



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Protecting the Safety of Road Maintenance Workers and Drivers

Hong Kong · 26 October 2016 – The Construction Industry Council (CIC) expressed deep concern that a number of traffic accidents involving road maintenance works have occurred since end of June this year. To protect the safety of road maintenance workers, a meeting was arranged for the CIC, relevant government departments and industry stakeholders on 20 October 2016 to discuss possible measures and take resolute actions to avoid similar accidents. The meeting was attended by representatives from the Development Bureau (DEVB), the Highways Department (HyD), the Housing Department, the Labour Department (LD), the Transport Department (TD), the Hong Kong Construction Association, the Hong Kong Construction Industry Employees General Union, the Hong Kong General Building Contractors Association, the Hong Kong Federation of Occupational Safety and Health Association, the Occupational Safety and Health Council, The Federation of Hong Kong Electrical & Mechanical Industries Trade Unions, and the CIC.

Regarding safety performance of road works, the DEVB has been reviewing and enhancing the corresponding safe working system with relevant Works Departments, in particular road works on expressways by the HyD, to prevent further fatal accidents. On top of that, the DEVB is collaborating with CIC and OSHC on enhancing the training for frontline road works workers, as well as specifying the training requirements in public works contracts.

At the meeting, it was emphasised that the HyD attaches great importance to the safety of road works. According to the Road Traffic Ordinance (Cap. 374), the HyD has prescribed a “Code of Practice for the Lighting, Signing and Guarding of Road Works” (the Code) to protect the safety of workers and road users. The Code is updated when necessary.

A working group with members from the TD, the Police, and the HyD (the Working Group) is comprehensively reviewing the need to improve the lighting, signing and guarding measures with a view to further enhancing the safety protection measures for carrying out road works. Furthermore, the HyD has reached out to understand the concerns of various stakeholders and exchanged views on possible ways to further enhance the lighting, signing and guarding measures prescribed in the Code. Regarding the recommendations made at the meeting by the representatives of the construction industry, the HyD expressed that they would follow up for detailed consideration.

In order to enhance the safety protection to workers at the earliest before the review of the Code is fully completed, the HyD is making arrangement to implement some additional guarding measures in its road works starting from 1 November this year. The HyD has also strengthened the spot checks of the lighting, signing and guarding measures of its road works to enhance its supervision of the contractors of its road maintenance contracts.

LD is highly concerned about road/roadside works safety and health. In respect of the recent accidents involving road works, LD has maintained close communication with related departments and given comments on enhancement of the "Code of Practice for the Lighting, Signing and Guarding of Road Works" from the occupational safety and health perspective to the Working Group comprising representatives of these government departments, with a view to enhancing safety measures and safeguarding the safety and health of workers concerned. To further enhance collaboration, LD will also join the Working Group. LD is also looking into the aforesaid accidents and examining the legal liability of relevant duty-holders, and where breach of occupational safety and health legislation is detected, legal action will be taken out as appropriate.

The construction industry representatives made the following recommendations on the enhancement of road safety measures:

1. Set a safe speed limit in advance of the road maintenance works area, and strengthen the monitoring of car speed;
2. Perform less road maintenance works at night as far as practicable
3. Improve the lighting for road maintenance works at night, and use warning signs with stronger flashing;
4. Provide sufficient time for workers to place and clear the set-up before and after work; and
5. Introduce advanced technologies, such as automated machines, to place and collect traffic cones by manipulators in lieu of handling by workers, or set up robotic dummies of road maintenance workers waving construction warning lighting signs to enhance drivers' alertness.

Mr. CHAN Ka-kui, Chairman of the CIC added, "Contractors must strictly comply with and enforce safety measures in road maintenance works to provide a safe working environment to ensure the safety of frontline workers and safe working practice for each and every procedure. We should work together to avoid similar traffic accidents from occurring."

Mr. CHOW Luen-kiu, Chairman of the Hong Kong Construction Industry Employees General Union stressed, “We urge all drivers to drive with care and pay attention to road and traffic situations, especially those who need to work for long hours. Road maintenance workers should follow the Code of Practice to ensure safety for themselves and other workers.”

Ms. Ada FUNG, Chairperson of the Committee on Construction Safety of the CIC said, “Following this year’s first traffic accident relating to road maintenance works in June, the CIC immediately took step to alert the industry. In August this year, *Safety Alert No. 003/16 Road Maintenance Works Safety* (Safety Alert) was published. We also organised two seminars on Road Maintenance Works Safety on 29 August to emphasise the importance of the safety of road maintenance works”.

The Safety Alert is available for download on the CIC’s website:

<http://www.cic.hk/eng/main/aboutcic/publications/alert/>





**CONSTRUCTION
INDUSTRY COUNCIL**
建造業議會

About the Construction Industry Council

The Construction Industry Council (CIC) was formed in 2007 under the Construction Industry Council Ordinance (Cap. 587). The CIC consists of a chairman and 24 members representing various sectors of the industry including employers, professionals, academics, contractors, workers, independent persons and Government officials.

The main functions of the CIC are to forge consensus on long-term strategic issues, convey the industry's needs and aspirations to Government, provide training and registration for the construction workforce and serve as a communication channel for Government to solicit advice on all construction-related matters.

Please visit www.cic.hk for further details.

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