

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

**Date** : 20 April 2022 (Wednesday)  
**Time** : 1605 hours

\*Video conference was conducted

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

#### 1. **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. The Chairman reiterated that despite manpower being redeployed to handle anti-epidemic work in recent months, priority was still given to processing GBP submission and FSI acceptance inspection.

##### **Repeated Irregularities Found in GBP Submission / during Acceptance Inspection**

Several repeated irregularities were noted in recent GBP submissions and acceptance inspections:

- (i) Unclear EVA calculation;
- (ii) FS Notes amendments were not highlighted/ underlined;
- (iii) The standards of system in FS Notes were not updated, such as-
  - ◆ Sprinkler installation – FSD Circular Letter No. 5/2020 for BS EN 12845:2015 (w.e.f. 1.1.2021)
  - ◆ Emergency lighting –FSD Circular Letter No. 4/2021 for BS 5266-1:2016 (w.e.f. 1.1.2022)
  - ◆ Fire detection and fire alarm system –FSD Circular Letter No. 6/2021 for BS 5839-1:2017 (w.e.f. 1.1.2022);
- (iv) Inclusion of notes which were not related to FSI in FS Notes; and
- (v) The alterations and additions (A&A) area/ submission areas were not clearly delineated / colored on plans.

2. **Car Parking Facilities with Automated Parking System**

Further discussion with BD regarding some odd cases had been made in March 2022. A reply with FSD's suggestions was given at the end of March 2022 while a formal reply from BD on the information paper was still pending.

3. **Review on Fire Safety Requirements for Car Ports**

After receiving comments from the relevant stakeholders and government departments, response to comments on the information paper was prepared and would be issued accordingly. The FSD circular letter prescribing the fire safety requirements would be issued in mid-2022.

4. **Review of FSI Code (2012)**

Comments from relevant stakeholders and government departments were received and response to comments would be issued in May 2022. The revised FSI Code had been finalized and would be issued in the second quarter of 2022.

5. **Enquires from AP**

5.1 In response to a member's enquiry on the processing of FSI/314B submissions, it was explained that the purpose of the Fire Safety (Commercial Premises) Ordinance was to enhance fire safety in certain commercial premises/ buildings. Owners/occupiers of prescribed commercial premises (PCP) or specified commercial building (SCP) were required to ensure the provision of or improvement on fire service installations and equipment comply with the relevant rules and codes of practices specified under the Fire Safety (Commercial Premises) Ordinance. The provision of relevant information/drawings illustrating the fulfillment of relevant requirement was therefore essential. In case there was any hurdle or technical issue being encountered, APs could contact the relevant case officer to look for possible alternatives or other flexible and pragmatic approaches.

5.2 In response to a member's enquiry on why Loss Prevention Council (LPC) rules was only applicable to FS Sprinkler tank, but not FS HR tank, it was explained that the requirements on supply tank supplying fire hydrant/hose reel was prescribed in para.5.26 of the FSI Code which was a local

requirement. The supply tank was to provide a building with in situ water supply for readily use by firemen when they arrived at the fire scene, enabling them to spring into fire-fighting action immediately. It would also provide a buffer period for the firemen, while carrying out fire-fighting, to secure access to street hydrants or other sources of water supply for prolonged operations. The different levels of supply tank capacity requirements stipulated in the FSI Code had been drawn up by FSD taking into account its past experience of fire-fighting, the number of fire-fighting jets and length of buffer period required for buildings with different floor areas, and its consultations with the trade and other government departments (including the Hong Kong Institute of Architects, Hong Kong Institute of Engineers, Hong Kong Federation of Insurers, Buildings Department and Architectural Services Department).

The requirements on sprinkler suction tanks came from LPC Rules for Automatic Sprinkler Installations which comprised different technical requirements for sprinkler system design, installations as well as system components, ending up with a robust and reliable automatic sprinkler installation for fire protection. Hence its requirements, after review, were to be followed by both the Authority and the trade. This was stated in item 2.13 of List Two of FSD Circular Letter No. 3/2006 that "the tank shall be of concrete construction or LPC approved".

It was further explained that as a general rule, a HR system should be equipped with a supply tank of 2000 litres effective capacity as stipulated in FSD Circular Letter No. 5/2016 - Revised Supply Tank Requirement for Hose Reel system in connection with Enforcement of the Fire Safety (Buildings) Ordinance (Cap. 572). This Circular Letter, with consideration of FSD's emergency response time and the objective to improve fire safety standard under Cap. 572, stipulated the revised requirements of effective supply tank capacity of HR system for target buildings as 500 litres (for built-up areas), and 750 to 1500 litres (for dispersed risks and isolated development areas).

- 5.3 Regarding the list of approved glass reinforced plastic (GRP) tanks for FS Sprinkler system as requested by a member, it was explained that in the review exercise of LPC Rules for Automatic Sprinkler Installations incorporating BS EN 12845:2015 and subsequent issuance of FSD Circular Letter No. 5/2020, Fire Safety Standard Advisory Group concluded that the certification of sprinkler suction tank from different manufacturers by Loss Prevention Certification Board (LPCB) would be market-driven. It was

observed that LPCB listed GRP tanks for sprinkler suction tank had become more popular in some construction projects and building extension as well as fire service installations upgrading projects.

- 5.4 A member expressed his great concern, reflecting from various Architects, on FSD's requirement recently imposed to AP to issue a written agreement that all the staff involved in the acceptance tests were not diagnosed with COVID-19 as a precedent condition for the FS inspection. Relevant stakeholders were not consulted before the implementation of such requirement. It was explained that such urgent precautionary measure was implemented to protect the health & safety of all parties involved in the FS site inspection from infection in response to the fifth wave of COVID-19, so as to ensure that the acceptance tests could be conducted safely without stoppage.

The member further stated that COVID-19 precautionary measures was needed but should be transparent and with proper consultation with all stockholders. FSD could consider the similar precautionary measures being taken by all school with face-to-face lessons in requiring all people participating in the FS inspection to provide negative RAT result in the morning of the FS inspection before entering the site. The Chairman advised that such arrangement should be reviewed regularly in response to the actual epidemic situation with corresponding appropriate measures.

(Post-meeting note: The instant discussion between the AP, FS contractor and FSD was conducted at one construction site under inspection on 22.4.2022. The concerns about the implementation of such agreement was consulted and it was generally welcome by AP as such agreement could be easily applied by signing a back-to-back agreement between main contractor and other trade members who involved in the FS site inspection beforehand. AP could also be benefited from this arrangement as his/her health could also be protected during the FS inspection.)