

MEDIA RELEASE

95% of escalator incidents reported to BCA due to user behaviour **- *BCA urges members of the public to use escalators safely***

Singapore, 29 December 2016 – Since 1 November 2016, the Building and Construction Authority (BCA) has received reports of 63 incidents relating to the use of escalators, with 95 per cent of these incidents attributed to user behaviour. 3 incidents were due to mechanical faults such as the handrail stopping while the escalator was still in operation.

2. With effect from 1 November this year, BCA had introduced new regulations on escalator maintenance. With these new maintenance requirements, escalator owners and registered escalator contractors, who maintained the escalators, are required to notify BCA as soon as practicable when an incident involving any death or injuries to passengers, or malfunction of safety critical components occurs. For incidents related to mechanical fault, BCA will suspend the operation of the escalator. The owner is also required to engage an Authorised Examiner to investigate the cause of the incident and recommend rectification works. The escalator will only be allowed to resume operation with BCA's consent.

3. Based on BCA's investigations, the most common causes of escalator incidents were users carrying heavy or bulky objects, and losing their balance when travelling on the escalators. BCA also received reports of incidents in which escalator users fell due to inattentiveness, intoxication, being unwell, or from leaning against the sides of the escalator. Generally, it was also observed that about 78 per cent of the incidents involved the elderly (above the age of 60).

4. There are more than 6,000 escalators in Singapore and many people use escalators daily when commuting. Even though escalators are equipped with safety devices as a preventive measure, accidents may still happen if users do not take

greater care when using the escalators. During the year-end festive season, BCA urges the public to practise safe use of escalators, especially in crowded areas such as shopping malls and train stations. Most escalator incidents can easily be prevented by following simple escalator safety tips.

Tips for Safe Use of Escalators

- Hold on to the handrail and stand within the yellow lines on the escalator steps, where marked
- Be mindful when using escalators, and avoid being distracted by mobile devices
- Young children should always be accompanied and closely supervised by adults when on the escalator; make sure that they do not play or run on the escalator, or lean over the handrail
- Do not linger at the landing areas to avoid obstructing other users
- Avoid leaning or standing too near to the sides of the escalators as clothing or soft footwear may get trapped between the gaps of the escalators
- Passengers with trolleys, prams, luggage, heavy items, who have limited mobility, are intoxicated or feeling unwell, should use the lifts instead
- In the event of an escalator incident, the public is advised to press the emergency stop button and call for assistance immediately

5. “As most of the reported escalator incidents can be prevented, we need to raise the level of awareness on the safe use of escalators among users of escalators. We are working with escalator owners in shopping malls, schools, hospitals as well as train operators to disseminate the “Safe Use of Escalators” posters. The posters illustrate safety tips that users should observe when using escalators to prevent incidents from happening. It is important for everyone to do their part to ensure the safe use of escalators. ” said Dr John Keung, Chief Executive Officer of BCA. *(Please refer to attached PDF for the posters)*