

## **Brief Notes of Liaison Meeting between FSD and Authorized Persons**

**Date** : 9 December 2010 (Thursday)  
**Time** : 1500 hours  
**Venue** : Conference Room, Fire Safety Command, FSD

### **Matters Discussed in the Meeting :**

#### **1. Registered Fire Engineer (RFE) Scheme**

The revised Consultation Paper was submitted to SB on 31.8.2010. Having considered that the Scheme might have implication on fire safety control in licensed premises in the long run and the Efficiency Unit (EU) was studying the said control regime, SB had passed the consultation paper circulated to the ten related B/Ds to EU for reference.

Liaison had been made with SB to discuss the way forward. SB had in principle no objection to the Second Round Consultation to stakeholders. Prior to the consultation, SB had suggested to clarify the issue with DoJ such as the liability issue caused by the revoking of license, implication on validity of business licenses issued if the work of the Registered Fire Engineer was found to be substandard during audit inspection by officers of FSD, etc. After the clarification with the issues with DoJ, it was anticipated that the consultation would be conducted in January 2011.

The RFE scheme was similar to the registration mechanism of Authorized Persons, Registered Structural Engineers and Registered Ventilation Contractors. Under the Buildings Ordinance, disciplinary proceedings might be carried out to those Authorized Persons, Registered Structural Engineers or Registered Ventilation Contractors who had been convicted by any courts of an offence related to carrying out his professional duties or had been negligent or had misconducted himself in a professional way. In addition, the requirements of high qualifications for registration as professional RFE would deter the RFE from conspiring with the applicant of licensed premises or Fire Safety Installation

Contractor to swindle or issue false fire safety certificate. It was suggested to consider clearly stating in the amended Regulation/Ordinance that contravention of any relevant provisions should be guilty of a criminal offence and the RFE would be liable for prosecution in the law drafting stage.

2. Inspection of Ventilating Systems in New Buildings

The circular letter on 'Inspection of Fire Dampers before Application for Occupation Permit' was issued to all Authorized Persons, Registered Structural Engineers, Registered Geotechnical Engineers, Registered General Building Contractors and Registered Specialist Contractors by the Buildings Department on 24.9.2010. The implementation date of the trial inspection scheme was fixed on 1.1.2011.

The trial run schedule would take four to six months. During the trial scheme, about three newly constructed buildings per month would be randomly selected by BD for inspection by FSD. The scope of inspection would mainly cover the functionality of fire dampers. After the trial run, the collated information/statistics would be passed to BD for review.

3. Review of Codes of Practice (CoP)

398 comments from 19 key stakeholders had been consolidated and relevant FSD Circular Letters would also be incorporated into the updated Codes. After meeting with various stakeholders, 96 out of 360 comments for the FSI Code were adopted in the updating exercise. For the Inspection Code, 21 out of 38 views were incorporated. The draft Codes would be circulated to the stakeholders for comment once finalized.

4. Submission of Fire Engineering Report

A copy of FER had been/would be attached to the Letter of No Objection in Principle issued to consultants. In this connection, AP members were requested to assist in reminding the consultants to complete and return the FER to FSD for follow-up action.

5. Motor Vehicle Diesel and Unleaded Petrol Meeting Euro V Standards

Advisory letters had been sent to all Cat.5 DG store licensees, DGV licensees, oil companies and owners of fuel tank rooms as well as other stakeholders to inform them of this particular issue. They were reminded to apply for the appropriate class of DG Licence(s) in advance if diesel with a flash point below 66°C was to be conveyed/handled/stored by them.

6. BD's Code of Practice for Fire Safety Design for Buildings

Parts A to E of the draft Code of Practice for Fire Safety in Buildings (FS Code), Report No. 28, had been finalized in June 2010 and were issued to members on 24.6.2010.

As regards consultation with BSC/APSEC, Parts A to E were introduced to BSC/APSEC members at the meeting on 24.6.2010. A Briefing Session to the BSC/APSEC was subsequently conducted on 29.7.2010. Comments from BSC/APSEC members were received by 24.9.2010 and responses were prepared. At the Steering Committee meeting held on 8.11.2010, responses / comments from relevant parties / departments (including FSD) had been discussed. Parts A to E would be adopted for use upon acceptance by the BSC/APSEC.

Parts F and G were in final drafting stage and had been sent to the relevant parties / departments for comments by BD in late November / early December. Next Steering Committee meeting would be convened in late December 2010 for discussing and refining Parts F and G.

As Parts F and G were more complicated and many responses / views had been/would be received, it was anticipated that lengthy discussion would be required. The meeting suggested BD to implement Parts A to E first. In addition, upon the implementation of Parts F and G, AP representatives opined that the industry and the Building Authority might explore the feasibility of issuing common design parameters.

7. Request for Fire Engineering Design Report for Exemption Items

BD would normally request for a fire engineering design report when AP applied for exemption for building work items from requirements of the Buildings Ordinance. In view of the uncertainty of fire safety objectives, preparing a fire engineering design report would be not viable.

The meeting noted that this requirement might be applied to building work items not prescribed in the Buildings Ordinance. It was suggested to elaborate the rationale / basis of the requirements in the FS Code as a reference.

8. Requirements of Drencher System on Refuge Floors

In view of the constraints posed by the original design of some domestic buildings, there was no refuge floor and the occupants would stay and wait at the roof area in case of fire. Under part IV, clause 4.40 (iii) of the Codes of Practice for Minimum Fire Service Installations, it is stipulated that no drencher system was required at roof-type refuge floor. It was noted that there were cases where Building Service Engineer requested for installation of drencher system to covered common area being included as refuge area leading to the open refuge roof.

The meeting noted that roof-type refuge floor would not require a drencher system. However, the codes of practice only stipulated the minimum requirements of fire service installations and equipment to comply with the legislation. The requirements of drencher system at refuge area/floor would depend on whether there was proper separation at this area. The main criteria applicable to refuge area/floor was that all furniture, equipment and finishing materials used should be non-combustible materials and did not emit toxic gas in case of fire, and that to be regarded as a refuge floor, the main roof should be of a flat surface as provided in clause 21.3 (a) of the Code of Practice for the Provision of Means of Escape in Case of Fire.

9. Locking Device at Staircase Door Leading to Roof

FSD had spotted from some Building Plans that the door in

common staircase leading to the roof was installed with dead lock. From FSD's fire safety point of view, all doors giving access from a common staircase to a roof should be readily and conveniently openable from the staircase side without the use of a key. In addition, if the common staircases did not give access to the roof of the building, suitable notice should be securely fixed at a conspicuous position at the entrance to the staircase on every floor notifying occupiers and visitors that the staircase did not give access to the roof and escaping to the roof was not feasible in case of fire. Despite there were discrepancies in the interpretation of 'Means of Escape' under FSD and BD's purviews, FSD would issue FHAN and prosecute the building owners/occupiers in this regard according to Fire Services (Fire Hazard Abatement) Regulation. In this connection, BD had been requested to consider adding the above requirements in the new draft Code of Practices on Building Fire Safety. As the industry might not be aware of such requirements, AP members were requested to disseminate the said requirements to all building professionals.

END