

Special enforcement operation on safety of new works construction sites at Kai Tak Development Area and Kowloon Bay

The Labour Department (LD) is highly concerned about the spate of fatal accidents that happened at new works sites in the Kai Tak Development Area and Kowloon Bay in April this year. To curb unsafe work activities for protecting workers' safety, the LD commenced a four-week Special Enforcement Operation on April 23 targeting new works sites located in the above-mentioned areas.

The LD's spokesman today (May 4) said, "In the first week of the operation, we inspected 19 new works sites with 88 improvement notices issued and 10 prosecutions initiated. The above-mentioned legal notices and prosecutions mainly involved work at height, electrical work and personal protective equipment (PPE)."

The spokesman added, "In this week's operation, the LD noticed some contractors had failed to comply with the safety legislation regarding work at height, including failing to guard dangerous edges where persons are liable to fall, failing to take adequate steps to prevent workers from falling from a height of 2 meters or more and failing to ensure the use of safe working platforms and other safe means of support. In addition, the LD also detected that some contractors had failed to comply with the safety legislation regarding electrical work, such as failing to take precautionary safety measures to prevent their workers from being put in danger by live electric cables or apparatus. The LD also found that some workers had failed to wear suitable safety helmets and eye protectors."

Pursuant to the general duty provisions of the Factories and Industrial Undertakings Ordinance, employers shall provide safe working environments as well as safe plant and systems of work for their employees. Those who contravene the above provisions are liable to a maximum fine of \$500,000 and imprisonment for six months.

The LD once again appealed to contractors and employers to provide plant and systems of work for the work activities concerned that are safe and without risks to health. Employees should co-operate with their employers, adopt all safety measures and use provided PPE properly to avoid endangering their own work safety and that of other workers. The special enforcement operation is in progress. The LD will take vigorous enforcement action pursuant to the law if any violation of the occupational safety and health legislation is detected, including issuing suspension notices and improvement notices and taking out prosecutions without prior warning.