

Remarks by SLW on scaffolding safety

Following are the remarks by the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Mr Chris Sun, on scaffolding safety at a media session after attending the Launching Ceremony of the Caring Food Coupon Programme this afternoon (January 14):

Reporter: First, the Code of Practice for Bamboo Scaffolding Safety was revised last year, but such an accident happened yesterday. Is the revised code still not efficient in ensuring workers' safety? Second, serious industrial accidents occurred two days in a row. Does this show a need in improvement in terms of safety awareness among frontline workers and even management? How does the Government plan to address the issue?

Secretary for Labour and Welfare: We have recently revised the Code of Practice for Bamboo Scaffolding Safety. Clearly all relevant scaffolding works have to comply with the code of practice. For the accident yesterday, apart from looking into whether or not those involved have fully complied with the code of practice, another issue we have to look at, which is why we are going to hold a stakeholders conference inviting not just those involving in scaffolding work, but also the principal contractors as well as those responsible for installing external glass walls. We have to not only look into the scaffolding work itself, but also the workflow and the related work procedures, whether or not there is room for improvement, or to reduce and, if at all possible, to eliminate the risk arising from those who are using the scaffolding but are not responsible for installing or dismantling it. This is what we are going to do.

For industrial safety, it has long been our commitment to educate workers and provide training, as well as to build up a culture where everyone is going to put safety first. At the same time, we are stepping up inspections as well as to initiate prosecutions and take enforcement actions against those who violated the laws and codes of practice. Thank you very much.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the remarks.)