

Chairman of Construction Industry Council

Message from
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In the past two decades, the accident rate of our construction industry has indeed improved significantly. However, we cannot ignore the crucial fact that the death rate in the construction industry has remained almost unchanged! Every year about 20 workers died on the job. In such a modern city, such a situation is absolutely unacceptable.

The recent tower crane accident resulted in the loss of 3 young professionals and the heartbreak of their families. I am sure we all feel very sad. As a member of the construction industry, do you hear the signal? Have you found the source of the problem? It is better to render a workplace safe rather than to regret after an accident, do you think so? Think of yourself, your colleagues, and those who love you at home.

Last week, when I represented a charity to donate \$1.7 million to three families, one of the mothers talked to me for 45 minutes. She accused the whole construction industry of what they had done in the past ten years. Why did a young man of twenty-two die when he was working in a container office on a site? Why did the government let a company with so many fatalities and industrial accidents continue to operate? We are simply speechless!

We must change our current safety culture and management methods immediately. All of us in the construction industry must fulfill our safety roles and responsibilities and take immediate action to rectify this worrisome situation.

As members of the construction industry, we must start from the heart when we make any decision on the project, put safety first, and use the spirit of heart for the heart, consider the perspectives of different stakeholders, and promote the spirit of caring and professionalism. It is necessary to bring the industry back to the normal track so that employees can work in peace and leave work happily. The Construction Industry Council advocates the following four directions:

First of all, we must commit ourselves to the implementation of Design for Safety, Sustainability, Productivity and Livability.

We can no longer just talk. We must put the above commitments into reality. I visited the construction project of Urban Renewal Authority / Chinachem Tonkin Street last month. As the first concrete (Modular Integrated Construction) (MiC) private residential project in Hong Kong, it truly embodies the above principles to the fullest, and it is worth emulating in the industry!

As seen in their MiC model, the platform for maintenance of air conditioner can be directly accessed from the balcony without compromising the view and air quality. Not only this is a perfect example of design for safety, but more importantly it can save lives!

Regarding MiC, I believe that adopting Mi-infinity is another way to improve safety. I am glad we are not alone. Last week I visited the MiC simulation workshop in Jat Min Chuen, and I was very impressed with their Mi-Lift installation. The MiMEP and MiC components for the machine room, lift tower and lift shaft are all manufactured in the factory. The above arrangements reduce the risk of working at height and shorten construction time on site.

I sincerely hope that all of our stakeholders can follow, not just adopt Mi-infinity, but also have determination and innovative thinking to seek breakthroughs from traditional methods. Besides, we should implement the "Reference Materials - Safety Roles and Responsibilities of Key Stakeholders in the Construction Industry" and turn them into our own code of practice.

As I said, we must have the full support of the owners, consultants, main contractors, subcontractors and frontline personnel. Otherwise, we will never succeed. Earlier this year, the Construction Industry Council issued the "Reference Materials - Safety Roles and Responsibilities of Key Stakeholders in the Construction Industry", which clearly stipulates the safety roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders. We need your support to make it the norm in our industry. Likewise, the projects at Tonkin Street and Jat Min Chuen are perfect examples showing how all stakeholders can work together to provide a safe, sustainable and livable environment.

Third, commitment to implementing a temporary works management plan for all projects.

Temporary works is an important part of all construction projects. In the past few years, there were a number of fatal accidents caused by temporary works failures. We must take this issue seriously. The Construction Industry Council is now working closely with the Temporary Works Forum and other professional bodies to hold temporary works coordinator/engineer courses as soon as possible.



Fourth, I urge everyone to commit to building a safe and smart workplace as soon as possible.

I am sure that everyone would agree that innovative technologies definitely help improve construction safety. The Secretary for Development pointed out in her Blog earlier on the importance of adopting innovative technology. A number of pilot projects in public works have also proved that the "Smart Site Safety System" has excellent results in improving construction site safety. From next year, the Development Bureau will require all public works projects worth more than HK\$30 million to adopt the safe and intelligent construction site system.

The Construction Industry Council also encourages the industry to actively adopt innovative technologies to enhance construction site safety, including providing financial support.

In 2022, the Construction Innovation and Technology Fund (CITF) will significantly increase the funding ceiling for safety-related technologies from HK\$800,000 to HK\$2 million, and the joint funding ceiling for Building Information Modelling (BIM) and Advanced Construction Technology (ACT) for each company has been raised to HK\$6 million. Industry stakeholders please note that policy has been formulated and financial support provided for you, what are you waiting for?

Looking ahead, a huge number of infrastructure and housing projects will be started in the next few years. You are the elite and pillar of our industry. Remember, great authority comes with great responsibility, and safety is in your hands.

The Development Bureau and the Construction Industry Council organised the "Construction Safety Summit 2022" on 4 November, 2022. On that day, we gathered more than 100 industry representatives and experts to discuss various issues related to construction safety. At the same time, more than 40 industry representatives signed the "Safety Charter", promising to build a construction site safety culture that cares for the community, and promote "heart-centered". The spirit of "being considerate of oneself and others", taking construction safety as the basic consideration, promoting best practice of site safety, and actively using technology to improve safety performance, I urge everyone to move towards the four directions in the "Safety Charter" and move towards zero accident. We set out to show our determination to realize the above commitments!

Finally, I wish today's Safety Forum run successful. I also invite all stakeholders in the construction industry to take immediate action and join us using design enhancements for project safety and sustainable development. Not only to "enhance the speed, quantity and efficiency", but also to reduce the procedures on the construction site, so that our construction personnel can work in peace and leave work happily!