

Construction Industry Safety Award Scheme promotes occupational safety for 20 years and beyond (with photos)

The 20th Award Presentation Ceremony of the Construction Industry Safety Award Scheme was held today (March 17) to offer recognition to principal contractors, sub-contractors, site personnel and front-line workers with good occupational safety and health (OSH) performance. The scheme aims at enhancing OSH awareness and fostering a safety culture in the construction sector.

Speaking at the ceremony, the Commissioner for Labour, Mr Carlson Chan, said, "With the concerted efforts of the Government and the industry over the past 20 years, the accident rate per 1 000 workers in the construction industry significantly dropped over 80 per cent from 203.9 in the first three quarters in 1999 to 31.4 in the first three quarters in 2018."

Mr Chan added, "However, the construction industry still has the highest OSH risk and number of fatalities among all industries. Among the 16 fatal industrial accidents last year, 14 involved the construction industry, with falling from height being the main cause of death. The Labour Department (LD) launched in January this year a special enforcement operation targeting high-risk operations such as scaffolding work in order to eradicate unsafe practices."

Mr Chan pointed out that the LD would launch a new online OSH complaint platform very soon to facilitate lodging of complaints through electronic forms on the LD website, by uploading photos, videos and audio files, via mobile electronic devices. The LD officers will conduct prompt investigation upon receipt of the complaints. All complaints will be treated in the strictest confidence.

The LD will, in collaboration with the Occupational Safety and Health Council (OSHC) and other stakeholders, hold a safety seminar on truss-out scaffolds in May. It will continue to promote OSH messages via different platforms such as issuing work safety alert animations (www.labour.gov.hk/eng/news/work_safety_alert_video.htm) in a lively and comprehensible way.

Inaugurated in 1999, the Construction Industry Safety Award Scheme marks its 20th anniversary this year. Participation has been enthusiastic, with the competition attracting a total of 186 construction sites, 116 sub-contractors and 134 safety teams this year.

A new award, namely the Most Active Participating Construction Sites, has been introduced this year to engage principal contractors to encourage their sub-contractors' participation. In addition, in view of the business nature in the Minor Renovation and Maintenance Works (MRMW) sector, the

assessment arrangement of the MRMW sub-category has also been changed to encourage more small and medium-sized contractors' participation in the competition.

The Construction Industry Safety Award Scheme is co-organised by the LD with 15 organisations, namely the OSHC, the Development Bureau, the Hong Kong Housing Authority, the Occupational Deafness Compensation Board, the Construction Industry Council, the Pneumoconiosis Compensation Fund Board, the Hong Kong Housing Society, the Hong Kong Construction Association, the Hong Kong General Building Contractors Association, the Hong Kong Construction Sub-Contractors Association, the Hong Kong Federation of Electrical and Mechanical Contractors Limited, the Minor Works Contractor Association, the Hong Kong Association of Property Management Companies, the Hong Kong Construction Industry Employees General Union and the Federation of Hong Kong Electrical and Mechanical Industries Trade Unions. Also officiating at the award presentation ceremony today were Legislative Council member Mr Abraham Shek; the Chairman of the OSHC, Dr Alan Chan; the Chairman of the Occupational Deafness Compensation Board, Dr Albert Luk; and representatives of the co-organisers.

