

[Building Safety Symposium concludes Building Safety Week 2019 \(with photos\)](#)

Some 500 participants including building professionals, members of the building management sector, government officials and academics attended the Building Safety Symposium 2019 held at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre today (May 3) to exchange views on building safety issues.

Addressing the symposium's opening ceremony, the Under Secretary for Development, Mr Liu Chun-san, said that the Government attaches great importance to the problem of ageing buildings. However, it is difficult to thoroughly improve the repair and maintenance of private buildings if one relies solely on enforcement work. Hence, the Government has introduced a number of policy initiatives over the past years to raise the awareness of property owners about building repair and maintenance. Together with co-operation from the industry, recent years have seen rising public awareness of building safety.

Mr Liu noted that the Mandatory Building Inspection Scheme and the Mandatory Window Inspection Scheme, which were implemented in 2012, tackle problems on building safety and maintenance at root by upholding the concept of "prevention is better than cure". Operation Building Bright 2.0 (OBB 2.0), which was jointly launched in mid-2018 by the Buildings Department and the Urban Renewal Authority, offers technical and financial assistance to owners of old buildings in need, and assists them in co-ordinating necessary building inspection and repair works. Moreover, the Buildings Department conducts risk assessment on buildings whose owners are unable to comply with mandatory building inspection notices by themselves, and arranges for government contractors to carry out inspection and repair works on selected target buildings. Mr Liu said he hoped that with OBB 2.0, some 2,500 old buildings will have repair works underway by 2023.

The Director of Buildings, Mr Cheung Tin-cheung, in his welcoming speech, said that the symposium, as the closing event of Building Safety Week 2019, provided a good opportunity for the industry to add value and exchange ideas. He said he hoped that the experience shared by the speakers would lead to further reflection and discussion of building safety issues among participants.

Mr Cheung said that under the theme of this year's symposium, "Holistic approach on building safety", various speakers had shared their views and experience on innovative technologies applicable to the construction industry. As science and technology are ever-changing, he called on the construction sector to make use of better technologies and search for more effective, quality-assured construction methods, and to continuously update their knowledge to cope with the impact and challenges brought by new technologies.

A number of local and overseas experts from Singapore and Italy were invited to give speeches and share their experience on the following topics:

- A New Era in Construction Industry with A.I.R. (Artificial Intelligence & Robotics);
- Application of Unmanned Aircraft System for Building Inspection and Construction Industry;
- Advanced Diagnosis of Building Defects Using Various Technologies;
- Modular Integrated Construction/Prefabricated Pre-finished Volumetric Construction in Nanyang Technological University;
- Legislation for Fire Safety Improvement Works to Existing Buildings in Hong Kong; and
- Cyclone-resistant Facade Systems: Design, Post-Event Inspection and Repair.

In addition to the speeches mentioned above, the symposium also featured two panel discussion sessions.

The Building Safety Symposium 2019 was the finale of the six-day Building Safety Week 2019. Over the past few days, the Buildings Department staged a series of activities to help members of the public better understand building safety messages and foster a buildings care culture. Programme highlights included the opening ceremony at Tai Kwun, public talks, Building Information Centre Open Day, and the Registered Inspectors Briefing Session.

