

[Building Safety Week 2023 closes with Building Safety Symposium \(with photos\)](#)

Some 360 participants from representatives of the building industry and the property management sector, government officials and academia attended the Building Safety Symposium organised by the Buildings Department (BD) at the Hong Kong Palace Museum today (October 27) to exchange views on the application of innovative technologies to enhance building safety as well as the safety of construction works.

Speaking at the symposium, the Secretary for Development, Ms Bernadette Linn, said that the Development Bureau has taken the lead to strengthen collaboration among the Buildings Department, the Home Affairs Department and the Urban Renewal Authority, so as to address the issue of dilapidation of aged buildings. The Government will continue to provide practical support to owners to help them complete building inspections and repairs as soon as possible. At the same time, the Government has stepped up law enforcement against owners who have not actively fulfilled their obligations, including instigating prosecution.

Ms Linn pointed out that in order to strengthen enforcement power to deal with building safety issues, it was announced in the recent Policy Address that the Buildings Ordinance will be comprehensively reviewed by exploring raising the penalties, streamlining prosecution procedures and lowering the prosecution threshold against non-compliance with notices served under the Mandatory Building Inspection Scheme and the Mandatory Window Inspection Scheme, repair and investigation orders, unauthorised building works and other illegal building works, with a view to increasing deterrence and enforcement effectiveness. She appealed to enhanced collaboration among various departments and agencies as well as active co-operation from the community and the industries, so as to jointly safeguard building safety and to create a safe, quality and sustainable built environment.

In her welcoming speech, the Director of Buildings, Ms Clarice Yu, said that in the face of challenges in design and construction of new developments, as well as the impact of ageing buildings on building safety, the Government and the industry have sought to integrate smart technologies into the life cycle of buildings to facilitate building design, building construction and preventive maintenance, which could also help promote building safety and sustainability, enhance efficiency, reduce costs and mitigate the impact of labour shortage on the construction industry.

Ms Yu said that the BD is committed to exploring and adopting innovative technologies to enhance building safety control and services. She cited as an example that when dealing with cases of fallen concrete and rendering from the external walls of buildings and serious unauthorised building works

(UBWs) in recent months, the BD had used drones to conduct inspections over the buildings concerned, coupled with the use of three-dimensional modelling, which enabled it to make an immediate assessment of the safety condition of the buildings, thereby enhancing work efficiency.

The theme of this year's symposium is "Expanding Opportunities for a Safer and More Sustainable Built Environment". In the symposium, a number of local experts spoke on the following topics:

- Prevention is Better than Cure: Periodic Inspection and Maintenance of Buildings;
- Application of/Experience on Technologies and AI in Inspection and Maintenance of Buildings;
- Safety Roles and Responsibilities: from Truss-out Scaffold to Design for Safety;
- Innovation to Enhance Quality, Efficiency and Cost-effectiveness in Building Management and Maintenance;
- Intelligent Building Management with BIM – Asset Management; and
- Innovation in Design and Monitoring of Building Works for Safety.

In addition to the above speeches, the symposium also featured two panel discussion sessions and four innovative technology booths were set up in the foyer of the venue. The University of Hong Kong, Cyberport Startups, the Architectural Services Department and the BD demonstrated the use of drones, artificial intelligence and related innovative technologies to assist in the inspection of dilapidation at building exterior walls and UBWs.

The Building Safety Symposium was the closing event of the Building Safety Week 2023. Over the past week, the BD also organised the Building Safety Carnival and the BD Inno Tech Open Day to enable the public to gain a better understanding of the importance of building safety and to experience the convenience and improvement which innovation has brought to the building industry. A total of about 7 200 attendees participated in the two events.

