

# Labour Department highly concerned about the work accident that happened today

The Labour Department (LD) is highly concerned about a serious work accident that happened at the Chemical Waste Treatment Centre in Tsing Yi this morning (June 14), in which ten workers were injured when a metal scaffold erected inside the chimney of a combustion chamber for repairing and maintenance work collapsed.

The LD's spokesman said, "We commenced an immediate on-site investigation as soon as we were notified of the accident and issued suspension notices to the contractors concerned and the occupier of the premises, suspending the use, erection, alteration and dismantling of the metal scaffolds as well as any works carried out in the combustion chamber. The contractors concerned and the occupier of the premises cannot resume the work process until the LD is satisfied that measures to abate the relevant risk have been taken."

The spokesman added, "We will complete investigation as soon as possible to identify the cause of the accident, ascertain the liability of the duty holders and recommend improvement measures. We will take actions pursuant to the law if there is any violation of the work safety legislation."

The general duty provisions of the Factories and Industrial Undertakings Ordinance require employers to provide safe working environments, plant and safe 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 general duty provisions of the Occupational Safety and Health Ordinance require occupiers of premises/employers to provide safe means of access and egress and safe working environments, plant and systems of work for the employees. Those who contravene the above provisions are liable to a fine of \$200,000 and imprisonment for six months.

In regard to today's accident, the LD will issue a Work Safety Alert through its website and email, giving a brief account of the accident concerned to duty holders, workers' unions, professional bodies of safety practitioners and others, reminding the industry of the importance of following safety precautionary measures to prevent a recurrence of similar accidents.

For the sake of securing the safety and health of employees at work, the LD appeals to employers to provide plant and systems of work that are safe and without risks to health. Employees should co-operate with their employers, adopt all safety measures and use personal protective equipment provided properly to avoid endangering their own work safety and that of

other workers.