

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

Witness Statement of YUNG Kam-hung, Michael

I, YUNG Kam-hung, Michael, of Fire Safety Command, Fire Services Department, 7th Floor, North Wing, Fire Services Headquarters Building, 1 Hong Chong Road, Tsim Sha Tsui East, Kowloon do say as follows:-

1. I am the Assistant Director (Fire Safety) of the Fire Services Department (“**FSD**”) of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. I have joined the FSD for 31 years since about 1994 and was promoted to the present rank on 31 December 2024. My main responsibility is to oversee the 7 Divisions under the Fire Safety Command, to draw up fire safety policies, to formulate fire safety measures for buildings and mass transit systems, and to upgrade the fire safety standard of old buildings.

2. 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.

3. This Witness Statement addresses Questions 13, 14.1, 15, 19.4, 19.8.1 and 19.8.2 of the 23 December Letter. As Questions 14.1.1, 14.1.2, 14.1.4, 14.2, 14.3, and 16 to 18 of the 23 December Letter are not related to FSD, they will not be covered in this Witness Statement. 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(I) of the LoD) without annexing them hereto for the avoidance of duplication.

4. This Witness Statement is divided into the following parts:-
 - 4.1. **Part A** provides an overview of the division of responsibilities among Government Departments in relation to fire safety of residential buildings in Hong Kong in answer to **Questions 13 and 14.1**;
 - 4.2. **Part B** highlights the different practice notes, codes of practice and circular letters governing the use of fire-resistant scaffolding nets in answer to **Question 15**;
 - 4.3. **Part C** responds to the suggestion of installing sprinklers and smoke detectors in residential buildings in Hong Kong in answer to **Question 19.4**;
 - 4.4. **Part D** describes the actions taken by the FSD and the Buildings Department ("**BD**") after two fire incidents involving the spread of fire through buildings via

scaffolding nets in recent years in answer to **Question 19.8.1**; and

- 4.5. **Part E** provides information on a complaint with respect to Wang Fuk Court concerning polystyrene boards in answer to **Question 19.8.2**.

Part A - An overview of the division of responsibilities among Government Departments in relation to fire safety of residential buildings in Hong Kong

Answer to Question 13

5. In Hong Kong, building fire safety is regulated by various Government Departments, each operating within its statutory role to safeguard buildings. These mainly include the FSD, the BD, and the Independent Checking Unit under the Housing Bureau (“ICU”).
6. From a technical perspective, fire safety in buildings can be divided into two main categories: “active fire safety provisions” and “passive fire safety provisions”, both of which work together to ensure safety. In fact, it is clearly stated in the “Code of Practice for Fire Safety in Buildings 2011” (“**Fire Safety Code**”) issued by the BD that fire safety provisions include active fire safety provisions and passive fire safety provisions. [FSD/A(II)/3]
p. 164
7. Active fire safety provisions refer to fire service installations and equipment (“**FSIs**”) that operate during a fire. For instance, fire detection system and fire alarm system can identify a fire at an early stage and alert occupants to evacuate promptly, sprinkler system activates automatically to suppress flames and limit their spread, and fire hydrant and hose reel system

provides essential means for extinguishing fires. Please refer to the witness statement provided by Assistant Director (Licensing and Certification) KEUNG Sai-ming for details of the current regime and protocol concerning active fire safety provisions in residential buildings in Hong Kong in answer to **Question 13**.

8. The FSD is responsible for regulating FSIs, which fall under active fire safety provisions. Under Section 16(1)(b)(ii) of the Buildings Ordinance (Cap. 123), buildings must be provided with the minimum FSIs necessary for their intended purposes. Thus, the FSD publishes the Code of Practice for Minimum Fire Service Installations and Equipment and the Code of Practice for Inspection, Testing and Maintenance of Installations and Equipment. While the former specifies the required FSIs for different types of buildings and premises, the latter categorizes inspections and tests, and provides guidance on how to conduct these inspections and tests. The FSD also issues circular letters to provide updates on fire safety requirements and procedures so as to enhance fire safety.

[FSD/A(I)/5]

[FSD/A(II)/1]

[FSD/A(II)/2]

9. Passive fire safety provisions are embedded in the design and construction of the building itself. They prevent the spread of fire and smoke, maintain structural stability, and ensure sufficient means for occupants to evacuate while enabling fire personnel to carry out rescue and firefighting operations. Examples include fire-rated partitions and fire doors, which must provide adequate resistance to minimise the spread of fire and smoke; structural components that require certified fire resistance ratings to preserve integrity during fire incident; and escape routes must also be designed with sufficient width and protective measures to allow safe evacuation.

10. The BD is responsible for regulating fire safety in buildings under the Buildings Ordinance (Cap. 123), covering the planning, design, construction and related works of buildings to ensure that passive fire safety provisions meet statutory standards. The BD oversees requirements stipulated under Regulation 35 of the Building (Construction) Regulation (Cap. 123Q) and Regulations 41, 41A, 41B, 41C, and 41D of the Building (Planning) Regulations (Cap. 123F), which govern means of escape, fire-resisting construction, and means of access for firefighting and rescue in buildings. To implement these requirements, the Fire Safety Code was issued to provide guidance on compliance with the requirements laid down in the aforesaid regulations. It also provides guidelines on the testing standards for the fire properties of building elements and components, fire safety management of buildings and the alternative approach in fire safety design. In addition to this Fire Safety Code, the BD issues practice notes, circular letters and guidelines to provide the industry with detailed technical standards and approval requirements for building design and construction. [FSD/A(I)/7]
[FSD/A(I)/6]
11. In general, the BD is primarily responsible for regulating fire safety in private buildings to ensure that passive fire safety provisions meet statutory standards. As for projects developed by the Hong Kong Housing Authority, such as Wang Fuk Court, the ICU oversees the compliance of regulation. Both authorities follow the Fire Safety Code and relevant practice notes, circular letters and guidelines issued by the BD to govern the fire safety design and construction of buildings.

Answer to Question 14.1

12. While the FSD does not have any regulations, codes of practice or guidelines governing renovation of buildings, I understand

that the fire safety requirements set out in Clause F5.6 of the Fire Safety Code should be observed by parties in carrying out alteration and addition, renovation, maintenance, repair works for existing buildings.

[FSD/A(II)/3]
pp. 168-169

13. Furthermore, the Labour Department (“LD”) may by order in writing prohibit smoking and the use of naked lights in such construction site where any flammable liquid or any mixture containing any substance is used or intended to be used in a construction site which involves danger from fire in accordance with Regulation 53 of the Construction Sites (Safety) Regulations (Cap. 59I). The contractor(s) responsible for a construction site shall take such measures and steps to enforce the prohibition as the LD may by notice direct.

[FSD/A(I)/8]

Part B – Practice notes, codes of practice and circular letters governing the use of fire-resistant scaffolding nets

Answer to Question 15

14. Under the framework of the relevant legislations and the established division of responsibilities, the FSD, the BD and the ICU each oversee building safety issues according to their respective roles.
15. While the FSD does not have any rules or regulations in relation to the use of scaffolding nets, I understand that the BD has established safety standards and fire resistance requirements for external wall materials, and issued Practice Notes: APP-70 and the following circular letters subsequent to various incidents involving bamboo scaffolds and protective nets over the years.

15.1. APP-70

[FSD/A(III)/7]

Before the issuance of APP-70, the BD had consulted relevant Government Departments. Having consolidated all the comments (including that from the FSD on the effect on fire spread with the use of PVC sheets), the BD issued APP-70 stating, among other requirements, the flame-retardant requirement for plastic sheet covering scaffolding outside buildings.

15.2. Circular Letter issued on 21 March 2023

[FSD/A(III)/4]

Subsequent to the fire incident at the Mariners on 2 March 2023, the BD issued a circular letter on 21 March 2023 specifying that protective net, screen, tarpaulin/plastic sheeting installed to cover the façade of buildings under construction, demolition, repair or minor works should have appropriate fire retardant properties in compliance with a recognized standard and provided the following examples:

- GB 5725-2009 - Safety nets (or formerly GB 16909-1997 - Fine mesh safety vertical net);
- BS 5867-2:2008 (Type B performance requirements) - Fabrics for curtains, drapes and window blinds - Part 2: Flammability requirements - Specification;
- NFPA 701:2019 (Test Method 2) - Standard methods of fire tests for flame propagation of textiles and films;
- Other standards of equivalent fire retardant performance as per the above recognized standards.

15.3. Circular Letter issued on 21 October 2025

[FSD/A(III)/5]

After the fire incident involving bamboo scaffoldings at Chinachem Tower on 18 October 2025, the BD issued another circular letter on 21 October 2025 requiring building professionals and registered contractors to take immediate action to inspect and ascertain that the protective net, screen, tarpaulin/plastic sheeting installed to cover the façade of buildings with works (including any sites under construction, demolition, repair and minor works) possess the appropriate fire retardant properties in compliance with the recognized standards to prevent the spread of fire should a fire occur. Attention was also drawn to relevant requirements stipulated in various codes of practice, practice notes, circular letters and guidelines.

15.4. Circular Letter issued on 31 October 2025

[FSD/A(III)/6]

A circular letter was issued by the BD on 31 October 2025 for amendment to the Technical Guidelines on Minor Works Control System (2024 Edition) to include relevant recognized standards of fire-retardant properties of protective net, screen, tarpaulin or plastic sheeting installed at the facade of buildings when carrying out minor works.

16. The LD also issued the Code of Practice for Bamboo Scaffolding Safety to provide practical guidance for the safe erection and use of bamboo scaffolds to ensure construction site safety.

[FSD/A(II)/4]

17. It is noteworthy that the FSD was not involved in the process of determining the above-mentioned standards set out by the BD and the LD.

Part C - Response to the suggestion of installing sprinklers and smoke detectors in residential buildings in Hong Kong

Answer to Question 19.4

18. The existing fire safety regime for residential buildings relies on both active and passive fire safety provisions as well as good house-keeping being properly in place and maintained.
19. As for the suggestion to install fire detection system and automatic sprinkler system in residential buildings, while both systems are capable of giving early warning to alert occupants to evacuate in case of fire, the latter would also suppress fire upon actuation. To impose them both or either one as requirement for residential building would require further studies in various areas including but not limited to technical feasibility, structural/spatial constraints of existing buildings, as well as the likely concerns of owners of existing residential building if retrofitting their building is mandatory which would undoubtedly have financial implications.

Part D - Actions taken by the FSD and the BD after the two fire incidents involving the spread of fire through buildings via scaffolding nets in recent years

Answer to Question 19.8.1

20. Following the fire incidents at the Mariners and Chinachem Tower, both the FSD and the BD took follow-up actions in accordance with our division of responsibilities, i.e. the FSD and the BD to focus on active and passive fire safety provisions respectively:

20.1. The Mariners Incident

20.1.1. The Mariners fire involved a high-rise building under construction. After the incident on 2 March 2023, the FSD identified room for improvement in active fire safety provisions for construction sites of high-rise buildings. The FSD then issued Circular Letter No. 2/2024 on 21 March 2024 specifying the revised requirements on fire protection measures including the mandatory requirement of closed-circuit water relaying systems for buildings with designed construction height of 30m or above, instead of the previous 80m criterion.

[FSD/A(III)/2]

20.1.2. The BD issued a circular letter on 21 March 2023 specifying that protective net, screen, tarpaulin/plastic sheeting installed to cover the façade of buildings under construction, demolition, repair or minor works should have appropriate fire retardant properties in compliance with a recognized standard with examples of recognized standards specified therein.

[FSD/A(III)/4]

20.2. Chinachem Tower Incident

20.2.1. Following the fire at Chinachem Tower on 18 October 2025, the BD issued a circular letter on 21 October 2025 requiring all registered building professionals and contractors to promptly inspect protective nets, screens, tarpaulins, and plastic sheets on building facades for which they are responsible including those involved in construction, demolition, repair, or minor works

[FSD/A(III)/5]

to confirm compliance with fire retardant standards and help prevent the spread of fire.

20.2.2. Although no additional active fire safety provision was considered necessary for building under renovation, the FSD learned from the BD that they were conducting further reviews on the use of scaffolding nets, and offered to assist in the process. A fire test for scaffolding nets was subsequently scheduled for 12 December 2025 at the Fire and Ambulance Services Academy of the FSD. However, the test was withheld due to the fire incident at Wang Fuk Court on 26 November 2025.

Part E - Information on a complaint with respect to Wang Fuk Court concerning polystyrene boards

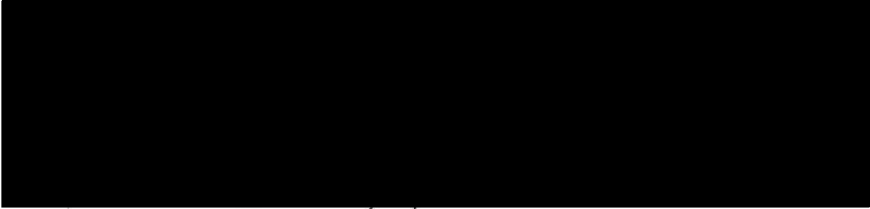
Answer to Question 19.8.2

21. A complaint regarding the storage of a large quantity of polystyrene boards to be used for window protection at Wang Fuk Court was received by the FSD on 23 September 2024. At the time of inspection to Wang Fuk Court at about 1640 hours on 25 September 2024, a quantity of polystyrene boards were noted at openground areas outside Wang Cheong House, Wang Shing House and Wang Chi House, which was not irregularity concerning the FSD. [FSD/B/1]
22. The complainant was informed by telephone on 3 October 2024 of (i) the inspection result, and (ii) the fact that the issue of fixing polystyrene boards on building windows was not under the purview of FSD. The complainant did not make

further enquiry. As the complaint was also sent to the ICU, no further referral was made by the FSD.

23. Before the inspection on 25 September 2024, there was no communication between the FSD and the ICU regarding the complaint. After the inspection, the ICU had enquired the FSD on the complaint via emails and telephone. During the telephone conversation with Ms. Amanda KM LAU, Mr. LIU Ching-hin of the FSD informed her of (i) our inspection result and (ii) our verbal reply to the complainant.
24. 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.



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