

First, let us invite our keynote speaker

Mrs. Irene Cheng, Assistant Director (Development & Procurement) of the Housing Department, to deliver her keynote address. Mrs. Cheng, please.

Ms. Fung, Deputy Director, Chairman Wong, distinguished guests, fellow colleagues,  
Good afternoon. Organized by the Hong Kong Housing Authority and the Occupational Safety & Health Council,  
the Site Safety Forum for Works Contracts and Property Services Contracts  
has entered its eighth year. Thank you for your unfailing support.  
Every year, we'll select a topic which deeply concerns the construction industry, thus worth candid and in-depth discussions.

It is hoped that through this Forum, we can come up with inspirational ideas and proposals, so that bad practices can be rectified, and site accidents and fatalities be minimised.

I believe you will all agree that safety risk in the construction industry is the highest as compared with other trades and industries. This may be attributed to a number of factors, such as the high mobility and ageing problems in construction workforce, new comers not familiar with the operation modes, skills mismatch, malpractice contamination, multi-layered sub-contracting, the large number of projects undertaken, inadequate resources, deficiencies in management, the lack of safety awareness, etc. All these factors pose many difficulties to the management of front-line workers. Notwithstanding that morally and legally, contractors are duty bound to ensure safety at work. The Housing Authority remains ready to impose more stringent contractual requirements to encourage contractors to aspire to higher occupational safety and health standards in the daily operation of worksites through various means..

Embracing the core values of "Caring", "Committed",  
"Customer-focused" and "Creative",  
the Housing Authority has been taking firm steps to raise the quality and safety standards on sites and promote best practices for upgrading the overall quality of project management . In the following few slides,  
I would like to introduce the new measures implemented by the Housing Authority  
in response to the three-pronged approach:

A is "Procurement Strategy and Performance Monitoring Mechanism with Incentives and Sanctions",  
including:

The implementation of the Housing Authority Lift and Escalator Nominated Sub-contracts Safety

Auditing System

and the Surprise Safety Inspection Programme (SSIP).

review practicality of incorporating SSIP score index into the Performance Assessment Scoring System (PASS) and Pay for Safety Scheme.

Enhance the interface among the Housing Authority Safety Auditing System, PASS and Pay for Safety Scheme.

The fifth is to establish the Occupational Injury and Disease Surveillance System.

B is "Strengthening Contract Requirements and Administration". We will

incorporate the Lift and Escalator Nominated Sub-contracts Safety Auditing System as well as the Surprise Safety Inspection Programme into the our contract requirements.

For workers new to the industry and the construction sites,

we will adopt a series of caring measures,

including the launching of the caring programme for New Comers on Construction Sites with the introduction of "N" and "P" labels.

Under very hot weather, we will implement measures to protect workers from heat stroke and enhance site safety measures for large panel metal formworks and working platforms.

The other five points include: promulgation of new specification clauses for overhaul requirements on major construction plant;

upgrading the personal protective equipment for contractors' site personnel and visitors, such as using the Y-type chin strip for safety helmet and wearing reflective clothing; requiring the site management and supervisory staff to take part in safety training;

explore the permit-to-work system for using ladders;

Finally is to study the implementation of the provision of working platform on bamboo scaffolding and clarified the responsibility between contractors and sub-contractors.

C is to continue to encourage "Research, Training and Promotion of Safety Awareness",

including: through standardizing the use of smartphone applications,

this can enhance the contractors' site management

and also help the Housing Authority's site supervisory staff

to conduct project supervision and prepare report. In addition, this can facilitate the exchange of information.

Implement site safety training programmes for Housing Authority's resident site staff.

We upload Safety & Health circulars onto the Housing Authority Site Safety Website each month, and enhance our Site Safety Website to comply with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines requirements and organize Site Safety Seminars.

Under the implementation of this three-pronged approach, the accident rate for new works sites has dropped from 32.8 accidents per 1,000 workers in 2003 to 7.3 accidents per 1,000 workers in 2013, the decrease is 78%.

Facing issues such as increased number of projects, insufficient resources, high mobility and ageing of workers, new workers' unfamiliarity with the relevant practices and skills mismatch, we encounter various challenges in the area of safety, so we hope the frontline workers and enterprises' management will make greater efforts to continue improving site safety.

The theme for this year's forum is "Risk Assessment is the Key to Site Safety".

Although the construction industry involves numerous high-risk and complicated processes, I'm confident that with proper risk assessments to identify potential hazards, comprehensive assessments of the risks of injuries or damages that can be caused by the hazards identified, and control measures to eliminate such risks or contain them to an acceptable level, I trust the site accident rate and probability can be further reduced.

Later my colleague will analyse some site accident cases

I hope all of you can take the opportunity at this forum to share experiences and exchange views, thus achieving continuous improvement to construction safety. Thank you.