

**Independent Committee in relation to the
Fire at Wang Fuk Court in Tai Po**

Witness Statement of YIU Men-yeung

I, YIU Men-yeung, of New Territories South Command, Fire Services Department, Lai King Fire Station, 6 Wa Tai Road, Kwai Chung, New Territories, do say as follows:-

1. I am the Assistant Director (New Territories South) of the Fire Services Department (“**FSD**”) of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. I have joined the FSD for 28 years since 1998 and was promoted to the present rank on 31 March 2025. My main responsibility is to lead the New Territories South Command.
2. Following the fire at Wang Fuk Court, I have been tasked to lead the Inter-departmental Fire Investigation Task Force (“**IFITF**”) with the following investigative objectives: (i) to investigate the cause of the fire and how it spread; and (ii) to determine the factors that led to heavy casualties.
3. I make this Witness Statement pursuant to the request of the Independent Committee (“**Committee**”) in relation to the fire at Wang Fuk Court in Tai Po as set out in a letter from Messrs. Lo & Lo, Solicitors for the Committee, to the FSD dated 23 December 2025 (“**23 December Letter**”) in which specific questions were raised in paragraphs 2 to 3, 5 to 9, and 12 to 20 (“**Questions**”). Save where otherwise appears, the facts deposed hereto are within my personal knowledge or are derived from office files and records and sources to which I have access and are true to the best of my knowledge, information and belief. Save as otherwise specified, this Witness Statement adopts the same abbreviations and nomenclature as in the 23 December Letter.

4. This Witness Statement addresses Questions 12 and 19.1 of the 23 December Letter. Other Questions which are within FSD's purview will be addressed in the witness statements of other relevant officers of FSD to the Committee. I understand that FSD will produce to the Committee a List of Documents ("LoD"), a draft of which I have read, indexing all relevant documents in FSD's possession. In this Witness Statement, I shall refer to these documents by their designation in the LoD (for example, [FSD/A(I)/1] means Item 1 in Part A(1) of the LoD) without annexing them hereto for the avoidance of duplication.
5. This Witness Statement is divided into the following parts:-
 - 5.1. **Part A** explains and describes the work in progress and the timetable of IFITF and the anticipated time of submission of its report(s) in answer to **Question 12**; and
 - 5.2. **Part B** comments on the replacement of traditional bamboo scaffolding with metal scaffolding in the future in answer to **Question 19.1**.

(A) Work in progress and the timetable of the Fire Investigation Task Force and the anticipated time of submission of its report(s) in answer to Question 12

6. Led by the FSD, the IFITF comprises representatives from the Hong Kong Police Force ("HKPF"), the Buildings Department ("BD"), the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department ("EMSD"), the Independent Checking Unit under the Housing Bureau ("ICU"), Labour Department ("LD") and the Government Laboratory ("GL"), as well as fire engineering professionals.
7. The Terms of Reference for each member of the IFITF and their corresponding deliverables ("**Deliverables**") are as follows:

No.	Department	Terms of Reference	Deliverables
1	FSD	- Conduct fire scene examinations and perform fire dynamics analyses. - Engage fire engineering and material science specialists as needed. - Provide technical expertise on fire behavior and suppression methods. - Compile and submit a comprehensive, consolidated investigation report.	(i) Fire Severity Analysis (ii) Cause of Fire Analysis (Expected to be completed in Feb 2026)
2	BD	- Provide support and advice to the ICU in conducting a site investigation. - Identify any contraventions of the Buildings Ordinance (Cap. 123) (BO) based on the ICU's findings and recommendations.	
3	EMSD	- Identify whether the root cause of the fire is electrically related. - Investigate whether the cause and rapid spread of the fire at the suspected fire origin in Wang Cheong House's lightwell are gas-related.	(i) Report on Investigation of Electrical Faults (ii) Impact Analysis of LPG (Expected to be completed in later Jan 2026)
4	GL	- Conduct on-site forensic investigation of the incident for establishing the origin, cause and the development of the fire. - Serve as an expert witness to explain the findings and methodologies.	(i) Cause of Fire Analysis (Completed in Dec 2025)
5	HKPF	- Provide updates on the progress of the Police's actions and investigation. - Coordinate with Task Force members on the preservation of evidence and the interviewing of witnesses or suspects in accordance with the Department of Justice (DoJ)'s advice. - Assist experts in conducting their experimental studies.	
6	ICU	- Conduct investigation of the fire incident in accordance with BO.	(TBC)
7	LD	- Investigate the fatal occupational accidents in the fire and provide recommendations to the stakeholders to avoid recurrence of similar accidents in the scope of occupational safety and health. - Examine the compliance of Factories and Industrial Undertakings Ordinance (Cap. 59) and Occupational Safety and Health Ordinance (Cap. 509) and their subsidiary regulations by the duty holders.	(TBC)
8	Fire Engineering Professionals	- Conduct numerical and experimental studies to gain a detailed understanding of the initiation and development of the fire, with a focus on the material characteristics of protective nets, polystyrene window covers, bamboo sticks, and other combustible materials.	(i) Report of Findings from Computer Modelling and Full Scale Burning Tests (Expected to be completed in Apr 2026)

8. At present, a three-storey full-scale model, replicating part of Wang Cheong House during its renovation, will be constructed at the Sichuan University of Science and Engineering. Fire tests will be conducted in January to February 2026 to gain a detailed understanding of the initiation and development of fire. The tests will also study the burning characteristics of construction materials like bamboo scaffolding, safety nets, polystyrene window covers, plastic toe-boards, canvas and wooden planks, as well as their impact on fire development. A detailed test report will be prepared by fire engineering professionals in the form of a Report of Findings from Computer Modelling and Full Scale Burning Tests (see Deliverable No. 8(i) above) and is expected to be available by April 2026.
9. Meanwhile, an interim report covering our preliminary findings will be available earlier by February 2026. The interim report will tentatively consider findings from the following investigation reports:
 - By FSD: the Fire Severity Analysis (see Deliverable No. 1(i)) and the Cause of Fire Analysis (see Deliverable No. 1(ii)) (expected in February 2026)
 - By EMSD: the Report on Investigation of Electrical Faults (see Deliverable No. 3(i)) and the Impact Analysis of LPG (see Deliverable No. 3(ii)) (expected in later January 2026); and
 - By GL: the Cause of Fire Analysis (see Deliverable No. 4(i)) (completed in December 2025).

[FSD/C(II)/1]

The final report is tentatively scheduled for May 2026 after evaluation of the following additional investigation reports:

- By ICU (see Deliverable No. 6) (details and timetable to be confirmed);
- By LD (see Deliverable No.7) (details and timetable to be confirmed); and
- By fire engineering professionals: the above mentioned Report of Findings from Computer Modelling and Full Scale Burning Tests (Deliverable No. 8(i)) (again, expected in April 2026).

(B) Replacement of traditional bamboo scaffolding with metal scaffolding in the future in answer to Question 19.1

10. In the Wang Fuk Court Fire, it was observed that plastic strips used to secure the scaffolding were burnt in the fire, causing bamboos to detach from the scaffolding at upper levels. The said detachment accelerated both downward and lateral fire propagation, which in turn led to burning debris accumulating at building entrances and obstructing ground-level exits. Severe hazards were thereby created for both evacuees and firefighters seeking access.
11. Evidence also indicates that burning bamboo sticks had fallen to the ground level during the early stage of fire. According to the CCTV footage of Wang Tai House (recorded at approximately 1517 hours), large quantities of flaming bamboo sticks had fallen to the ground near the building entrance.

[FSD/D(I)/3]



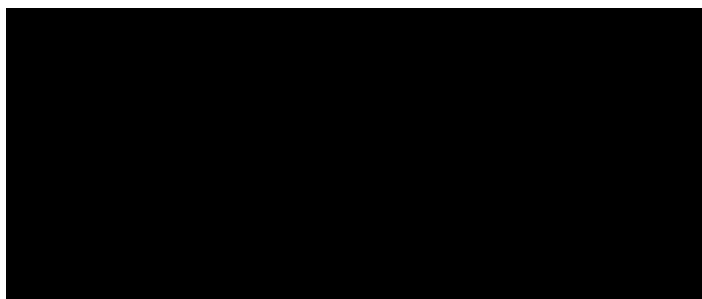
CCTV footage of Openground outside Wang Tai House¹

12. Undoubtedly, bamboo's combustibility contributes to the fire load on building exteriors. Moreover, the structural stability of bamboo scaffolding under fire conditions raises serious safety concerns. If bamboo and other combustible materials on the scaffolding catch fire, their detachment may ignite other nearby materials and in turn lead to the acceleration of fire propagation and pose additional dangers to people on the ground level.
13. Yet, the difference between bamboo and other materials used as scaffolding is a complex scientific issue that requires systematic investigation and experimentation. To the best my knowledge, there is at present no conclusive research on this matter in Hong Kong or elsewhere. Hence, a comprehensive study is required to assess and eventually determine the replacement of traditional bamboo scaffolding with other alternatives.

¹ Playtime of the video 00:15:48 – 00:17:53.

14. I confirm that the contents of this Witness Statement are true to the best of my knowledge, information and belief.

Dated this 16th day of January 2026.



YIU Men-yeung
Assistant Director (New Territories South)
Fire Services Department