

INDEPENDENT COMMITTEE
IN RELATION TO THE FIRE AT
WANG FUK COURT IN TAI PO

WITNESS STATEMENT OF MR. HAU WA KIN

**(Pursuant to the Committee's Directions for Evidential
Hearing as made on 5 February 2026)**

I, Hau Wa Kin, of Room 801-802, 8th Floor, Laurels Industrial Centre, 32 Tai Yau Street, San Po Kong, Kowloon, Hong Kong state as follows: -

1. I hold the office of Director of Prestige Construction & Engineering Co., Limited (hereinafter referred to as "Prestige"). I am also the principal shareholder of Prestige.
2. Prestige was duly appointed as the Registered Contractor for the Renovation of Wang Fuk Court. We accepted the inquiry laid upon us, mindful of our obligations and the trust reposed by the public.
3. I make this my Witness Statement in response to the Letter of Request dated the 26th January 2026, (hereinafter referred to as "LOR") issued by the Independent Committee, (hereinafter referred to as "the Committee") concerning the Fire Outbreak at Wang Fuk Court in Tai Po (hereinafter referred to as "Fire Outbreak").

4. Due to my unfortunate ill health, I found myself unable to partake in these proceedings. Nonetheless, I feel it is of the utmost importance to convey the circumstances of Prestige to the public.
5. It is with no small measure of concern that I endeavor to gather information within the company, much of which is unfamiliar to me personally, yet derived from the labours of our colleagues concerning the events and particulars herein. I set down these words with a clear awareness of the gravity that this subject entails.
6. A brief antecedent account of Prestige is here set down. The company was established by me and my partners in the year 2009. Since then it has continued to grow, employing up to a total of 20 employees in 2025. We have been working hard and by the labours of our hands, we have engaged in numerous large scale engineering contracts thereby contributing to various renovation work throughout Hong Kong.
7. Among the major employees, Mr. Ho Kin Yip, Gordon (hereinafter referred to as "LOR", "Gordon"), and I stand as the sole directors of Prestige. Gordon joined our company in around 2006. In the letter addressed to us you also named him and he shall make a response to your committee separately.
8. The division of responsibilities between myself and Gordon has long been established. I offer guidance to the broader development of the company, whilst Gordon oversees the daily operations of projects.

9. It is my firm knowledge that Gordon would make best decisions for the company and observe all safety standards. I place my utmost trust in him, believing that he possesses a wealth of technical knowledge and insight that far exceeds my own in many respects. My focus, in contrast, lies predominantly with the business and finance facets of the company.
10. I have entrusted Gordon with the management of numerous projects. In the case of the Wang Fuk Court renovation works, Gordon is in the position to oversee the more technical and compliance side of our decision making and objectives. Therefore, it stands to reason that he is best suited to address inquiries of a technical nature pertaining to the Wang Fuk Court renovation project.

A. Inspection Stage

11. I must aver that I was not made known to the particulars of Will Power's bidding price.
12. Having long been engaged in the building trades and civil undertakings, I can attest to the prevailing custom that governs the Consultation Stage of such projects. It is alongside with common practice that until at such time as my formal appointment as the Registered Contractor was confirmed, no knowledge of the sum proposed by Consultants should be imparted to Prestige. The Consultant's bidding price should not have bearings on the Contractor's bidding price.
13. One must also note that the marketplace for such commissions is keenly contested. Engineering Firms put forth bids at rates that are fiercely

competitive, for oftentimes it is only by submitting terms most tempting that one attains the prospect of selection.

14. Upon reflection I would observe that Will Power's tender appeared to only lean toward the lower end of the customary spectrum, and the tender fell within the confines of reasonableness in the vigilant competition.

B. Consultant Stage

15. To address the public's concerns, I am unaware of any such impropriety; indeed, I incline to the belief that no such manipulation has ever occurred in this matter.

16. It is customary for firms to submit exceedingly competitive rates at successive stages of selection as a means of advancing their reputation.

17. One must also note that while the Consultant bears the duty to prepare and present recommendations and critique of the Consultant tenders; yet the final appointment of the Registered Contractor rests not with the Consultant but alone with the Owners' Corporation (hereinafter referred to as "the OC"). Thus the Consultant's influence, though substantial, is not absolute: a bid excessively low will fail to prosper when in the later stage the Consultant cannot secure the OC's favour of its preferred company.

18. Moreover, in the present procurement, I was given the impression that Will Power favoured another firm for the office of Registered Contractor; their proposed sum, as I recall, approximated Four Hundred and Forty Million Hong Kong Dollars. This preference was known within the discussions and weighed upon the proceedings.

19.The result, however, was otherwise decided by the OC, who found themselves more inclined to the proposals we had submitted. It was the OC's favor for our plans — their judgment of the method and manner of our intended works — that carried resulted in our appointment.

20.After many rounds of interviews are concluded, there follows the tabulation of individual assessment scores by both the Consultant and the OC. The ultimate power of selection vests with the owners, in this incident two rounds of voting by the owners were conducted, whose decision determines the contractor who shall be appointed to undertake the works. It is not within my purview to comment upon the owners' decision.

21.Prestige and Will Power have worked together before. On two earlier projects, first around 9 years ago being at Lin Fung Centre, 184-186 Texaco Road, Tsuen Wan; the other around 3 years ago being Fung Kam House, 37-43A Wan Fung Street Kowloon in Wong Tai Sin.

22.Our relationship has always been commercial and competitive in nature.

C. Contractor Stage

23.As much as we strive to provide all our communications to this matter, my staff have informed me that these relevant papers relevant to tender submissions have been appropriated by the authorities.

24.I am aware that there have circulated rumours suggesting that certain other bidders for this contract held some form of connection to myself.

25. I wish to state clearly that the relationships between Prestige and these four bidders are purely commercial and competitive in nature. Allow me to elaborate.

26. In response to the allegations concerning my connection with Widely Construction & Engineering Limited. (“偉利建築工程有限公司”), it is noted that one of its directors, namely Mr. Leung Bing Yiu, was indeed a director of Prestige from the year 2005 until 2014. Leung was a colleague of mine, holding the position of Technical Director at Prestige. However, the relationship between myself and Leung deteriorated, and he subsequently departed Prestige to establish his own company, Widely. Upon his departure, he also brought with him other former colleagues from Prestige, including Mr. Kwong Cheung Kei, who was the former authorized signatory for Prestige. Over the intervening years, Widely has consistently remained a principal competitor to Prestige.

27. Regarding the alleged association with Mega Praise Construction & Engineering Limited. (“萬嘉建築工程”), it is observed that at one time the registered address of Mega Praise was linked to properties held by my wife. This must be clarified: there has been no collaboration on any construction projects between Mega Praise and Prestige. The connection between Mega Praise and myself is strictly limited to rental context, and all agreements and the rents charged are in accordance with prevailing market values and standard business practices.

28. Concerning the alleged relationship with Man Sing General Contractors Limited (“民星營造有限公司”), the director of Man Sing was, in fact, my former employer during the earlier years of my career in this industry. Subsequently, I chose to separate from him and establish Prestige independently. The relationship between Man Sing and Prestige has been strictly competitive ever since.

29. Lastly, in relation to 澤豐創建, the connection with my wife is that she was an investor in this company.

30. To summarise, it is a common feature of the construction industry for contractors to be acquainted with one another or to have been involved in different projects together, given the nature and relatively contained scale of this field. My connections with these companies are entirely proper, and I welcome the Committee’s scrutiny of these aspects should they deem it necessary. I am prepared to furnish any required information that the Committee may request.

31. It must be strongly emphasised that, notwithstanding the aforementioned connections between myself and the other three bidders, Prestige’s participation in this tender process has been conducted with the utmost integrity, remaining strictly competitive and confidential. Both Prestige and I are singularly focused on the objective of securing the contract for Prestige’s own benefit.

32. I have previously declared that Prestige has no interest, no undue connected interest, and no conflict of roles or improper collusion in relation to the tender or appointment for the Wang Fuk Court works. However it is my

understanding that these relevant declarations have been appropriated by the authorities.

33. In our industry, industrial summons record searches are public information where Will Power have total access to. These industrial summonses can be found on many online databases and public records, readily available to those who seek them. It is obvious that such checks of public record would be performed by Will Power.

34. As for any undisclosed criminal records by Will Power to the OC, we are unaware of their nature. Again, criminal records of any companies are accessible by the public. Consequently, we have no knowledge of any of our records being withheld from the Office of the Commissioner.

35. Nonetheless, we have previously communicated with emphasis the existence of various industrial summons convictions during our meetings with the OC. In all earnestness, we have reported faithfully and with integrity all legal proceedings in all the audits which our company had involved.

36. At the time of the Fire Outbreak, we have the following large scale building maintenance and renovation works ongoing:

- 新界葵青區葵涌道 1009-1011 號珍寶大樓
- 新界屯門區景峰徑 4-8 號怡樂花園
- 香港南區域多利道 555 號碧瑤灣 4 期第 25-27 座
- 香港東區炮台山道 32 號富嘉閣

37. The breakdown of costs has been calculated by Gordon, who has taken into account various factors pertinent to the undertaking of the repair works. This assessment encompasses the expenses related to all subcontractors, the procurement of materials, and duly considers the Reference Unit Rate for the renovation work, being Three Hundred and Sixty Million Hong Kong Dollars, as recommended by the Urban Renewal Authority.
38. Attached hereto and marked HWK-1 is the contract awarded to Prestige by Will Power Architects Company Limited (hereinafter "Will Power"). This contract comprises one hundred and thirty-five pages in their entirety. Upon the fourth page, designated SW/2, there is set forth in concise enumeration the obligations incumbent upon Prestige. Upon the seventh page I appended my signature, acting in the capacity of Director and on behalf of Prestige, the same having been subscribed with the concurrence and cooperation of the Owner and Will Power.
39. As much as we strive to provide all our communications between Prestige and Will Power between the invitation of tenders and the signing of the contract between Prestige and the IO, my staff have informed me that these relevant papers have been appropriated by the authorities.
40. Concerning the disputes among the residents, we have been made acutely aware of the fierce competition and contentious disputes that have arisen between the residents for control of the OC. These struggles have, regrettably, manifested in a variety of uncharitable words and actions exchanged during meetings. We have encountered significant opposition from certain residents.

41. As a consequence of these objections, the payment of our contractor's fees has been unjustly withheld. Many of our works have also been obstructed, and some have even reported that renovation efforts have been sabotaged.

D. Works and Supervision Stage

42. As I have previously elucidated, I have assigned Gordon the position of project manager. Consequently, it is my firm belief that he is best positioned to address matters pertaining to the compliance of the Company.

43. In addition to Mr. Gordon's oversight, we have engaged the services of an external safety officer, Excel Target International Limited, whose role is to diligently monitor the safety standards throughout the renovation project.

44. I was unaware that Mr. Steve Wong was employed by the Housing Department at the relevant time.

45. We have never requested Mr. Wong to sign any declaration of interest, for, in our estimation, it is of no consequence whether he engages in any external work beyond his association with Prestige.

46. In regard to those questions in paragraphs 31 to 51 of LOR, which involve more technical aspects concerning how decisions are made at a practical level, I firmly believe that Gordon possesses knowledge and insight that surpass my own. As I have previously elucidated, the demarcation of responsibilities between myself and Gordon designates him as the project manager. He is, at present, prepared to furnish responses to the inquiries at hand.

47. In light of this, I stand ready and willing to assume his responsibilities in assisting the Committee should he require aid.

48. Should his responses prove insufficient in yielding the answers sought by the Committee, I shall gladly undertake the necessary inquiries and strive to provide the requisite answers on behalf of our company.

E. Conclusion

49. I understand that this Witness Statement may be used in the course of the Committee's investigation. I make this statement conscientiously, believing the same to be true of my own knowledge and recollection, and I am prepared to answer such questions as may be put to me in relation thereto. I have set out the facts as I know them, in good faith and with the clear intention of facilitating the Committee's inquiries into the causes and circumstances of the Fire Outbreak in Wang Fuk Court.

50. I fully acknowledge the seriousness of the matters under inquiry and the duty incumbent upon me, as Director of Prestige, to assist the Committee. I pledge to exert my utmost endeavours to cooperate fully and frankly with the Committee.

51. I am willing to provide, and hereby undertake to produce, any documents, records or further evidence in my possession which the Committee may request. Even should this company cease to exist in its present form, I shall nonetheless seek to use any influence I retain to encourage former employees to provide information and assistance to the Committee.

52.I sincerely hopes that the Committee through the series of investigations, will be able to fairly achieve its aim of preventing similar tragedies in the future.

Dated this 2nd day of March 2026.

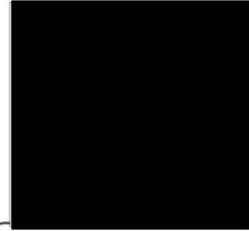


Hau Wa Kin

STATEMENT OF TRUTH

I, Hau Wa Kin, believe that the facts stated in this Witness Statement are true.

Dated this 2nd day of March 2026



Hau Wa Kin