

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

Date : 9 December 2024 (Monday)
Time : 1430 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 in respect of the New Projects (NP) Division, Airport Expansion Project (AEP) Division and Railway Development Strategy Division were presented.

Enquiry on GBP Submissions

In response to a member's enquiry on the number of new GBP submissions received in the past few months, it was advised that NP Division received 33 and 13 new submissions of GBP in June and July, being the highest and lowest record that had been received respectively.

Repeated Irregularities Found in GBP Submission/ during Acceptance Inspection

A number of repeated irregularities were noted in recent GBP submissions and acceptance inspections:

- (i) Recessed and concealed sprinklers should not be used in the areas with fast response type sprinkler provision; and
- (ii) A compartment schedule of the building shall be provided for the non-provision of FSIs, e.g. static or dynamic smoke extraction system.

A point to note regarding "Open Kitchen Sprinkler Head Positions against Cabinet in Residential Unit" had been included in the Appendix IV of the "Supplementary Guidance Note on General Building Plan Submissions" in October 2024. On the other hand, the

above-mentioned repeated irregularities would also be included shortly.

AEP Disbandment

AEP Division would be disbanded on 1 January 2025. Responsibilities for processing GBPs and Fire Engineering Reports (FERs) as well as conducting FSI acceptance inspections for the 3-Runway-System Project would be transferred to NP Division and Fire Protection Engineering Compliance (FPEC) Division respectively.

2. Car Parking Facilities with Automated Parking System (APS)

Comments from all stakeholders had been received and considered. A circular letter promulgating the fire safety requirements for CPF with APS was under preparation.

A number of GBP submissions with APS were endorsed by FSD in recent years. This circular letter was expected to cause no significant impact to the trade.

3. Fire Protection Measures in Construction Sites

The revised requirements outlined in FSD Circular Letter No. 2/2024 had taken effect on 1 July 2024 for all new submissions of GBP received by FSD. The video recording of the seminar on the revised requirements had been uploaded to the FSD website through the “FSD Connects with the Industries” platform.

5. Electronic Submission with Adoption of iAM Smart or Valid Personal Digital Certificate for Application of FSI Acceptance Inspection

A seminar on the electronic submission of the Form FSI/314 and FSI/314A was conducted on 18 October 2024 through the “FSD Connects with Registered Fire Service Installation Contractors and Building Professionals” platform, and relevant video recording of the seminar would be uploaded to FSD Website shortly.

To foster trade participation with valid iAM Smart account and/or personal digital certificate for making electronic submission efficiently, FSD would provide additional support to AP/RPE/RFSIC in making covering electronic submission of Form FSI/501 and Certificate FSI/501a once hard copy applications were received by FSD. For example, the

application date of the hard copy form would still be treated as the actual receipt date by FSD even the submission date of covering e-FSI/501 and e-FSI/501a was later.

Such arrangement would provide great incentive for AP/RPE/RFSIC to adopt electronic submission so as to enjoy the full benefits of round-the-clock submission with a compressed processing time, advanced retrieval of documents and plans to prepare for on-site inspection as well as streamlined administrative procedure.

In response to a member's enquiry on whether there was a timetable for compulsory use of electronic submission, it was advised that there was no such plan next year and efforts would be made to educate members on the sector on the use of electronic submission by one-to-one guidance. Generally speaking, e-service could speed up the progress and members are encouraged to use the service.

6. **Implementation of Electronic Submission Hub (ESH) and e-FS161 Certificate**

It was reported that minor amendment of electronic GBP (e-GBP) during the stage of FSI acceptance inspection could be administered via the ESH. The general administrative procedure would be the same as existing arrangement of GBP in paper form. Upon receipt of application for minor amendment from AP, a designated platform in ESH named "Discussion Forum" would be created for them to submit the e-GBP requiring amendment. As such amendment could be conducted in online platform, it was anticipated that the turnaround time for the final minor amendment of e-GBP could be reduced. No update on the e-FS161 Certificate arrangement was made.

7. **Electronic Issuance of Fire Services Certificate (FS172)**

The e-Issuance System (e-IS) for issuance and delivery of e-F.S.172 for cases where FSI/501 application was successfully launched and implemented. As at 4 November 2024, 49 out of 67 FSI/501 application were issued with e-F.S.172 by email via e-IS. Members' support to adopt e-IS in receiving e-F.S.172 was appealed since the demand note would be received once the F.S.172 was endorsed by Assistant Director (Fire Safety) / Assistant Director (Licensing & Certification). After payment and verification, the e-F.S.172 would be automatically sent to

email(s) provided by AP and all stakeholders authorized by AP would receive the e-F.S.172 instantly. Besides, e-correspondence along with e-F.S.172 (e.g. Letter of Duties of owner & Letter to Owner on incompleteness of DTL) as well as e-memo and e-acceptance letter were planned to be issued to applicants via e-IS by end-2024 tentatively.

In response to members' suggestion of providing some tips on using e-services, it was advised that a PowerPoint had been used and a "one-page short version" (懶人包) could also be prepared. Comments from members would be sought before it is launched.

8. **Streamlining Application Procedures for Exemption of Sprinkler Installation underneath Canopy or in Inaccessible Voids**

Comments and feedbacks had been received from AAP as well as Building Services and Fire Division of HKIE. A response-to-comment table would be distributed to the relevant stakeholders separately. These comments were considered and taken into account accordingly. The forms would be available on the FSD's website in due course.

In response to a member's suggestion of providing a checklist for other special approval or exemption application (e.g. EM lock approval), it was advised that while the suggestion could be considered, some situations were more complicated and could not be easily applied to a checklist form. In such a case, alternatives would be explored. The aim of the FSD was to facilitate the stakeholders to speed up progress with new methods and the checklist form was a pilot plan. A standard template would be designed and extended for other projects in the future.

9. **Enhancement Measures on FSI Acceptance Inspection for New Building Projects**

It was advised that as stated in the Policy Address 2024, a "One-stop Coordination Office for New Fire Protection Facilities Acceptance" (OFFA) would be established in Q1 2025. It would provide one-stop co-ordination services in respect of the acceptance inspection of fire protection facilities of new residential buildings and projects that facilitate business operations and benefit the people. Facilitation measures to be implemented after the establishment of OFFA, e.g. advanced coordination on FSD submissions, early confirmation of inspection schedule, information symmetry among stakeholders, exploring the use of AI and

new technology in assisting inspection, etc., were introduced during a briefing session on 21 November 2024. An introduction and a new enquiry email were posted in FSD's Facebook page on 23 November 2024.

10. **Streamlining the Processing Time of Final Plans Submission for Smoke Control Systems (SCSs)**

It was reported that with a view to facilitating the trade in SCS plans submission (including smoke extraction system, staircase pressurization system and ventilation/air-conditioning control system), FSD had proposed to streamline the processing time for final submission. Upon receipt of an application for vetting of final submission of SCS plans, the processing time of "normally not more than 12 weeks" would be reduced to "normally not more than 8 weeks". The enhanced measure would be announced shortly through FSD's website.

In response to a member's enquiry on the possibility to reduce the processing time if only minor changes were made, it was advised that if these minor changes were not reviewed by NP Division, the consequences would be more serious if problems were discovered at the acceptance of building inspection. In view of the current manpower situation, the streamlined arrangement would be implemented and could be reviewed later.

11. **Enquiries Regarding Final Amendment Submission**

In response to a member's comment that different requirements between approved plans and those inspected by FSD were observed, it was advised that FSD would contact related members after the meeting when more details were received.

A meeting between FSD, BD and members in the sector was also proposed since BD was unable to determine whether submission to FSD was required for minor amendment in the final amendment submitted for reissuance of the certificate and follow up actions would be taken in due course.