Brief Notes of Liaison Meeting between FSD and Authorized Persons

Date : 27 March 2012 (Tuesday)
Time : 1530 hours
Venue : Conference Room, Fire Safety Command, FSD

Matters Discussed in the Meeting :

1. Registered Fire Engineer (RFE) Scheme

The 3-month consultation period of the RFE scheme was completed on 16 January 2012. Since the commencement of the consultation, a total of 31 written comments (19 from trades and 12 from professional organizations) were received and were in general supportive to the proposal and preferred Option B of categorizing RFE into three distinct classes according to their area of expertise so as to allow more competent persons to be registered as RFE. FSD would take into account of the comments during the formulation of legislative proposals.

FSD in collaboration with Economic Analysis and Business Facilitation Unit and Security Bureau was now appointing a consultancy firm to conduct a Business Impact Assessment to assess the cost and benefit to various business operators as well as the supply of RFE in the market.

2. Review of Codes of Practice (CoP)

The English version of the updated FS CoP would be issued shortly. Pending for BD's translation of their Fire Safety Code 2011, the Chinese version of the FS CoP would also be ready.

[**Post-meeting Notes**: FSD Circular Letter No. 4/2012 – *Codes of Practice for Minimum Fire Service Installations and Equipment and Inspection, Testing and Maintenance of Installations and Equipment (April 2012)* (English Version) was issued on 28 March 2012 and had been uploaded onto the FSD Website.]

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

Having considered comments from various parties, a Table TB210.T5 on pump performance had been incorporated into the FSD Circular Letter No. 3/2012 issued on 22 March 2012. The Circular Letter was aimed at further elaborating a few technical issues and ratifying existing practices.

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

A new FSD Circular Letter No. 1/2012 was issued on 1 February 2012 which served to supersede FSD Circular Letter No. 2/2004 for Installation of Fire Service (FS) Pump on Roof or Floor Slab pursuant to the prevailing enforcement policy against unauthorized building works of the Buildings Department. The arrangements had been discussed at the liaison meetings of FSD with APs and RFSIC respectively.

The overall consensus was that in order to facilitate a smooth implementation of the above-mentioned arrangements taking into consideration that improvement works could have been entrusted to RFSIC without prior knowledge of the additional cost implications brought about by the new arrangements, there would be a grace period of six months for RFSIC to submit FSI drawings and further six months for completion of the standard spreaders with proposal for adopting standard spreaders for FS pumps on flat roof constructed in accordance with the specifications and conditions stipulated in FSD Circular Letter No. 2/2004, i.e.:-

Submission of FSI Drawing – by 31.7.2012.
Completion of works – by 31.1.2013.

5. Submission of Fire Engineering Reports and Enquiries

The New Projects Division had received over 200 fire safety engineering reports every year. There were many occasions that fire safety engineering reports and enquiries in respect of project development were submitted by fire consultants without notifying the

project AP. Since such submissions/enquiries might affect the fire safety strategy and formulation of fire service installations in subsequent general building plans (GBP) submissions, it was the statutory duties of the AP to coordinate all such applications or submission to the authorities. Recently, there were cases that approved fire safety strategy or engineering design was not stated in the FS notes of relevant GBP submissions. Therefore, if there was an AP assigned for a particular project, FSD would only handle those project-related submissions or enquiries, which were submitted by the project AP. It followed the spirit of PNAP APP 87.

There was no performance pledge on processing fire engineering submissions. In general, more time was required for processing projects adopting fire safety performance-based design than those complying with the prescriptive requirements. From the experience in processing fire engineering submissions, the process usually involved clarifications with the consultants on various details of the submissions and revisions made by the consultants, which normally took time. This was also the case for fire safety engineering submissions adjudicated by the Fire Safety Committee under the Building Authority with decision on cases deferred for submission of further justifications/clarifications/information by the consultants. Other factors such as unforeseen upsurge of workload to the Division, adequacy of information contained in the submissions, complexity of the fire safety engineering design, involvement of other working divisions/offices, etc would also lengthen the processing time. To facilitate the industry in preparing GBP submissions and fire engineering reports, over 10 lectures/seminars had been conducted by the New Projects Division in years 2009 to 2012.

Full compliance of the Fire Services requirements was required in order to provide better protection from the risk of fire for occupants and users of, and visitors to buildings. However, if there were insurmountable difficulties for the applicant in complying with the prescriptive FS requirements due to structural or spatial constraints, the applicant could adopt the fire safety engineering approach and might submit alternative fire safety engineering proposals for the Authority’s consideration.

6. Specification of Complying FS Code 2011 in General Building Plans Submissions

For GBP submissions adopting the Fire Safety Code 2011, the application should be specified in the General Notes. For submissions with open kitchen design adopting the Fire Safety Code 2011, a fire safety management plan (FSMP) had to be endorsed by the FSD before the GBP submission. The FSMP should include but not limited to fire action plan, training plan and maintenance/inspection plan of those FSI in relation to the fire safety engineering design.

In general, kitchen enclosure walls and door were designed to mitigate the effect of fire and limit the spread of fire. For buildings adopting the performance-based design with open kitchens, apart from installing smoke detector and sprinkler inside individual premises, AP should provide a FSMP showing how the building developer / management office / premises owners and occupiers will comply with the requirements such as:

- the management office or the caretaker counter should be 24-hour manned;
- training should be provided to ensure that the property management staff would proceed to the affected floor as fast as possible once an alarm signal was received at the control panel or the repeater panel and once a fire was confirmed, would activate the fire alarm by breaking the break-glass and inform FSD by dialing 999;
- fire drills should be conducted for the premises owners/occupiers regularly;
- periodic inspection and testing of the building FSI should be conducted by the management office.

7. FSD Circular Letter No. 2/2012

The FSD Circular Letter No. 2/2012 comprising two parts, namely:

1. Part I : Visual Fire Alarm Systems as Required under the Design Manual; Barrier Free Access 2008

2. Part II : Checklist for Fire Detection and Fire Alarm System to BS 5839-1:2002+A2:2008

was issued on 7 February 2012 and had been uploaded onto the FSD Website.

8. Building Regulations

The Building (Planning) Regulations 123F on the provision / specifications of emergency vehicular access and fireman's lift should be observed when submitting GBP for approval:

Reg. 41B – Fireman's lifts
Reg. 41D – Emergency vehicular access

Under the Building (Private Street & Access Roads) Regulations 123G and Reg. 16 – *Surfacing of private streets, cul-de-sacs and access roads*, the carriageway of every private street, cul-de-sac and access road should be surfaced with concrete, bitumen macadam or other approved material. Paving blocks should not be applied unless the material was approved by the Authority.

Full compliance of the requirements was required. In special circumstances, relaxation might be considered on the merits of each case, taking into account such factors as the potential fire risk, floor layout, nature of uses, actual occupancy, combustible materials, etc. Applicants should submit a study report to explain how they would tackle problems of fire suppression, smoke control, evacuation and access of the Fire Services etc.

9. Amendments to General Building Plans

As recommended by the ICAC, it was desirable to formulate a set of guideline for minor amendments to GBP. At present, the following minor amendments to the plans / drawings after submission were acceptable:

(a) Insertion / Deletion of descriptive notes;
(b) Amendments to typing / drawing errors;

(c) Minor modifications to FSI design, such as coverage, routing, pipework / ductwork / devices / components and layouts etc; and

(d) Other minor amendments not involving relaxation of requirements, major system design and insertion of a completely new system design.

Comments/inputs from the industry were welcome.

END