

**Brief Notes of Liaison Meeting between Fire Services Department (FSD)
and the Authorized Persons (APs)**

Date : 29 May 2020 (Friday)
Time : 1600 hours
Venue : Conference Room, Fire Safety Command, FSD

Matters Discussed in the Meeting :

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

The draft Fire Service (Registered Fire Engineers) Regulation and the draft code of practice were still under preparation. In order to establish a robust regime for the RFE Scheme, FSD would ensure the adequacy of checks and balances in the Regulation. Given the current progress in the drafting of Regulation and code of practice, it was agreed that the subject issue to be temporary shelved and would be reported at appropriate juncture.

2. **General Building Plan (GBP) Submission and FSI Acceptance Inspection**

Performance Indicators

The figures related to the performance indicators for GBP processed and FSI acceptance inspection for New Projects Division, Airport Expansion Project Division and Railway Development Strategy Division were presented. APs had no comment on the performance indicators presented.

3. **FSI Provisions for Car Parking Facilities with Automated Parking System (APS)**

In the 2019 Policy Address, the Chief Executive committed that the Government would strive to resolve the persisting shortage of car parking spaces in Hong Kong. Amongst other measures, the APS was one of the feasible solutions that could achieve the goal. An APS was a mechanical parking system capable in delivering unmanned vehicles from a designated drop off area/ point to any available parking space and subsequently retrieving them to the pick-up area/ point in an automated manner.

Transport Department, as the leading department, had been working closely together with various government departments to push the above initiative forward. The role of FSD was to ensure that these APSs, if materialized in Hong Kong, would be operated with minimum fire safety provisions. In

Hong Kong, all buildings/ premises were fitted/ installed with appropriate FSI and equipment according to their occupancies as prescribed in the Code of Practice for Minimum Fire Service Installation and Equipment (FSI Code). As APS was new in Hong Kong, it had not been included in the FSI Code. Furthermore, owing to its unique design, mode of operation and envisaged fire risk, there was no similar or comparable occupancy/ premises in the FSI Code that could encompass the APS. Hence, there emerged the need of a new type of occupancy of “Automated Parking System (APS) with the car parking facilities” to be inserted into the FSI Code to cope with the foreseeable development.

FSD had arranged overseas visits to APSs in the UK and Germany in 2019 and a study on APS was conducted. Subsequently, an information paper with fire safety requirements would have been prepared and would be issued shortly for reference.

A presentation on the fire safety requirements for APS was conducted.

4. **Review of Application for Inspection and Testing of Fire Service Installations and Equipment (FSI/501)**

The revamped application procedure for inspection and testing of fire service installations and equipment came into effect on 1 May 2020. Up to 29.5.2020, more than 30 nos. of application covering public and private projects were received. For smooth processing of application for FSI acceptance inspection, form submission should be properly proceeded with particular attention to the following observations: -

- i. All the essential information, such as approval date of GBP, reference no. of FSI/501a should be provided in the form FSI/501(rev.2020).
- ii. All parts of the form should be properly signed, such as declaration by AP.
- iii. The form FSI/501(rev. 2020) should be submitted together with, inter alia, duly signed FSI/501a which was provided by registered fire service installation contractor (RFSIC). It was also acceptable for the FSI/501a to be submitted separately by the RFSIC to FSD within 14 days after completion of works but prior to the submission of FSI/501(rev. 2020).

5. **Handling of Long Outstanding FSI Acceptance Inspection Cases**

There were six recent cases not ready for FSI acceptance re-inspection over 3 - 5 months. To facilitate completion of FSI acceptance inspection and subsequent issuance of FS Certificate, it was anticipated that the project AP would arrange for defect rectification and completion of re-inspection within 2 months since the issuance of Initial Inspection Report FSI/507B-1 from FSD. For cases not keeping FSD informed of any re-inspection arrangement over 2 months, FSD would issue final reminder notice to the project AP with copy to the project owner, RFSIC(s) and responsible registered professional engineer(s), as appropriate. If FSI acceptance re-inspection could not be conducted within 3 weeks, cancellation of the application might then be considered. He reminded that the responsibilities of errors, defect rectification and subsequent FSI acceptance re-inspection arrangement, which might lead to refusal or delay in issuing the Certificate (F.S. 172) or acceptance memo/letter, rested with the project AP and /or the RFSIC(s).

6. **FSI Requirements for Maintenance Access of Lift Pit**

In response to the enquiry from a member, it was told that the new design of lift pit was noted subsequent to the amendment of the Code of Practice for Building Works for Lifts and Escalators 2011, which was under the jurisdiction of the Buildings Department. Should the design of the maintenance access and/or its associated staircase/lobby fall within the definition of “Basement” as stated in the FSI Code, FSI should be provided in accordance with paragraph 4.3 or 4.4 of the FSI Code. Application for relaxation of FSI requirements would be considered on a case-by-case basis.

7. **Enforcement of Mini-storage Premises (MSP)**

In response to the enquiry from a member, the following potential fire hazards in MSPs were explained-

- undesirable layout of mini-storage cubicles;
- obstruction to/insufficient number of windows;
- insufficient coverage of the hose reel system;
- undesirable types of locking devices for escape doors; and
- insufficient exit signs and/or directional signs.

The progress of law enforcement actions against those MSPs with fire

hazards identified was also reported.

8. **Clarification of Restriction on Location in SCH/102**

In response to the enquiry from a member, it was told that the fire safety requirements “SCH/102” was applicable for the application of converted school registration. Under the existing handling mechanism of converted school registration, upon receiving the application form and layout plans from the applicant, FSD officer would first conduct an on-site risk assessment to assess the suitability of proposed premises location.

During the on-site risk assessment, amongst other factors, the co-existence of converted school premises with restaurant/club would be critically examined. Should a converted school premises being located "vertically" above/below a restaurant/club, due consideration would be given to whether there is any remedial measures/provision which might mitigate the potential risk on a case-by-case basis. All contributing factors would be fully considered which included the business nature of the restaurant/club, type of fuel used inside the restaurant/club premises, fire service installations installed / to be installed and proper separation, etc.

9. **Presentation on Fire Safety (Industrial Buildings) Bill [(FS(IB) Bill]**

The FS(IB) Bill to the meeting was introduced to the meeting.

10. **Fire Safety of Electric Vehicle Charging Facilities**

In view of the rapid development of Electric Vehicle (EV), EV would become the main stream vehicle supply in the foreseeable future. It was anticipated that the installation of EV charging-enabling infrastructure in car-parking facilities would become an irresistible trend. Some of the potential fire risks of EV’s battery and its charging process were illustrated. The fire safety requirements for EV charging facilities were being formulated and would be promulgated soon.

11. **Job Creation under Anti-epidemic Fund 2.0**

The Chairman told the meeting that \$6 billion had been earmarked by the Government under Anti-epidemic Fund 2.0 for the creation of time-limited jobs in the public and private sectors. APs or professional bodies who

were hard hit by COVID-19 pandemic and interested in the scheme could contact the relevant subject department for more details.