



## Keynote Address by Mr CHAN Siu-tack, Assistant Director (Estate Management) (2)

First of all, I would like to thank our guests for their active participation and invaluable advice in the previous discussions on “Safety System of Work” and “Building Information Modelling”. I trust that this Forum can provide excellent opportunities for stakeholders of the industry to share their experiences with a view to enhancing the safety awareness among and tapping the expertise of practitioners in various fields.

As to the property management services, we have all along attached great importance to the safety of our frontline staff as well as those working for the service contractors concerned. Frontline staff are often required to deal with different kinds of clients, and their encounters with aggressive abuse are not uncommon. In order to provide them with adequate protection, the Housing Authority (HA) has taken various improvement measures since the end of 2010 to step up the security of estate offices and related workplaces. Moreover, we also provide training programmes to help our staff tackle difficult clients.

On the other hand, we are also aware that some routine cleansing work, such as cleaning the canopies of the lower floors, may involve a certain degree of risk. Apart from ensuring that proper safety measures and training are put in place for the cleansing workers by the service contractors concerned, HA will continue to install the horizontal lifeline fall arrest system at appropriate spots of canopies and covered walkways in public housing estates. Scheduled for completion in the end of 2012, the whole installation project will cost about \$50 million and cover some 140 estates. We will also arrange proper training for the workers and management personnel concerned to ensure that they can correctly use the installations, as well as enhance their awareness and level of occupational safety and health.

For building maintenance, various maintenance schemes and improvement measures have been implemented by HA to provide residents with a better living environment. However, it is inevitable that the maintenance works and improvement projects carry risk factors. If the risks are not managed properly, the safety of not only the workers but also the residents and pedestrians will be under threats. Taking estate refurbishment for example, the operations involving high risks include working at heights, the use of chemicals, and the disposal of wastes. Moreover, lift modernisation involving works inside the machine room, on the top of the lift car, and inside the lift shaft is also subject to a certain degree of danger. Therefore, the most effective solution is to formulate a holistic and systematic approach to eliminate all relevant hazards or prevent accidents by taking corresponding precautions on the basis of the “Safe System of Work”.

To further enhance the safety performance of contractors and, hence, site safety, HA is planning to tailor-make a Safety Auditing System for maintenance and improvement works. Based on the safety management framework, the System’s enhancement measures will comprise safety and health policies, organisational structure, training, rules and regulations, risk assessment, hazard inspections, etc. With all these enhancement measures in place, we will be able to assess and further improve the contractors’ safety performance on various aspects. We will adopt this System in District Term Contracts, as well as contracts for estate refurbishment works, addition of lifts, lift modernisation and lift maintenance. I would like to take this opportunity to appeal for support from all practitioners in the industry.





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HA is committed to raise the awareness of a health and safety culture in the construction industry. Since 2008, HA has gradually required the contractors on the relevant approved lists to obtain the OHSAS 18001 certification. By the end of 2011, all of HA's contractors for the maintenance, electrical, fire services and water pump, and lift and escalator works should have obtained the appropriate certification as required.

In the up-coming session, a video will be presented on the Safety System of Work for estate refurbishment and lift modernisation. I trust members of the industry and all of my colleagues understand that site safety counts on not only the commitment of frontline workers but also the Management's participation and support. In the quest for enhancing the efficiency of work, stakeholders of the industry are requested to join hands with the Housing Department to foster a safety culture.

