

Enhancements under the new WSH (Operation of Cranes) Regulations

Background

With the enactment of the Workplace Safety and Health (WSH) Act on 1 March 2006, Subsidiary Legislation made under the previous Factories Act continued to remain in force.

2 The Occupational Safety and Health Department (OSHD) of the Ministry of Manpower (MOM) has been actively working in consultation with the industry to review the remaining Factories Subsidiary Legislation to update and align the provisions, so as to facilitate the crossover to the WSH Act in September 2011. In general, the review process includes the following:

- a) reviewing the original intent of the subsidiary legislation to establish whether it is still valid under the new regime;
- b) updating the provisions and making them less prescriptive where possible
- c) updating all relevant terminologies (e.g. from Chief Inspector to Commissioner);
- d) clarifying the intended duty holder for the provision; and
- e) rationalising offence and penalty provisions to commensurate with breaches within the Regulations.

Key Enhancements to the WSH (Operation of Cranes) Regulations

3 The WSH (Operation of Cranes) Regulations have been drafted to replace the existing Factories (Operation of Cranes) Regulations. The key enhancements are:

- Requiring the implementation of a lifting plan before any lifting operation
- Requiring a “Responsible Person”¹ to establish and implement the lifting plan before any lifting operation

4 To guide industry in putting in place a lifting plan, MOM has worked with WSH Council on a new Code of Practice on Safe Lifting Operations. The Code of Practice provides guidance on the expectations and accepted principles of a sound and safe lifting plan for any lifting operation. For example, the Code of Practice gives examples of operational factors that should be considered when developing a lifting plan, such as:

- the selection of appropriate cranes in terms of adequacy of capacity
- rigging method of load
- competency and composition required of a lifting team.

5 The lifting plan and the permit-to-work for safe lifting operations will work-in-tandem to ensure that all the necessary control measures have been adequately considered before any lifting operation is approved for implementation. The Code of Practice on Safe Lifting Operations is issued by WSH Council on 19 July 2011 and is available on the Council’s website at www.wshc.sg.

¹ The “Responsible Person” is a legal entity and refers to the party who is responsible for the planning and the carrying out of a lifting operation.