

Brief Notes of Ad Hoc Liaison Meeting between
Fire Services Department (FSD) and the Authorized Persons (APs)

Date : 10 March 2023 (Friday)

Time : 1600 hours

*Video conference was conducted

Matters Discussed in the Meeting :

Fire Protection Measures in Construction Sites

The Chairman briefed the meeting on the No. 4 alarm fire at a construction site at 11 Middle Road in Tsim Sha Tsui on 2 March 2023 and the subsequent follow-up actions taken by FSD. Discussion was held to ensure that all relevant laws and regulations were strictly observed and relevant fire safety measures were put in place at construction sites to avoid recurrence of similar incidents.

The contents stipulated in FSD Circular Letter No. 2/2008 “Fire Protection Measures in Construction Sites”, including the provision of water relaying facilities for high-rise buildings under construction, responsibilities of building contractor/responsible person in the compliance of the FSD’s requirements, construction site visits and practical tests by local fire stations as well as the enforcement actions of FSD upon non-compliance of concerned requirements by building contractor/responsible person, were explained.

A member suggested that registered safety officers should have the statutory obligation to ensure that all fire safety measures at construction sites were fully implemented. He further advised that the government should legislate the fire safety requirements of construction sites.

The Chairman responded that FSD officers would conduct inspections and provide appropriate advice based on the Fire Services Ordinance to ensure that the responsible person would comply with the requirements stipulated by FSD, and that the facilities were in efficient working order at all times.

A member advised that relevant practice notes could be issued to registered contractors to remind them to strictly comply with all the fire safety requirements throughout the construction period. He further supplemented that while APs would conduct site inspections and check if the works were in compliance with the Buildings Ordinance, main contractors would be in a more appropriate position to handle and manage fire safety issues in construction sites instead.

Another member remarked that the feasibility of applying fire retardant paint to bamboo scaffolds could be explored. Furthermore, to ensure that all fire service installations and equipment to be provided during building construction would be in efficient working order, relevant testing should be timely conducted by registered fire service installation contractors (RFSIC). Also, RFSIC could assist safety officers to conduct regular risk assessment on storage of combustible materials and dangerous goods in construction sites.

A member added that temporary heat detectors and smoke sensors, with signals connecting to the security office, should be installed on every floor after removal of temporary formwork. Besides, main contractors should appoint RFSIC to install and maintain fire pumps in constructions sites. He further proposed that guidelines on fire safety in construction sites could be issued to the trade as reminder.

One of the members advised that modelled on the existing practice of some contractors, CCTV could be installed at construction sites for early detection of fire.

The Chairman thanked all members for their valuable suggestions. Upon completion of investigation on the No. 4 alarm fire concerned, relevant improvement measures would be brought up in the coming meeting for further discussion.