

Remarks by SDEV on application for renewal of registration of contractor at media session (with video)

Following are the remarks by the Secretary for Development, Ms Bernadette Linn, at a media session today (May 22) on the application for renewal of registration of a contractor:

Reporter: First question is how can the Government prevent future projects from being managed by the same individuals at Aggressive Construction Engineering Limited, and avoid similar incidents in the future? Additionally, how will the Bureau address other subsidiary companies of the said company? Will the Bureau refuse applications from them? Second question is, since the main contractor of the Anderson Road project is Superb Interior Contracting Company, which is also managing five other private developments, can you provide the name of these five projects, and will the Bureau remove the said company from the list accordingly? And will these projects be handed over to other contractors?

Secretary for Development: Let me try to answer the three questions you have raised. On the first one, regarding how we would prevent the same authorised signatories or what we call the technical directors, who are the responsible persons under the registered contractor, from being appointed to other construction companies. I think on this you can be rest assured that we have a system to prevent that from happening without going through the gatekeeping of the Buildings Department. Taking the present case as an example, the director has just now explained that the authorised signatories and the technical directors of this company have failed the interviews. So they will be removed from the list. If the same persons would like to work for other construction companies as authorised signatories and technical directors, they will have to go through the gatekeeping by the Buildings Department. So if they cannot go through, then they cannot go through. They can't be appointed by other construction companies in that capacity.

As regards your second question, whether a parent company and a subsidiary company will be interrelated or affected whenever we take action against one. Our current system of deregistration, disciplinary action and prosecution focus on the entity. Whichever is the entity that is our target, we focus on them. So for today, we are talking about Aggressive Construction Company Limited, that is the target that we have for this deregistration exercise. We won't be penalising the parent company or any related subsidiaries of the company penalised, because that will not be fair. What we will focus on is to make sure that, as I have explained just now, the authorised signatories and technical directors responsible and who have failed in the exercise, will not be too readily appointed by other construction companies, because of the gatekeeping system.

Regarding your third question that is concerning the case investigated by ICAC and the Buildings Department yesterday, that is completely a different case, because yesterday's case regards another construction site under another construction company and is related to bribery and corruption, and also some deficiencies in the quality of the building works. And today, the case is about the decision on the application to renew the registration of another company. So the two are in two different contexts. So we have to deal with them separately and they are not interrelated in our consideration of the case.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the remarks.)