

Keynote Address by Mrs Irene CHENG

Assistant Director (Development & Procurement), Housing Department

Time flies. This year marks the seventh Site Safety Forum for Works Contracts and Property Services Contracts co-organised by the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) and the Occupational Safety and Health Council (OSHC). As a public organisation, HA has all along embraced the four core values, namely "Caring", "Committed", "Customer-focused" and "Creative", and has been committed to doing its utmost to raise the safety standard at sites through the operation of the supply chain, thus enhancing the industry's awareness of site safety.

Although HA is now facing a challenge of enhancing the housing production efficiency for achieving greater flat production, site safety will not be compromised so as to ensure quality and site safety standard. Housing Department Environment, Health and Safety Committee (HDEHSC) headed by Permanent Secretary of Transport and Housing (Housing) oversees the health and safety issues of the department. The HDEHSC is underpinned by the Housing Department Site Safety Sub-committee (HDSSSC). With membership spanning a wide spectrum of concerned industry sectors, the HDSSSC is responsible for reviewing the formulation and implementation of site safety strategies.

A series of workshops on safety and health topical issues are organised by HDSSSC every year. Experts in the industry are invited to give their analyses on particular topics to our contractors and staff. Our recent new works safety seminars have covered topics like working at height, safety of electrical work, lifting, safety auditing system and surprise safety inspection programme. Training seminars to enhance safety awareness were also held for our service providers and staff of estate management. The Site Safety Forum 2013 is the highlight of the year offering a platform to facilitate business partners' exchange of views and experience on safe practices, providing the participants with practical information on site safety.

HA implements a three-pronged strategy systematically through procurement strategies, performance monitoring mechanisms, contract provisions as well as research, training and publicity programmes. Also, a mechanism with incentives and sanctions has been established for the long-term strategic promotion of good practices and a safety culture.

On the procurement front, contractors are required to fully implement safety management measures, formulate safety standards, and provide supervision and training to their staff to ensure compliance with safety measures and prevention of accidents. Given a massive influx of newcomers to the construction industry, we have introduced from early this year the Caring Programme for New Workers into the contract provisions to take greater care of workers who newly join the industry or who are new to a construction site, which can help minimising accidents. To ensure safety at work under hot weather, we have introduced new contract provisions requiring the contractors to arrange proper work schedule, rest period, shading device, ventilation facilities and drinking water. The consumption of alcoholic drinks at sites is forbidden. We have also enhanced the tender assessment requirements for the technical aspects to encourage contractors to use heavy machinery that are of good condition so as to further improve the safety of using heavy machinery at HA sites. The measure is applicable to complex construction contracts as well as piling contracts.

At the same time, we are trying to work out a practicable plan in the near future to require our resident site staff to wear reflective vests at sites.



I Act with a Caring Heart
從心出發·坐言起行
ZERO 零事故
Incident

工作安全齊做好 職業健康共創造
Together we strive to ensure work safety.
Together we are rewarded with occupational health

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On the monitoring of performance, we have introduced (1) incorporation of the scoring of critical pass items into the enhanced Pay for Safety Scheme; (2) the Safety Auditing Scheme version 1.5; (3) the Lift and Escalator Nominated Sub-contracts Safety Auditing System; (4) the Surprise Safety Inspection Programme which requires them, through surprise visits by independent safety inspectorates, to strengthen site management and monitor high-risk operations; and (5) new items into the Performance Assessment Scoring System to monitor the operation and maintenance of heavy machinery on sites.

All along we have spared no efforts in promoting site safety education. Since 2010, nearly 1 960 of our staff at different levels, from deputy directors to front-line site personnel, have completed site safety training courses. We are now considering the launch of refresher courses for those colleagues who have received site safety training to help them brush up their knowledge. We have compiled the Practical Guide to Working at Height: Ensuring Safe Work Practices, taking into account input from the core members of the Housing Department Site Safety Sub-committee. Last year, we laid down in contracts that contractors should provide their workers with reflective working uniform to increase protection for the workers at work.

While the number of site accidents of New Works per 1 000 workers fell from 37.8 in 2002 to 7.4 in 2012, representing a decrease of 80%, but we still have a lot of work to do in site safety. Every member in the industry, from front-line workers to the management, has to devote more efforts to enhance safety.

The theme of the forum this year is "Key to Safety: I Act with a Caring Heart". The video we are about to play will show real-case examples of safety innovations introduced by the industry. Awards have been given accordingly under the prevailing Pay for Safety Scheme to such innovative measures or designs approved and recognised by OSHC. The examples demonstrate that, to achieve the goal of "ZERO Incident", the most important thing for us is to have a caring heart and join hands to develop a safety culture, with more and better innovative measures or designs to boost site safety.



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注意安全齊用心·攜手共建零意外
Site safety and zero accident can be achieved only by joint efforts