

## **Video Transcript for Road Openings Control and Management**

Hong Kong is a highly developed city.

On Average, there are more than 47 kilometers of utility services laid underground per kilometer of road.

Laying of these utility services usually involves road excavation works

The Highways Department manages and controls road excavation works.

In Hong Kong, the underground space is congested with different types of utility.

There are water pipes, electric cables, gas pipes, sewage, drainage pipes, etc.

These underground utilities constitute an essential part of the infrastructure in the city and are closely related to people's livelihood.

Road excavation works are necessary and they are constructive to the society.

The role of the Highways Department is to supervise and manage road excavation works to prevent danger and to minimize inconvenience to the public.

To facilitate coordination between the Government and relevant organizations on road excavation works.

The Highways Department established a 3-tier collaboration system:

The Joint Utilities Policy Group (JUPG) and the Utilities Technical Liaison Committee (UTLC) focus on policy and technical aspects respectively and they conduct meetings on quarterly basis.

The Road Opening Coordinating Committee (ROCC) conducts monthly meetings at each regional office to discuss frontline issues.

Road excavation works may cause damages to China Light and Power Company's cable network which would not only pose a risk to staff safety, but also seriously affect our customers.

We can share information at these meetings and formulate improvement measures.

In the past 5 years, the number of cable damage cases caused by road excavation works has been decreasing.

In 2009, the Highways Department launched a computer system XPMS.

It is a one-stop portal for processing excavation permit applications.

Government departments can process applications on the same electronic platform.

It greatly improves the efficiency and transparency of the application process.

The system allows all concerned parties to communicate through the Internet expedite the working process and get to know within a short time which government department or organization should be approached next.

Concerned parties can also exchange information through the Internet.

Therefore, the XPMS is very helpful to us.

The government has amended the Land (Miscellaneous Provisions) Ordinance to facilitate the Highways Departments enhancement of road excavation works management.

Since April 1, 2004, the Highways Department has implemented the amended Land (Miscellaneous Provisions) Ordinance to effectively improve the control of road excavation works in the following key areas:

Firstly, applicants for all road excavation works are required to pay the prescribed fees for recovering administrative costs.

Secondly, if road traffic is affected by the extension of excavation permit, economic cost will be charged in accordance with the road category of the affected road.

This Ordinance also binds all Government road excavation works, such as road works by the Water Supplies Department and Drainage Services Department.

If non-compliance with permit conditions are found, we will issue advisory letters to the permittees requesting the permittees to take corrective measures.

If necessary, we will also consider taking prosecution action.

The highways Department will also refer cases of repeated non-compliance with permit conditions to the Enforcement Team for prosecution.

The decking is securely fixed and the beveled edges of the decking are smoothed to avoid tripping pedestrians.

These are also anti-slip measures to prevent pedestrians from slipping.

The overall condition is satisfactory.

If we find any non-compliance with permit conditions at the site that shall be rectified immediately, we will use our PDA to notify the site supervisor via email or SMS to take immediate follow-up action.

After the implementation of the amended Ordinance, applicants have adopted a more rigorous and prudent manner when applying for excavation permits resulting in a 50% reduction in the number of excavation permits issued.

In addition, the number of excavation permit extension applications has reduced substantially by 90%.

In regard to on-site safety measures or site idling, non-compliance cases have also reduced substantially by more than 85%.

Through our control mechanism, the industry has a better understanding of the road excavation requirements.

Their quality of works has continuous improvement.

Hence, number of complaints from the public has reduced.

These achievements bring us a sense of satisfaction.

The Highways Department will continue to strike a balance between the development of the society and the needs of road users and to provide high quality services to the public to pave the way for a brighter future for Hong Kong.