

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

Witness Statement of HOR Herman

I, HOR Herman, of Central Division, Hong Kong Island Command, Fire Services Department, 2 Western Fire Services Street, Sheung Wan, Hong Kong, do say as follows:-

1. I am the Deputy Divisional Commander (Hong Kong Central) / Operations of the Fire Services Department (“**FSD**”) of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. I have joined the FSD for about 23 years since 2003 and was promoted to the present rank on 31 December 2024. My main responsibility is to assist Divisional Commander (Hong Kong Central) in managing the operations and administration of the Hong Kong Central Division.

2. I make this Witness Statement pursuant to Request 5 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 16 February 2026 (“**16 February Letter**”) in which specific questions were raised in paragraphs 1 to 16 (“**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 16 February Letter.

3. This Witness Statement addresses Questions 16(a), 16(b) and 16(c) of the 16 February Letter. Other Questions which are within the FSD's purview will be addressed in the witness statements of other relevant officers of the FSD to the Committee. I understand that FSD has indexed all relevant documents in its possession in Lists of Documents produced on various dates (collectively "**LoD**") and a 5th List of Documents ("**5th LoD**") to be produced, a draft of which I have read. 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(I) of the LoD, [FSD(2)/A(I)/1] means Item 1 in Part A(I) of the 2nd LoD, and so on) without annexing them hereto for the avoidance of duplication.
4. Questions 16(a) and 16(b) relate to an email dated 4 October 2024 titled "Request from Committee of Wang Fuk Court IOC" ("**4 October Email**") sent by the then Vice Chairman of the Management Committee of Wang Fuk Court. Question 16(c) relates to complaints or requests for assistance received by the FSD in relation to Wang Fuk Court other than the 4 October Email and those already mentioned in the Witness Statement of KEUNG Sai-ming and Witness Statement of YUNG Kam-hung, Michael. In response to Question 16(c), 8 cases have been identified (hereinafter "**Cases 1-8**") and copies of the emails are produced at [FSD(5)/G(III)/2].
5. I was the Station Commander ("**StnC**") of Tai Po Fire Station ("**TPFStn**") from 23 February 2024 to 30 December 2024. During this period and insofar as Wang Fuk Court is concerned, I received one notification (i.e. Case 3) and two enquiries (i.e. Case 5 and Case 7) and entrusted my subordinates to arrange a fire drill/talk at Wang Fuk Court (i.e. Case 6). Details of the

above matters are stated in the following paragraphs.

Case 3 – Placement of Bamboo Scaffold Materials at the Means of Escape and Emergency Vehicular Access at Wang Fuk Court

[FSD(5)/G(III)/2]
pp.18-23

6. On 12 July 2024, I received an email from the Management Office of Wang Fuk Court giving notification about the placement of bamboo scaffold materials at Wang Fuk Court (“**12 July Email**”). As shown in the 12 July Email, the Management Office of Wang Fuk Court provided a layout plan identifying the locations where the bamboo scaffold materials would be placed and claimed that all the bamboo scaffold materials so placed would not affect the means of escape (“**MoE**”). To check for possible issues under the jurisdiction of the FSD, I tasked Senior Station Officer (“**SStnO**”), CHENG King-cho of TPFStn to determine whether the placement of the bamboo scaffold materials would cause obstructions to the MoE and Emergency Vehicular Access (“**EVA**”) at Wang Fuk Court.

7. On 15 July 2024, SStnO CHENG confirmed and verbally reported to me (then followed by an email on the same date) that the placement of the bamboo scaffold materials would not cause obstruction to the MoE and EVA at Wang Fuk Court. In making this assessment, I understand that SStnO CHENG had contacted a staff of the Management Office of Wang Fuk Court at 1435 hours on 15 July 2024 and made proper enquiries to confirm that the storage areas were as delineated on the layout plan and that all the bamboo scaffold materials would be confined to those areas without causing obstructions to any MoE or EVA at Wang Fuk Court. To my understanding, fire safety advice had been given to highlight the importance of

keeping the bamboo scaffold materials at the designated areas and of keeping the MoE and EVA free from obstruction. Therefore, I agreed with SStnO CHENG's finding and no further action was necessary. At last, SStnO CHENG sent me an email at 1500 hours on 15 July 2024 regarding the above matter. A copy of this email is produced at [FSD(5)/G(III)/2] p.18.

Case 5 – Installation of Mill Barriers along an Access Road/EVA next to Wang Fuk Court Carpark

[FSD(5)/G(III)/2]
pp. 31-34

8. On 4 September 2024, I received an email enquiry titled “obstructions at the corridor near Wang Fuk Court” from a representative of Link Property Management Services Limited at 1701 hours (“**4 September Email**”). I understand that earlier on the same day at about noon, the enquirer had made a telephone enquiry with Probationary Station Officer (“**PStnO**”) MAK Lok-wan of TPFStn regarding possible installation of mill barriers along an access road/EVA next to Wang Fuk Court Carpark to prevent people from placing their personal items thereat. The enquirer was requested to send an enquiry email to TPFStn, hence the 4 September Email, as PStnO MAK was unable to comprehend the details given by him over the telephone. On receipt of the 4 September Email, to check for possible issues within the purview of the FSD, I tasked SStnO CHENG King-cho to follow up the 4 September Email and PStnO MAK to assist him with the case and act as a contact person when necessary.
9. At about 0930 hours on 5 September 2024, PStnO MAK verbally reported to me that he had informed a staff of the Management Office earlier at 0905 hours that the erection of barriers of any type that would cause obstruction to EVA or

hamper the FSD in discharging its duties in the event of fire was not allowed by the FSD.¹ PStnO MAK further reported that the staff of the Management Office was satisfied with the reply. As for the personal items that gave rise to the enquiry, no issue of obstruction to the MoE or EVA had been identified and so no further action was required.

Case 7 – Smoking Issues of Workers within the Building Renovation Site of Wang Fuk Court

[FSD(5)/G(III)/2]
p.37-40

10. On 11 October 2024, an enquiry email titled “fire risks of Wang Fuk Court” from a couple regarding workers smoking within the building renovation site of Wang Fuk Court (“**11 October Email**”) was received by StnC of Tai Po East Fire Station (“**TPEFStn**”). Since the location of Wang Fuk Court falls within the station boundary of TPFStn, StnC TPEFStn forwarded the email to TPFStn and tasked SStnO HUI Kin-on to follow up this case.

11. On 14 October 2024, SStnO HUI verbally reported to me that he had contacted the staff of the Management Office of Wang Fuk Court by telephone at about 1030 hours on the same date and advised them to step up security patrols and strengthen renovation site management by prohibiting smoking among workers. Additionally, I understand that following SStnO HUI’s advice, the staff of the Management Office agreed to maintain close communication with their project contractors to ensure that all workers be informed about the safety advice –

¹ Anyone responsible for causing obstruction to an EVA will be served a Fire Hazard Abatement Notice (FHAN) in accordance with s.3 of the Fire Services (Fire Hazard Abatement) Regulation (Cap. 95F). The interpretation of fire hazard is contained in s.2 of the Fire Services Ordinance (Cap. 95).

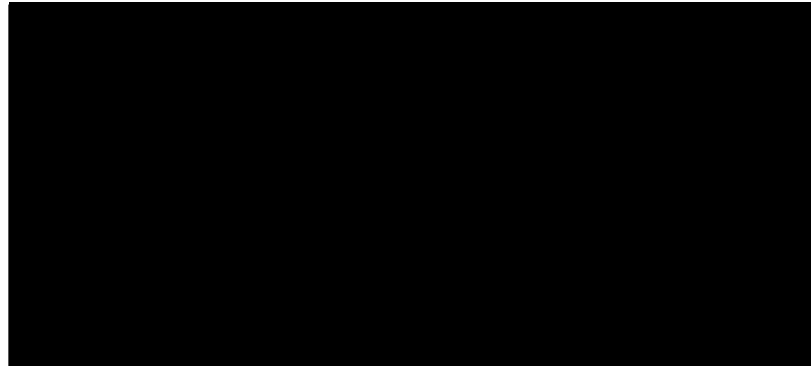
no smoking within the renovation and maintenance site(s). Later, I sent an email reply to Mr LAI and Mrs LAI at 1655 hours on 14 October 2024 to inform them of the action taken and the assurances given by the Management Office of Wang Fuk Court. A copy of this email is produced at [FSD(5)/G(III)/2] p.37.

Case 6 – A Fire Drill/Talk for Wang Fuk Court

[FSD(5)/G(III)/2]
p.35-36

12. As stated in an email from SStnO NG Wing-kwong to StnC TPEFStn on 6 October 2024, a fire drill application was expected from the Vice Chairman of Management Committee of Wang Fuk Court IOC. Subsequently, a fire drill/talk was conducted at Wang Fuk Court by personnel from TPFStn on 19 October 2024. About 80 participants took part in it.
13. I confirm that the contents of this Witness Statement are true to the best of my knowledge, information and belief.

Dated this 4th day of March 2026.



HOR Herman
Deputy Divisional Commander
(Hong Kong Central) / Operations
Fire Services Department