

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

**Date** : 19 December 2011 (Monday)  
**Time** : 1500 hours  
**Venue** : Conference Room, Fire Safety Command, FSD

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

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

Consultation exercise on the RFE Scheme had been conducted. The majority of the stakeholders consulted were generally supportive of the Scheme.

A Business Impact Assessment Study would be conducted with assistance from Economic Analysis and Business Facilitation Unit in preparing the consultancy brief and selection of consultant.

FSD would set up a Registration Committee and a Disciplinary Panel respectively to oversee registration of the RFE and to deal with cases of professional misconduct and/or substandard performance.

#### 2. Inspection of Ventilating Systems in New Buildings

Up to end September 2011, FSD had conducted inspection of fire dampers in 28 new buildings (including one which was found not requiring inspection under Cap. 123J) covering residential, commercial, industrial and institutional categories. Nine of the inspected buildings (i.e. about 33%) had substantial amount of defects in fire dampers whereas 15 buildings were found with minor defects which could be rectified shortly after the inspections. Only three buildings were without defects in damper installation.

The Buildings Department (BD) had issued a Circular Letter on 26 September 2011 to announce the termination of the trial scheme on 1 October 2011. The information collected in the past months was being analyzed by BD for the drawing up of measures as may be necessary to ensure the relevant requirements were fully met.

#### 3. Review of Codes of Practice (CoP)

The new piece of Inspection Checklist for fire detection system and visual fire alarm system in accordance with BS 5839-1:2002+A2:2008 endorsed by the FSSAG had been incorporated into the updated FSCoP. The tentative effective date would be on 1 April 2012.

4. Local Application of the LPC Rules Incorporating BS EN 12845

The Circular Letter on local application of the LPC Rules incorporating BS EN 12845 for sprinkler system was finalized and would be issued subject to the endorsement by the FSSAG. It would be issued after the final confirmation of the FSSAG.

5. Requirements, Acceptance Criteria and Specific Locations of Emergency Vehicular Access (EVA) where Paving Blocks are Acceptable to FSD

According to the expert comments of the Highways Department, Grasscrete was a cellular reinforced concrete slab with cells filled with soil and seeded with grass. It did not provide a homogenous paved road surface similar to that of concrete or bituminous pavements commonly laid on EVA in Hong Kong. From engineering point of view, it should not be regarded as a kind of hard-paving material. In this regard, grass paving including Grasscrete should only be allowed for use on the portion of EVA where the ladder operation was not contemplated or at dead ends of EVA where fire appliances usually U-turned or reversed. However, FSD would consider the use of grass-paving materials on a case-by-case basis.

6. Standardization of Floor Numbering

While understanding that there was a long established local practice and custom in floor numbering for buildings in Hong Kong, such as omission of floor numbers “4”, “13” and those ending with a “4”, floor numbers not in consecutive numerical order was undesirable as it might cause confusion to emergency service personnel. FSD’s comment on the floor nomenclature would be proffered to BD in case it would materially hamper their operational efficiency.

7. Arrangement for Installation of Fire Service Pump on Roof or Floor Slab

The attendees raised concerns on how BD would handle the standard spreaders already installed and whether such spreaders would be treated as UBW hence affecting the title of the property concerned during meeting with FSICA. BD confirmed that since the standard spreaders previously installed in accordance with Circular Letter No. 2/2004 were deemed to be exempted under s.41(3) of the Buildings Ordinance, BD would not take enforcement action against them unless there was change in circumstances e.g. the building works became dangerous due to dilapidation, etc.

A working group meeting among FSD, BD and FSICA was conducted on 11 November 2011. The length of the grace period before the effective implementation of new arrangement was also discussed. It

was agreed that FSICA would consult their members on the appropriate length of the grace period and revert to FSD with their view in early December.

FSICA's comments were received which indicated that since many RFSICs had already signed contracts with Clients based on the current methodology as per FSD Circular Letter No. 2/2004, a 6-month Grace Period was the minimum period for them to prepare the FS system and FSI layouts, and submit the standard spreader design to FSD for approval. Even for those FSI designs that had been approved by FSD, there could still be many factors that could prolong the spreader installation period and affect the anticipated completion date of the work, such as:

- (i) Delay in collection of working fund by Owners' Corporation or among different owners in multi-ownership buildings;
- (ii) Reversal of prior agreement to surrender the area for spreader installation by landlord or new landlord;
- (iii) Deferred Master Programme due to various reasons by Owners' Corporation or Clients; and
- (iv) Other unforeseeable reasons.

In view of the difficulties, FSICA proposed the following arrangements in order to facilitate a smooth implementation:-

- (i) A 6-month Grace Period for RFSIC to submit works proposals adopting the standard spreader design as per FSD Circular Letter No. 2/2004; and
- (ii) Improvement works involving proposals for installation of standard spreaders under FSD Circular Letter No. 2/2004 including those proposals which had been previously approved and those with approvals to be sought within the 6-month period shall be completed within 12 months.

With a consensus having been reached among stakeholders, FSD Circular Letter No. 1/2012 was issued on 1 February 2012 to announce the arrangements with proposals based on designs according to FSD Circular No. 2/2004 to be received by FSD by 31 July 2012 and the corresponding improvement works to be completed by 31 January 2013.

## 8. Fire Hydrant and Hose Reel Installations

The rationale for the requirements that the water supplied through the fixed fire pump shall feed a wet rising main to all fire hydrants and hose reels under the new Codes of Practice (Minimum Fire Service Installations and Equipment) and (Inspection, Testing and Maintenance of Installations and Equipment) was that, for the protection of life and

property, there should be sufficient hydrants and hose reels on each floor to ensure that every part of each floor could be reached by a length of not more than 30 metres of fire services hose or hose reel tubing.

In Appendix 5 - Checklist for Fire Hydrant and Hose Reel Installations, while submitting the initial building plan to Building Authority, both FSI contractor and FSD Officer had to check items 4.2.3 - Length of hose reel was not exceeding 30 metres in length and item 4.2.4 - Every part of the building could be reached by a nozzle.

In regard a flat with large floor area which could not be reached by a length of not more than 30 metres of fire services hose or hose reel tubing, additional fire hydrant outlet or hose reel should be installed at suitable intervals for delivery of a jet of water for fire fighting.

9. Fire Safety Management Plan for Premises with Open Kitchens

BD had issued the Code of Practice for Fire Safety in Buildings 2011 on 30 September 2011. The fire safety provisions related to open kitchen design were laid down in Part F - Fire Safety Management.

Under the new Code, the Authorized Person should compile a fire safety management plan which included maintenance plan, training plan, and fire action plan. The fire safety provisions for a flat with open kitchen should be incorporated into the fire safety management plan and Deed of Mutual Covenant as the management office and the Owners' Corporation had to ensure that the management procedures stated in the fire safety management plan were implemented effectively. Before submission of general building plans associated with fire safety engineering design for open kitchens using the new Code, prior approval for the fire safety management plan had to be sought from the New Projects Division.

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