
REGULATORY OVERVIEW

HONG KONG LAWS

This section sets forth a summary of the material laws and regulations applicable to our business in Hong Kong.

Laws and Regulations in relation to Construction Labour, Health and Safety

Factories and Industrial Undertakings Ordinance

The Factories and Industrial Undertakings Ordinance provides for the safety and health protection to workers in the industrial undertakings. Under the Factories and Industrial Undertakings Ordinance, it is the duty of a proprietor of an industrial undertaking to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety at work of all persons employed by him at the industrial undertaking. The duties of a proprietor extend to include:

- providing and maintaining plant and work systems that do not endanger safety or health;
- making arrangements for ensuring safety and health in connection with the use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances;
- providing all necessary information, instructions, training and supervision for ensuring safety and health;
- providing and maintaining safe access to and egress from the workplaces; and
- providing and maintaining a safe and healthy working environment.

A proprietor who contravenes any of these duties commits an offence and is liable to a fine of HK\$500,000. A proprietor who contravenes any of these requirements willfully and without reasonable excuse commits an offence and is liable to a fine of HK\$500,000 and to imprisonment for 6 months.

Matters regulated under the subsidiary regulations of the Factories and Industrial Undertakings Ordinance, including the Construction Sites (Safety) Regulations (Chapter 59I of the laws of Hong Kong), include (i) the prohibition of employment of persons under 18 years of age (save for certain exceptions); (ii) the maintenance and operation of hoists; (iii) the duty to ensure safety of places of work; (iv) prevention of falls; (v) safety of excavations; (vi) the duty to comply with miscellaneous safety requirements; and (vii) provision of first aid facilities. Non-compliance with any of these rules commits an offence and different levels of penalty will be imposed and a contractor guilty of the relevant offence could be liable to a fine up to HK\$200,000 and imprisonment up to 12 months.

Occupational Safety and Health Ordinance

The Occupational Safety and Health Ordinance provides for the safety and health protection to employees in workplaces, both industrial and non-industrial.

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Employers must as far as reasonably practicable ensure the safety and health in their workplaces by:

- provision and maintenance of plant and systems of work that are safe and without risks to health;
- making of arrangements for ensuring safety and absence of risks to health in connection with the use, handling, storage or transport of plant or substances;
- as regards any workplace under the employer's control:
 - maintenance of the workplace in a condition that is safe and without risks to health; and
 - provision and maintenance of means of access to and egress from the workplace that are safe and without any such risks;
- providing all necessary information, instructions, training and supervision for ensuring safety and health; and
- provision and maintenance of a working environment for the employer's employees that is safe and without risks to health.

Failure to comply with any of the above provisions constitutes an offence and the employer is liable on conviction to a fine of HK\$200,000. An employer who fails to do so intentionally knowingly or recklessly commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine of HK\$200,000 and to imprisonment for 6 months.

The Commission for Labour may also issue an improvement notice against non-compliance of this ordinance or the Factories and Industrial Undertakings Ordinance or suspension notice against activity or condition of workplace which may create imminent risk of death or serious bodily injury. Failure to comply with such notice without reasonable excuse constitutes an offence punishable by a fine of HK\$200,000 and HK\$500,000 respectively and imprisonment of up to 12 months.

Employees' Compensation Ordinance

The Employees' Compensation Ordinance establishes a no-fault and non-contributory employee compensation system for work injuries and lays down the rights and obligations of employers and employees in respect of injuries or death caused by accidents arising out of and in the course of employment, or by prescribed occupational diseases.

Under the Employees' Compensation Ordinance, if an employee sustains an injury or dies as a result of an accident arising out of and in the course of his employment, his employer is in general liable to pay compensation even if the employee might have committed acts of faults or negligence when the accident occurred. Similarly, an employee who suffers incapacity arising from an occupational disease is entitled to receive the same compensation as that payable to employees injured in occupational accidents.

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According to section 24 of the Employees' Compensation Ordinance, a principal contractor shall be liable to pay compensation to sub-contractors' employees who are injured in the course of their employment to the sub-contractor. The principal contractor is, nonetheless, entitled to be indemnified by the sub-contractor who would have been liable to pay compensation to the injured employee. The employees in question are required to serve a notice in writing on the principal contractor before making any claim or application against such principal contractor.

Pursuant to section 40 of the Employees' Compensation Ordinance, all employers (including contractors and sub-contractors) are required to take out insurance policies to cover their liabilities both under the Employees' Compensation Ordinance and at common law for injuries at work in respect of all their employees (including full-time and part-time employees). Where a principal contractor has undertaken to perform any construction work, it may take out an insurance policy for an amount not less than HK\$200 million per event to cover his liability and that of his sub-contractor(s) under the Employees' Compensation Ordinance and at common law.

An employer who fails to comply with this ordinance to secure an insurance cover is liable on conviction upon indictment to a fine at level 6 (currently at HK\$100,000) and to imprisonment for 2 years.

Employment Ordinance

A principal contractor shall be subject to the provisions on sub-contractor's employees' wages in the Employment Ordinance. According to section 43C of the Employment Ordinance, a principal contractor or a principal contractor and every superior sub-contractor jointly and severally is/are liable to pay any wages that become due to an employee who is employed by a sub-contractor on any work which the sub-contractor has contracted to perform, and such wages are not paid within the period specified in the Employment Ordinance. The liability of a principal contractor and superior sub-contractor (where applicable) shall be limited (a) to the wages of an employee whose employment relates wholly to the work which the principal contractor has contracted to perform and whose place of employment is wholly on the site of the building works; and (b) to the wages due to such an employee for 2 months (such months shall be the first 2 months of the period in respect of which the wages are due). An employee who has outstanding wage payments from sub-contractor must serve a notice in writing on the principal contractor within 60 days after the wage due date. A principal contractor and superior sub-contractor (where applicable) shall not be liable to pay any wages to the employee of the sub-contractor if that employee fails to serve a notice on the principal contractor.

Upon receipt of such notice from the relevant employee, a principal contractor shall, within 14 days after receipt of the notice, serve a copy of the notice on every superior sub-contractor to that sub-contractor (where applicable) of whom he is aware. A principal contractor who without reasonable excuse fails to serve notice on the superior sub-contractor(s) shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine at level 5 (currently at HK\$50,000).

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Pursuant to section 43F of the Employment Ordinance, if a principal contractor or superior sub-contractor pays to an employee any wages under section 43C of Employment Ordinance, the wages so paid shall be a debt due by the employer of that employee to the principal contractor or superior sub-contractor, as the case may be. The principal contractor or superior sub-contractor may either (1) claim contribution from every superior sub-contractor to the employee's employer or from the principal contractor and every other such superior sub-contractor as the case may be, or (2) deduct by way of setoff the amount paid by him from any sum due or may become due to the sub-contractor in respect of the work that he has sub-contracted.

Occupiers Liability Ordinance

The Occupiers Liability Ordinance regulates the obligations of a person occupying or having control of premises on injury resulting to persons or damage caused to goods or other property lawfully on the land.

The Occupiers Liability Ordinance imposes a common duty of care on an occupier of premises to take such care as in all the circumstances of the case is reasonable to see that the visitor will be reasonably safe in using the premises for the purposes for which he is invited or permitted by the occupier to be there.

Immigration Ordinance

According to section 38A of the Immigration Ordinance, a construction site controller (i.e. the principal or main contractor and includes a sub-contractor, owner, occupier or other person who has control over or is in charge of a construction site) shall take all practicable steps to (i) prevent having illegal immigrants from being on site or (ii) prevent illegal workers who are not lawfully employable from taking employment on site.

Where it is proved that (i) an illegal immigrant was on a construction site or (ii) such illegal worker who is not lawfully employable took employment on a construction site, the construction site controller commits an offence and is liable to a fine of HK\$350,000.

Minimum Wage Ordinance

The Minimum Wage Ordinance provides for a prescribed minimum hourly wage rate (currently set at HK\$30 per hour) during the wage period for every employee engaged under a contract of employment under the Employment Ordinance. Any provision of the employment contract which purports to extinguish or reduce the right, benefit or protection conferred on the employee by this ordinance is void.

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Laws and Regulations in relation to Environmental Protection

Air Pollution Control Ordinance

The Air Pollution Control Ordinance is the principal legislation in Hong Kong for controlling emission of air pollutants and noxious odour from construction, industrial and commercial activities and other polluting sources. Subsidiary regulations of the Air Pollution Control Ordinance impose control on air pollutant emissions from certain operations through the issue of licences and permits.

A contractor shall observe and comply with the Air Pollution Control Ordinance and its subsidiary regulations, including without limitation the Air Pollution Control (Open Burning) Regulation (Chapter 311O of the Laws of Hong Kong), the Air Pollution Control (Construction Dust) Regulation (Chapter 311R of the Laws of Hong Kong) and the Air Pollution Control (Smoke) Regulations (Chapter 311C of the Laws of Hong Kong). The contractor responsible for a construction site shall devise, arrange methods of working and carry out the works in such a manner so as to minimise dust impacts on the surrounding environment, and shall provide experienced personnel with suitable training to ensure that these methods are implemented. Asbestos control provisions in the Air Pollution Control Ordinance require that building works involving asbestos must be conducted only by registered qualified personnel and under the supervision of a registered consultant.

Noise Control Ordinance

The Noise Control Ordinance controls, among others, the noise from construction, industrial and commercial activities. A contractor shall comply with the Noise Control Ordinance and its subsidiary regulations in carrying out construction works. For construction activities that are to be carried out during the restricted hours and for percussive piling during the daytime, not being a general holiday, construction noise permits are required from the Director of the Environmental Protection Department in advance. The carrying out of percussive piling is prohibited between 7:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. or at any time on general holidays.

Under the Noise Control Ordinance, construction works that produce noises and the use of powered mechanical equipment (other than percussive piling) in populated areas are not allowed between 7:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. or at any time on general holidays, unless prior approval has been granted by the Director of the Environmental Protection Department through the construction noise permit system. The use of certain equipment is also subject to restrictions. Hand-held percussive breakers and air compressors must comply with noise emission standards and be issued with a noise emission label from the Director of the Environmental Protection Department. Percussive pile-driving is allowed on weekdays only with prior approval, in the form of a construction noise permit from the Director of the Environmental Protection Department.

Any person who carries out any construction work except as permitted is liable on first conviction to a fine of HK\$100,000 and on subsequent convictions to a fine of HK\$200,000, and in any case to a fine of HK\$20,000 for each day during which the offence continues.

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Water Pollution Control Ordinance

The Water Pollution Control Ordinance controls the effluent discharged from all types of industrial, manufacturing, commercial, institutional and construction activities into public sewers, rainwater drains, river courses or water bodies. For any industry/trade generating wastewater discharge (except domestic sewage that is discharged into communal foul sewers or unpolluted water to storm drains), they are subject to licensing control by the Director of the Environmental Protection Department.

All discharges, other than domestic sewage to a communal foul sewer or unpolluted water to a storm drain, must be covered by an effluent discharge licence. The licence specifies the permitted physical, chemical and microbial quality of the effluent. The general guidelines are that the effluent does not damage sewers or pollute inland or inshore marine waters.

According to the Water Pollution Control Ordinance, unless being licensed under the Water Pollution Control Ordinance, a person who discharges any waste or polluting matter into the waters of Hong Kong in a water control zone or discharges any matter, other than domestic sewage and unpolluted water, into a communal sewer or communal drain in a water control zone commits an offence and is liable to imprisonment for 6 months and (a) for a first offence, a fine of HK\$200,000; (b) for a second or subsequent offence, a fine of HK\$400,000, and in addition, if the offence is a continuing offence, to a fine of HK\$10,000 for each day during which it is proved to the satisfaction of the court that the offence has continued.

Waste Disposal Ordinance

The Waste Disposal Ordinance controls the production, storage, collection, treatment, reprocessing, recycling and disposal of waste. At present, livestock waste and chemical waste are subject to specific controls whilst unlawful deposition of waste is prohibited. Import and export of waste is generally controlled through a permit system.

A contractor shall observe and comply with the Waste Disposal Ordinance and its subsidiary regulations, including without limitation the Waste Disposal (Charges for Disposal of Construction Waste) Regulation and the Waste Disposal (Chemical Waste) (General) Regulation.

Under the Waste Disposal (Charges for Disposal of Construction Waste) Regulation, construction waste can only be disposed at prescribed facilities and a main contractor who undertakes construction work with a value of HK\$1 million or above will be required, within 21 days after being awarded the contract, to establish a billing account in respect of that particular contract with the Director of the Environmental Protection Department to pay any disposal charges for the construction waste generated from the construction work under that contract.

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Under the Waste Disposal (Chemical Waste) (General) Regulation, a person who produces chemical waste or causes it to be produced has to register as a chemical waste producer. Any chemical waste produced must be packaged, labeled and stored properly before disposal. Only a licensed waste collector can transport the waste to a licensed chemical waste disposal site for disposal. Chemical waste producers also need to keep records of their chemical waste disposal for inspection by the Environmental Protection Department.

Under the Waste Disposal Ordinance, a person shall not use, or permit to be used, any land or premises for the disposal of waste unless he has a licence from the Director of the Environmental Protection Department. A person who except under and in accordance with a permit or authorisation, does, causes or allows another person to do anything for which such a permit or authorisation is required commits an offence and is liable to a fine of HK\$200,000 and to imprisonment for 6 months for the first offence, and to a fine of HK\$500,000 and to imprisonment for 2 years for a second or subsequent offence.

Dumping at Sea Ordinance

Under the Dumping at Sea Ordinance, anyone involved in marine dumping and related loading operations are required to obtain permits from the Director of the Environmental Protection Department.

Under the Dumping at Sea Ordinance, a person who except under and in accordance with a permit, does anything or causes or allows another person to do anything for which a permit is needed commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine of HK\$200,000 and to imprisonment for 6 months on a first conviction; and to a fine of HK\$500,000 and to imprisonment for 2 years on a second or subsequent conviction; and in addition, to a further fine of HK\$10,000 for each day if the court is satisfied that the operation has continued.

Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance

The Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance is to avoid, minimise and control the adverse environmental impacts from designated projects as specified in Schedule 2 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance (for example, public utility facilities, certain large-scale industrial activities, community facilities, etc.) through the application of the environmental impact assessment process and the environmental permit system prior to their construction and operation (and decommissioning, if applicable), unless otherwise exempted.

According to the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance, a person commits an offence if he constructs or operates a designated project as listed in Part I of Schedule 2 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance (which includes roads, railways and depots, dredging operation, residential and other developments, etc.) or decommissions a designated project listed in Part II of Schedule 2 of the Ordinance without an environmental permit for the project; or contrary to the conditions, if any, set out in the permit. The offender is liable (a) on a first conviction on indictment to a fine of HK\$2,000,000 and to imprisonment for 6 months; (b) on a second or subsequent conviction on indictment to a

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fine of HK\$5,000,000 and to imprisonment for 2 years; (c) on a first summary conviction to a fine at level 6 (currently at HK\$100,000) and to imprisonment for 6 months; (d) on a second or subsequent summary conviction to a fine of HK\$1,000,000 and to imprisonment for 1 year, and in any case where the offence is of a continuing nature, the court or magistrate may impose a fine of HK\$10,000 for each day on which he is satisfied the offence continued.

Contractor List maintained by the WBDB

The Contractor List comprises contractors who are approved for carrying out public works in one or more of the five works categories, namely, port works, roads and drainage, site formation, buildings and waterworks. There are three groups in each of the works categories, namely Group A (except that there are no Group A in port works and site formation categories), Group B and Group C. Each group has its particular tendering limits. According to the ETWB Contractor Management Handbook, the minimum probationary period is 24 months. After the probationary period, approved contractors may apply to the WBDB for confirmed status provided they have met the following requirements:

- (i) the technical and management criteria for confirmed status of each category of works; and
- (ii) the capital requirements applicable to confirmed status for each category of works.

A contractor may apply for “confirmed” status after the satisfactory completion of works appropriate to its probationary status. “Confirmed” contractors may apply to be elevated to a higher group which is subject to similar but more stringent criteria/requirements to that described above.

It is a requirement of the WBDB that all Group C contractors in Hong Kong must obtain ISO 9000 certification as one of the qualification for tendering for Government contracts.

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The following table sets out the value of works for which contractors in the respective categories and statuses may tender:

Category	Authorised contract sum
Group A (probation)	Any number of Group A contracts provided that the total value of works in any one category does not exceed HK\$30 million
Group A (confirmed)	Contracts of value up to HK\$30 million
Group B (probation)	Any number of Group A and any number of Group B contracts provided that the total value of Group B works in any one category does not exceed HK\$75 million
Group B (confirmed)	contracts of value up to HK\$75 million
Group C (probation)	a maximum of two contracts exceeding HK\$75 million in any one category provided that the total value of Group C works in any one category does not exceed HK\$220 million
Group C (confirmed)	contracts of any value exceeding HK\$75 million

Specialist List maintained by the WBDB

The Specialist List shall comprise suppliers and contractors who are approved for carrying out public works in one or more of 50 categories. For retention on the Specialist List, a contractor should generally possess at least a positive capital value. In addition, a contractor is required to maintain certain minimum levels of employed and working capital applicable to the appropriate category and group. For category “Landslip Preventive/ Remedial Works to Slopes/Retaining Walls”, the minimum employed capital and the minimum working capital are HK\$8,600,000 and HK\$8,600,000 respectively.

Contractors qualified/licensed with the WBDB are subject to a regulatory regime which is put in place to ensure that standards of financial capability, expertise, management and safety are maintained by contractors carrying out Government works.

General Building Contractor Licensing Regime

Under the current contractors registration system in Hong Kong, a contractor must be registered with the Buildings Department either as general building contractor or as specialist contractor or as minor works contractors. Registered general building contractors may carry out general building works and street works which do not include any specialised works designated for registered specialist contractors.

Set out below are the requirements to register as a general building contractor, specialist contractor in foundation works and specialist contractor in site formation works under the Building Authority.

Under section 8B(2) of the Buildings Ordinance, an applicant for registration as a registered general building contractor or registered specialist contractor must satisfy the Building Authority on the following aspects:

- (a) if it is a corporation, the adequacy of its management structure;
- (b) the appropriate experience and qualifications of its personnel;
- (c) its ability to have access to plants and resources; and
- (d) the ability of the person appointed to act for the applicant for the purposes of the Buildings Ordinance to understand building works and street works through relevant experience and a general knowledge of the basic statutory requirements.

Under section 8C(2) of the Buildings Ordinance, a registered contractor should apply to the Building Authority for renewal of registration not earlier than 4 months and not later than 28 days prior to the date of expiry of the registration.

Approved Contractors of the Hong Kong Housing Authority projects

If a contractor wishes to carry out maintenance works of the Hong Kong Housing Authority, it must be included in either “Group M1” or “Group M2” of the List of Building Contractors for Public Works which is administered by the Hong Kong Housing Authority under the category of “Building Work (Maintenance Works)”. Group M1 contractor is eligible to tender for maintenance and improvement contracts with a value of HK\$20 million and for term maintenance and improvement contracts with an average annual expenditure of up to HK\$20 million. Group M2 contractor is eligible to tender for maintenance and improvement contracts of unlimited value.

To carry out decoration works of the Hong Kong Housing Authority, a contractor must be included in the List of Approved Decoration Contractors which is administered by the Hong Kong Housing Authority.

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Electrical Contractors

All contractors engaged in electrical work on fixed installations must be registered with the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department.

To be qualified as a registered electrical contractor, an applicant must either employ at least one registered electrical worker or:

- (i) if the applicant is an individual, he/she must be a registered electrical worker; or
- (ii) if the applicant is a partnership, at least one of the partners must be a registered electrical worker.

Under regulation 13 of the Electricity (Registration) Regulations, a registered contractor should apply to the Director of Electrical and Mechanical Services for renewal of registration at least one month before and no earlier than four months before to the date of expiry of the registration.

Regulatory actions against contractors by the Development Bureau and the Hong Kong Housing Authority

The Development Bureau and the Hong Kong Housing Authority may take regulatory actions against contractors for failure to meet the financial criteria within prescribed time, unsatisfactory performance, misconduct or suspected misconduct, poor site safety record, and poor environmental performance, court convictions such as contravention of site safety legislation and Employment Ordinance and employment of illegal works etc.

For instance, if a qualified contractor is convicted of a series of safety or environmental offences within a short period of time in a project, or if a fatal construction accident occurs at a construction site for which the contractor is responsible, the Government may take regulatory actions against the responsible contractor, which include the removal, suspension (which means a contractor is prohibited from tendering for works of the relevant category during the suspension period) and downgrading (which includes downgrading or demoting the contractor's qualification to a lower status or class in all or any specified category) of the contractor's licence, depending on the seriousness of the incident triggering the regulatory actions.

Compliance with the relevant requirements

Our Directors confirm that our Group has obtained all relevant permits/registrations/licences for its existing operations in Hong Kong during the Track Record Period and up to the Latest Practicable Date.

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In order to ensure the ongoing compliance with the applicable requirements, laws and regulations, our administration department shall be responsible for the followings:

- (i) to identify and review any approvals, permits, licences and certificates required for our Group's operations and to ensure compliance with relevant laws and regulations periodically;
- (ii) to check relevant requirements and to make necessary submission to upkeep our Group's licensing status;
- (iii) to identify any information which shall be provided for application/submission such as company profile, job experience, resources, financial information, management systems and certificates, technical proposal, schedule, customer satisfaction etc;
- (iv) to designate suitable personnel/department to follow up the submission of the financial information to Development Bureau and the Hong Kong Housing Authority within the time stipulated under the prevailing laws and regulations;
- (v) to keep updating those information to our clients when necessary;
- (vi) to identify the new requirements, operation and control procedures under statutory and regulations; and
- (vii) to brief the senior management for the news/update/revised requirements for ensuring that our senior management obtains update of the industry characteristic.