

# Labour Department's response to ICAC's arrest of staff members and trainees from Mandatory Safety Training course providers

Regarding the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC)'s arrest of some staff members and trainees from Mandatory Safety Training (MST) course providers for excavator operators, a spokesman for the Labour Department (LD) responded today (October 23) as follows:

The LD is highly concerned about suspected illegal acts involving the offer and acceptance of benefits to assist unqualified persons in enrolling in training courses for Experienced Operators of Excavator. The department has initiated an investigation to examine whether the training course providers (TCPs) and their staff members have strictly complied with the Approval Conditions (ACs) for operating MST courses. If any violations are found, the LD will follow up seriously.

The LD has been actively co-operating with the ICAC's investigation, including providing information and assisting in evidence collection and enforcement action. As the investigations are under way, the LD will not comment further on the specifics of the case.

In response to the ICAC's actions, the LD hereby announced the revocation of 100 certificates for excavator operators involved in the case. The certificate numbers are listed in the Annex.

According to the Factories and Industrial Undertakings (Loadshifting Machinery) Regulation (Cap. 59AG), any person operating an excavator must have successfully completed the relevant safety training courses and obtained the corresponding certificates. As per established procedures, individuals wishing to become excavator operators can enrol in either training courses for New Operators or Experienced Operators of Excavator. Currently, there are approximately 10 000 qualified excavator operators in Hong Kong.

The LD attaches great importance to the quality of TCPs offering MST courses and the professional conduct of their staff members. The department will not tolerate any illegal or non-compliant behaviours. The department is reviewing the admission mechanism for TCPs and, with reference to advice from the ICAC's Corruption Prevention Department, will further enhance the mechanism, including improving current admission procedures and ensuring that TCPs strictly adhere to the ACs for operating MST courses. Additionally, the LD, in collaboration with the ICAC, is continuously disseminating anti-corruption information to all TCPs and their trainees to enhance awareness of corruption prevention.