

# SLW visits confined space worksite to promote occupational safety and health (with photos)

The Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Mr Chris Sun, and the Deputy Commissioner for Labour (Occupational Safety and Health), Mr Vincent Fung, visited a construction site today (October 28) to call on contractors, employers and workers to pay attention to safety and health at work in confined spaces.

The Labour Department (LD) attaches great importance to the occupational safety and health (OSH) of confined space work. The revised Code of Practice for Safety and Health at Work in Confined Spaces (CoP) published by the LD earlier will take effect on November 30 this year. The revised CoP provides proprietors, contractors, competent persons and certified workers engaged in confined spaces work with practical guidance and technical information, and imposes stricter requirements on proprietors and/or contractors to adopt technology to record videos at the entrance and exit of the confined space throughout the entire work period to monitor relevant personnel's compliance with the safety precautions. The LD will continue to conduct surprise inspections from time to time of workplaces carrying out confined space work, and check relevant work processes and equipment to ensure that workers' OSH is safeguarded.

Mr Sun said, "The Government has been encouraging the industry to provide a safer working environment, including wider adoption of the Smart Site Safety System in the construction industry. Advanced technology and equipment will be applied to transmit video recordings taken at the entrance and exit of confined space worksites as well as continuous air-monitoring results inside the confined spaces through a central management platform, enabling the management to perform real-time safety monitoring and maintain proper records. The system also helps to initiate evacuation and rescue procedures promptly in case of emergency to further improve OSH in confined space work.

Mr Sun called on proprietors and contractors of confined space work to observe the provisions of the revised CoP, take adequate safety measures and strengthen supervision to prevent accidents. Workers also must raise their safety awareness, remain vigilant at all times, protect their personal safety at work, and cherish their lives and families.

Mr Sun reiterated, "The Government has long adopted the combination of legislation and enforcement, education and training, and publicity and promotion in striving to ensure workplace safety. Employers and employees also have the shared responsibility to help ensure OSH."

The LD will continue to carry out inspections and law enforcement actions targeting confined space work. If any violations of the OSH

legislation are detected, stringent enforcement actions will be taken immediately without prior warning. In addition, the LD is carrying out a new round of publicity work to disseminate OSH messages through different channels, remind employers and employees not to contravene OSH legislation, and enhance workers' safety awareness regarding confined space work.

