweden, the UK, Australia, the US, Europe, Japan, Singapore and Hong Kong for reference by the Members.

Members were interested in the computation of the fatality rates as presented in the paper. After deliberation, Members recognized the efforts of the whole industry in the past were effective in bringing the fatality rate down. However, it would be necessary to further promote the safety culture in the Hong Kong

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construction industry in order to achieve a better site safety performance. A full participation of the management, professionals, site supervisors and workers in site safety management would be the critical factor for achieving such goal.

In order to review the safety situation of the local construction industry and to devise plans and actions for enhancement of safety performance at construction sites, the Chairman proposed to set up a Task Force on the strategic development of site safety. Members agreed that the proposed Task Force would be chaired by the Chairman with chairpersons from all Task Forces under the Com-CSS as members.

TH

In addition, on the account of the growing number of infrastructure works in the coming years, the Chairman proposed to invite a representative from the civil/ geotechnical works sector to participate in the Com-CSS so as to have the expertise in civil works safety in the Committee.

(e) Site Visit to New Training Centre Annex at IVE – Tuen Mun Campus

The CIC Secretariat demonstrated some photos taken during the site visit to the New Training Centre Annex at IVE – Tuen Mun Campus organized by OTIS for the study of the scaffold-less installation of lift on 13 Nov 2009. The CIC Secretariat highlighted the major characteristics adopted in the scaffold-less system, such as the use of the permanent lift as the working platform for the installation of lift rails and other accessories. The corresponding safety measures like warning visual alarms and buzzers, overhead safety mesh, protection to landing doors, etc. were also introduced.

After presentation, Members discussed the scaffold-less system adopted by OTIS. Members noted that workers from the main contractor might still be required to work on scaffoldings to make good the lift shaft before handing over of it to the lift contractor. Besides, such method had not been used in very high-rise construction projects. Members opined that the scaffold-less installation method might involve a longer construction period as more co-ordination works would be needed before the main contractor could handover the lift shaft to the lift contractor. Members also addressed that some other safety

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practices such as the use of jump lift were also worth consideration. It was agreed that the Task Force on Site Safety of Working in Lift Shaft should review the current situation and recommend good practice for the industry.

(f) Lighthouse Club Safety Award

The Chairman reported that he had accepted the invitation from the Lighthouse Club to co-chair a judging panel on safety award for developers and consultants. The Chairman hoped that in the long run, the Com-CSS might consider co-ordinating the resources of the industry and organize a centralized safety award for the whole industry.

(g) Progress Update on the Marketing Campaign of the Safety Partnering Programme

AnCN reported that Phase 1 of the marketing campaign for the “Safety Partnering Programme” jointly organized by HKCA and REDA had been launched and advertisements in the form of posters were placed at MTR stations, tram shelters, road billboard etc. Besides, Phase 2 had also been started with letters sent to developers and contractors explaining and encouraging them to participate in the “Safety Partnering Programme”. The HKCA, the REDA and the CIC Secretariat would continue to discuss the organization of a safety award scheme to commend those parties who had taken part in the “Safety Partnering Programme” so as to promote and encourage the participation in the Pay for Safety Scheme (PFSS).

4.11 Next Meeting

To be confirmed

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:40 pm.

Remark: The mentioned papers discussed in the meeting of the Committee on Construction Site Safety can be made available to the Council Members from the CIC Secretariat upon request.

CIC Secretariat
December 2009