

Fire Safety Standards Advisory Group (FSSAG)
Matter Discussed in the 71st FSSAG Meeting held on 8 March 2023

1. *Review of Precautions and Requirements in regard to Fire Safety in Mechanical Ventilating Systems*

It was reported that the updated version of the draft of (i) fire safety requirements (FSRs) for mechanical ventilating systems and (ii) FSRs for gas extraction system for battery room and electrical charging facilities had been circulated to FSSAG members on 2 February 2023. Having considered the comments received from FSSAG members, the latest draft of the two FSRs had been further updated and circulated to members of the FSSAG and the Ventilation Installations Liaison Group prior to this meeting. The FSRs were therefore recommended for implementation by the forthcoming promulgation of FSD Circular Letters.

It was further enquired whether the Chinese version of the aforesaid FSRs would be ready for issuance. It was responded that the Chinese version had been prepared and would be updated with the English version simultaneously.

FSD thanked members for their contributions and comments to the FSRs. It was expected that the FSD Circular Letters would be issued shortly.

2. *Validity Period of Calibration of Testing Equipment for Staircase Pressurization System and Smoke Extraction System*

It was advised that the above issues had been issued via FSD Circular Letter No. 5/2022 on 12 December 2022. There being no further updates on this item, it was suggested to delete this item in the next meeting.

It was proposed and members agreed to delete this item in the next meeting.

3. *Clarification for Low Level Directional Sign*

It was stated that the types of signs using as low level directional sign in audio/visual advisory system (AVAS) had been discussed in the last meeting.

Member of FSICA had raised further enquires on the subject matter. As such, it

was reviewed that the requirements of low level directional signs under the Code of Practice for Minimum Fire Services Installations and Equipment (CoP) in versions 2012 and 2022 respectively, and proposed if phosphorescent signs be the equivalent types of low level directional signs for local application.

It was stated that members should aware that the use of self-luminous sign was strictly-controlled locally in view of the containment of radioactive substance, i.e. tritium, inside the sign. The application of the use of self-luminous sign was limited unless justified by the potential benefit of saving of life and where the use of electrical power was not possible or feasible. Besides, the disposal of tritium sign was not permissible locally. Given the condition above, it was enquired FSICA that whether the practical application of self-luminous signs remained available in Hong Kong. A member of FSICA responded that the self-luminous sign with radioactive substance was not used in Hong Kong in recent years since members of the trade failed to obtain the corresponding license from Radiation Board.

Members shared their views and expressed their comments on the issue. It was noted that the self-luminous sign with radioactive substance had been used in Hong Kong many years ago. However, it became uncommon in recent years taking into account of its life span, license requirement, maintenance and disposal issues. It was suggested that the item of self-luminous sign with radioactive substance as mentioned in CoP should become obsolete and be repealed. In this connection, FSD agreed the CoP should be revised accordingly in due course.

It was supplemented that the use of phosphorescent signs had been adopted in various international standards, i.e. BS 5499 Part 4 and Part 10, with the presence of a reliable light source and subject to the following conditions:

- (i) The sign should be tested to BS ISO 17398 and attain classification C;
- (ii) The sign should be externally illuminated with a vertical illuminance of not less than 100 lux under normal lighting conditions; and
- (iii) If emergency lighting is provided, the signs should be illuminated with a vertical illuminance of 5 lux under mains fail conditions.

Having considered the request of the trade, it was suggested that phosphorescent signs for the application of low level directional signs be adopted in AVAS on the condition that the signs should comply with the requirements stipulated in BS 5499 Part 4.

It was responded and advised to “the emergency lighting shall be installed near the phosphorescent type low level directional signs within about 2 metres horizontally” proposed by FSICA that it would be more appropriate to comply with the international standard instead of FSICA’s proposed lighting condition. Members expressed support for the aforesaid arrangement.

4. Clarification for whether fire shutter should be included and completed in F.S. 251 during maintenance.

FSD replied that the item of fire shutter was included in F.S. 251 and suggested liaising with FSICA for detailed operation after the meeting. [Post-meeting note: A member of FSICA was contacted and advised the entry details in completing F.S. 251 for fire shutters.]

A member of HKIE expressed concern on the fire shutter actuation being related to FSI since the fire shutter should be fully closed within 60 seconds depending on the actuation. FSD supplemented that the efficient working order of AAD should rely on the inspection of the registered fire service installation contractors (RFSICs) in annual inspection. FSD added that the operation of fire shutter shall at all times be capable of sustaining continuous operation, the relevant requirements have been stipulated in CoP and a reminder letter addressing to Authorized Person and RFSIC was issued in 2018.

5. AOB

FSD supplemented that in response to the request raised in the last meeting, a briefing on the submission of FSI drawings under Cap. 502 and Cap. 572 was arranged in the FSD Connects held on 24 February 2023.

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