



# **A Guide to Application for Timber Store Licence**

**Fire Services Department**

**(April 2023)**

# **Fire Services Department (FSD)**

## **Our Vision**

To serve Hong Kong by making it a safe place to live and work.

## **Mission**

To protect life and property from fire or other calamity.

To give advice on fire protection measures and fire hazards.

To educate the community and to promote the public awareness on fire safety.

To render paramedic ambulance services to the sick and the injured and convey them to hospital.

## **Values**

Upholding high standards of integrity.

Striving for professionalism and continuous improvement.

Dedication and commitment to providing quality service.

Readiness in meeting challenge and accepting accountability.

Maintaining high spirit and esprit de corps among staff members.

## **Type of Timber Store Licence issued by FSD**

- Licence for the Storage of Timber

### **Abbreviation**

TS - Timber Store

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Our performance targets in respect of application for Timber Store Licence are as follows:-

<b>Processing Steps</b>	<b>Performance Target for Timber Store Licence</b>
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• On-site inspection</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• within 14 working days upon receipt of licence application and the required plans/drawings in full</li><li>• within 14 working days upon receipt of revised plans/drawings for licence application</li><li>• within 14 working days upon receipt of alteration application</li><li>• within 7 working days upon notification of change of licensee of a TS</li></ul> |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Issue fire safety requirements / Objection Letter with reason(s)</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• within 28 working days upon receipt of licence application and the required plans/drawings in full</li><li>• within 28 working days upon receipt of revised plans/drawings for licence application</li></ul> |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Compliance inspection upon receipt of report of compliance</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• within 7 working days upon receipt of report of compliance</li></ul> |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Issue of Licence / Result of compliance inspection</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• within 6 working days from the date of inspection</li></ul> |
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## **IMPORTANT ADVICE DO's & DON'Ts for Applicants**

### **DO's**

- DO read this guidebook before submitting an application for TS licence
- DO prepare 2 copies of plans of the proposed TS in the nearest metric scale together with supporting documents and an authorization letter from the applicant (applicable to application submitted by an agent)
- DO submit general building plans to the Buildings Department for alteration to building structure if applicable, prior to the TS licence application

### **DON'Ts**

- DON'T start construction of TS before your application is approved by the Authority
- DON'T start alteration works to a licensed TS before your application is approved by the Authority
- DON'T operate TS without a valid TS licence

## **Important Notes**

This is not a legal document. Information contained in this Guide is for reference only. Application for the grant of TS licence is processed in accordance with the Timber Stores Ordinance, Cap. 464, Laws of Hong Kong and its subsidiary legislation.

It is an offence under the Timber Stores Ordinance that any person who operates TS without a valid licence, upon conviction shall be liable to a fine up to HK\$50,000 and to imprisonment for 6 months.

Any TS licensee who fails to comply with any licence conditions of a TS licence, upon conviction shall be liable to a fine up to HK\$50,000 and to imprisonment for 6 months.

The applicant must not offer any advantage, money or gift to Government officials. This is an offence and offender is liable to prosecution.



## **PART I : General**

### **1. Introduction**

1.1 This guide book is to provide general information to the public to assist them in their application for TS licence under the Timber Stores Ordinance, Cap. 464, Laws of Hong Kong.

1.2 The materials contained in this guide book are for reference only. They aim to set out the application procedure and the general fire safety requirements for the issue of TS licence. Specific fire safety requirements will be formulated as appropriate for the applicant's compliance upon TS licence application.

### **2. Legislation**

2.1 The legislative control on the storage of timber under the Timber Stores Ordinance, Cap. 464, Laws of Hong Kong and its subsidiary legislation is by means of a licensing system.

2.2 "Timber store" means any place used for the storage of timber other than –

- (a) a place used for the storage of timber in bulk with an average sectional area of not less than 0.05 m<sup>2</sup>; or
- (b) a place used for the storage of any timber in a quantity in the aggregate of less than 12 m<sup>3</sup>; or
- (c) a place used for the storage of any timber being a construction site within the meaning of regulation 2 of the Construction Sites (Safety) Regulations, Cap. 59I, Laws of Hong Kong.

2.3 TS licensing is not applicable to storage of timber/bamboo on a building construction site as the timber or bamboo will normally be placed there temporarily before being used in connection with building construction works. Furthermore, construction sites are subject to various safety controls under the Construction Sites (Safety) Regulations, Cap. 59I, which provide (inter alia) for unobstructed means of escape and the maintenance of fire fighting appliances.

### **3. Licensing Authority**

The Fire Services Department is the Licensing Authority (the Authority) for TS under the Timber Stores Ordinance, Cap. 464, Laws of Hong Kong.

#### **4. Enquires**

For enquiries concerning TS licence application, please contact:

Dangerous Goods Enforcement Division  
2/F, Tsim Sha Tsui Station Complex,  
333 Canton Road, Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon.

Tel. : 3850 8487

Fax : 3850 8450

E-mail : [hkfsd\\_dg\\_enq@hkfsd.gov.hk](mailto:hkfsd_dg_enq@hkfsd.gov.hk)

## **PART II: Application for Timber Store Licence**

### **5. General Information**

5.1 A TS licence may be granted with terms and conditions specifying the requirements for the storage of timber.

5.2 The Authority may revoke such TS licence on proof of an offence against the Timber Stores Ordinance or a breach of any condition of such licence by the holder thereof.

### **6. Submission of Application**

6.1 Application for a TS licence shall be made in writing to the Dangerous Goods Division of the Authority. Application shall include 2 sets of plans showing details of the proposed location.

6.2 The plans for the proposed TS, as near as may be to scale, should include the following details: -

- (a) siting of the proposed TS;
- (b) layout of the store and the surrounding buildings (in case of TS located on open ground);
- (c) such other particulars, if any, as the Authority may require to be shown on the plan.

6.3 Any handwriting on the submitted plans should be signed and sealed. Where necessary, minor amendments could be made to the submitted plans. Such amendments should also be signed or sealed by the applicant or his authorized representative.

6.4 A flowchart showing the application procedure for TS licence is in **Appendix I**.

### **7. General Siting Requirements**

7.1 A TS is not allowed to be located on upper floor of any building unless such building is a designated industrial building. A licence for TS within non-industrial building will be issued only when the store: -

- (a) is located on ground floor;
- (b) is isolated from the rest of the building by adequate fire separation of appropriate Fire Resistance Period (FRP);
- (c) is for storage/sale of timber only and not for any industrial purpose; and

(d) complies with all the fire safety requirements so formulated.

## **8. General Fire Safety Requirements**

8.1 Fire safety requirements are measures for the protection of the TS, user as well as the general public against fire or other calamity arising from a fire situation.

8.2 The samples of fire safety requirements for Timber Store (Sample 1 – 3) are in **Appendix II** for reference. Specific fire safety requirements will be formulated and issued to the applicant when the application is considered acceptable-in-principle by the Authority upon vetting of the layout plan and site inspection as appropriate.

8.3 Should there be any insurmountable difficulties for the applicant in complying with the prescribed fire safety requirements, the applicant may consult the Authority for advice.

## **9. Report of Compliance**

9.1 Upon the completion of the construction works of the TS and full compliance with the fire safety requirements, the applicant may inform the Case Officer of the Dangerous Goods Division in writing for arrangement of a compliance inspection.

9.2 During the compliance inspection, applicant shall provide for verification a set of documentation such as catalogues, certificates for the required installations.

## **10. Re-inspection**

If non-compliance with any of the fire safety requirements is noted during the compliance inspection, a notification indicating the outstanding items will be forwarded to the applicant. The applicant may apply to the Dangerous Goods Division for a re-inspection upon full compliance with the fire safety requirements which shall include all the outstanding items.

## **11. Grant of Timber Store Licence and Licence Fee**

11.1 After all the fire safety requirements are fully complied with and the actual layout of the TS conforms to the approved plans, the applicant will be notified in writing for the collection of a TS licence upon full payment of the licence fee.

11.2 Licence fees are specified in the Schedule of the Timber Stores Regulation

(Cap. 464A, Laws of Hong Kong). Reference could also be made to the FSD website at the following URL:

[http://www.hkfsd.gov.hk/home/eng/source/licensing/timber\\_store\\_fees.pdf](http://www.hkfsd.gov.hk/home/eng/source/licensing/timber_store_fees.pdf)

## **PART III: The Role of Other Government Departments**

### **12. The Role of Buildings Department**

12.1 In every TS Licence application, the Dangerous Goods Division of the Authority will deal with the licensing requirements under FSD's jurisdiction. Where alteration and addition work involving the structure and/or means of escape of a building is to be carried out, formal submission of plans for the proposed work to the Building Authority by an Authorized Person (AP) and/or Registered Structural Engineer (RSE) will be required.

12.2 Applicants are strongly advised to seek advice from an AP or RSE in advance. The lists of AP and RSE registered under the Buildings Ordinance, Cap. 123, Laws of Hong Kong are available on the website of the Buildings Department or at their offices for viewing. URL: [http://www.bd.gov.hk/english/inform/index\\_ap.html](http://www.bd.gov.hk/english/inform/index_ap.html)

### **13. The Role of Lands Department**

The Lands Department is responsible for land administration work within the territory. As there may be restrictions on the use of land, applicant is advised to clarify the land use of the proposed TS location with the Lands Department prior to making the application for TS licence.

### **14. Point to Note**

It is important to note that the grant of licence (if applicable) by the Authority under the Timber Stores Ordinance, Cap. 464, Laws of Hong Kong or its subsidiary legislation does not relieve the applicant of any obligation to obtain prior consent, approval, permission or licence from other government departments or agencies pursuant to other legislation for the proposed storage of timber. These departments or agencies may include but are not limited to the Buildings Department, Lands Department and Planning Department.

## **PART IV: Miscellaneous**

### **15. Renewal of Licence**

TS licensee would normally be reminded to renew the licence before the expiry date by the Dangerous Goods Division in the form of written notification. During the application for renewal of licence, the imposed fire safety requirements will be verified by the Case Officer and the licence would only be renewed when it has been confirmed that the fire safety requirements and licence conditions have been maintained and the appropriate fee has been paid.

### **16. Transfer of Licence**

The Authority may on application in writing to him by the licensee, showing cause to his satisfaction, and on payment of the prescribed fee, permit the transfer of an existing licence before its expiration to another person. Such transfer shall be endorsed on the licence.

### **17. Cancellation of Licence**

The TS Licence is the property of the HKSAR Government. When a TS licence is no longer required, the licensee shall notify and return the licence to the Authority for cancellation.

### **18. Alteration to a Licensed Timber Store**

18.1 Licensee has to seek the approval of the Authority for any alteration to a licensed TS by submission of 2 sets of plans. Upon receipt of an application for the alteration, an on-site inspection would be conducted by the Case Officer and the applicant will be informed in writing on whether the alteration is approved or not.

18.2 Licensee shall not commence the alteration work without approval from the Authority.

**Fire Services Department**  
**April 2010**