

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2005-06
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HPLB(PL)051

Question Serial No.

0056

Head : 42 Electrical and Mechanical Services Department Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Mechanical engineering installations safety

Controlling Officer : Director of Electrical and Mechanical Services

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands

Question : EMSD will promote safety on mechanical engineering installations in 2005-06, so will the department increase the number of inspections of lifts and escalators? Moreover, will EMSD consider requiring the lift mechanics to be registered so as to enhance the safety of lifts? If a registration system is to be introduced, what will be the resources required?

Asked by : Hon. KWONG Chi-kin

Reply :

It is our target to carry out 5000 inspections in 2005 and we will conduct more inspections whenever appropriate.

In 2004 more than 95% of the lift and escalator incidents were relatively minor ones relating to passengers' behaviour such as kids' fingers/hands pinched in the gap between lift doors and the door frame and passengers falling on escalators. In response to this, apart from inspections, EMSD will strengthen its public education and publicity through regularly distributing leaflets, posters and other material to the public, organizing safety talks, safety carnival and outreaching programme for kindergartens and schools to promote the safe use of lifts and escalators, so as to prevent incidents caused by passengers' behaviour.

We have reviewed the need for introducing a scheme for the registration of lift and escalator workers. Under the present system and legislation, lifts and escalators are required to be maintained and tested by registered lift/escalator contractors and engineers to ensure safety. In addition, registered lift/escalator contractors should employ competent lift/escalator workers to perform lift/escalator work independently or supervise others to perform the work. These competent workers should possess apprentice certificates or higher qualification or have four years working experience/training with a registered lift/escalator contractor. The current regulatory regime pertaining to lifts and escalators safety is considered effective as reflected by the annual incident rate due to equipment failure (no. of incidents/no. of lifts and escalators) being kept below 0.04% for the past 3 years. Hence we consider that there is no need to set up a registration scheme for lift/escalator workers at this stage.

However, we will continue to monitor the situation and maintain our dialogue with the trade on this issue as appropriate.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Roger S. H. LAI

Post Title Director of Electrical and
Mechanical Services

Date 2 April 2005

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