

Fire Safety Standards Advisory Group (FSSAG)
Matter Discussed in the 79th FSSAG Meeting held on 27 March 2025

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

FSD informed the meeting that the forms were made available in the “Downloadable Forms” section of the FSD’s website as of 30 December 2024. Members of the trade were encouraged to make good use of the forms for applying for sprinkler exemption as far as possible.

FSD expressed appreciation for the comments provided by members of the meeting and the relevant responses-to-comments were given to stakeholders concerned in February 2025 accordingly.

As no further discussion on the issue was required so far, the Chairman proposed and members agreed to delete the item in the next meeting.

2. *Establishment of Focus Group in Reviewing and Exploring Measures to Streamline FSI Acceptance Mechanism*

FSD revealed that the Focus Group has come up a number of facilitation measures in preceding meetings which were recently adopted during FSI acceptance inspection. These measures including advanced coordination on smoke control and DG submissions, early pre-inspection meeting and confirmation of inspection schedule, information symmetry among stakeholders by FSD App, exploring the use of AI and new technology in assisting inspection, etc. Also, to formally implement the above measures, the Focus Group assisted in the establishment “One-stop Coordination Office for New Fire Protection Facilities Acceptance” (OFFA) 「新建消防設施一站式驗收統籌辦公室」(「消防驗收統籌辦」) on 13 March 2025, aiming at (i) answering enquiries from the stakeholders regarding the engineering aspects of FSI; (ii) exploring strategies to streamline FSI acceptance; and (iii) monitoring the effectiveness of the facilitation measures. Since Focus Group would continue operation under OFFA, it was suggested that any update related to the Focus Group would be incorporated into the agenda item titled “Establishment of OFFA” in the next meeting. In this connection, it was proposed to delete the item in the next meeting.

As no further discussion on the issue was required so far, the Chairman proposed and members agreed to delete the item in the next meeting.

3. Clarification on Sub-paragraph M.1 of Paragraph 5.23 “Smoke extraction system” of FSD Codes of Practice for Minimum Fire Service Installations and Equipment (FSI CoP)

FSD briefed the discussion as concluded in last meeting:

- Subsection M of paragraph 5.23 “Smoke extraction system” of FSI CoP specified the requirements for the provision of standby or duplicate equipment for dynamic smoke extraction systems. In addition to the premises with sleeping risks mentioned in sub-paragraph M.1, duplicate equipment was also required in premises where dual-purpose systems were utilized as specified in sub-paragraph M.2.

As no further discussion on the issue was required so far, the Chairman proposed and members agreed to delete the item in the next meeting.

4. Clarification on Paragraph 4.4 “Basements with total floor area exceeding 230m²” of FSI COP

FSD briefed the discussion as concluded in last meeting:

- According to paragraph 4.4 under Part IV of FSI CoP, a smoke extraction system be required if the following condition(s) as stipulated in the extent is/are met for a basement with total floor area exceeding 230m²:
 - (i) any fire compartment exceeding 7000 cubic metres where the designed fire load is likely to exceed 1135 MJ/m², or
 - (ii) industrial basements, or
 - (iii) basements of three or more levels except areas solely for car parking purposes.
- Smoke extraction system was required even if the entire basement of each level was broken down into many small compartments with less than 230m².
- According to paragraph 4.3 “Basements with total floor area not exceeding 230m²” under Part IV of FSI CoP, a smoke extraction system was not required for a basement with total floor area not exceeding 230m².

As no further discussion on the issue was required so far, the Chairman proposed and members agreed to delete the item in the next meeting.

5. *Clarification for Smoke Detector for Outside of Open Kitchen Flat*

FSD briefed the discussion as concluded in last meeting:

- The provision of smoke detector provided at the common area outside the subject flat as specified in CoP for Fire Safety in Buildings was to prompt fire alarm upon detection of smoke originated flats with open kitchen design. The Commentary supplemented that the smoke detectors were fire service installations designed in accordance with FSI code and should be subject to annual inspection and certification by an RFSIC.
- According to FSI CoP (September 2022), BS 5839-1 with local modification was adopted as the specification of fire detection system. The system configuration, siting requirements, etc. should be referred to this standard which were applicable to buildings prescribed with fire detection system.
- In the case of domestic buildings, unless otherwise required, fire detection system was not prescribed under Part IV of FSI CoP except domestic flats adopted with open kitchen design. Therefore, the requirements stipulated in BS 5839-1 should be applicable to common area outside units with open kitchen design. To this end, separate enclosure e.g. refuse room, lobbies, protected lobby etc. should not be classified as common area adjacent to units with open kitchen design that the provision of smoke detection system should not be required.

As no further discussion on the issue was required so far, the Chairman proposed and members agreed to delete the item in the next meeting.

6. *Clarification for Smoke Detector for Inside of Open Kitchen Flat*

FSD briefed the discussion as concluded in last meeting:

- The provision of smoke detector provided inside the subject flat as specified in CoP for Fire Safety in Buildings was to prompt fire alarm upon detection of smoke originated open kitchen. According to FSI CoP (September 2022), BS 5839-1 with local modification was adopted as the specification of fire detection system. The system configuration, siting requirements, etc. should be referred to this standard which were applicable to buildings prescribed with fire detection system.

As no further discussion on the issue was required so far, the Chairman proposed and members agreed to delete the item in the next meeting.

7. Clarification for Sprinkler Bypass from Sprinkler Tank to Sprinkler Control Valve

FSD briefed the discussion as concluded in last meeting:

- Regardless of installation zones, there were no specific requirements on the nos. of bypass pipe to be provided for sprinkler suction pump with sprinkler tank located at the floor level above the sprinkler control valve in accordance with the modified TB210.5.1 of the Technical Guidance. The arrangement was agreed with provided that the bypass pipe was installed from pump suction pipe to trunk main and was capable to isolate defective pumps in case of maintenance.

As no further discussion on the issue was required so far, the Chairman proposed and members agreed to delete the item in the next meeting.

8. Establishment of OFFA (「消防驗收統籌辦」) (FSD)

FSD informed that OFFA was officially established on 13 March 2025. Formal announcement with introduction on new facilitation measures had been made by approaching all key stakeholders and would be made via press conference and on various social media platforms on 10 April 2025 tentatively.

A new target on FSI Acceptance Inspection had been set up for OFFA in which the date between the receipt of FSI/501 to the date of issuing FS172 would be reduced from max. 52 to 35 working days in respect of average-scale regular projects through a series of measures, such as enhancing communication with various stakeholders, advance scheduling of acceptance inspections, arranging pre-inspection meetings, and expediting the process with the use of technology. For public housing projects, the target would be further reduced to 22 working days.

Also, a dedicated thematic website for OFFA would be created to consolidate all crucial information that facilitates the understanding of practitioners and stakeholders on details of the FSI Acceptance Inspection. On the other hand, FSD Mobile App would be enhanced to allow applicants and the project stakeholders to search for their FSI/501 application status using a specific reference number and a password. Both enhancements would be launched on 7 April 2025 tentatively.

It was noted that Focus Group, being formed with representatives from Fire Protection Engineering Compliance Division, Fire Protection Facilities Supervision Division, Dangerous Goods Control Division and New Projects Division of FSD,

would continue to explore measures to streamline and standardize FSI acceptance mechanism. Besides, 21 Working Groups were established under OFFA to provide advanced coordination for dozens of projects that facilitate business operations and benefit the people.

9. *Review on FSD Circular Letter No. 1/2022 Clean Agent Fire Extinguishing Systems - Review and Annual Inspection of Enclosure Integrity (Appendix I)* (FSICA)*

Member of FSICA presented to members their findings in relation to the quantitative results of enclosure integrity tests in years 2023 and 2024. It was noted that the FSD Circular Letter No.1/2022 successfully maintained the effectiveness of clean agent fire extinguishing systems with the adoption of inspection requirement for enclosure integrity. As such, FSICA would like to suggest the current practice as stated in FSD Circular Letter no. 1/2022 remain unchanged.

FSD responded that the requirements of review and annual inspection of enclosure integrity under the Circular Letter had been promulgated since 1 August 2022. For new buildings, the test reports were submitted along with application of FSI/501 and no irregularities were identified during the trial period. Therefore, the relevant requirements were suggested to be maintained.

FSD appreciated that FSICA's information on increasing satisfactory rates of conduction of enclosure integrity tests for new installations of clean agent fire extinguishing systems. It revealed the increasing awareness of owners/building parties on the quality of building elements, particularly sealing conditions of accommodation concerning the inspection of enclosure integrity.

In view of the above, the Chairman appreciated the discussion among the members and would take note of their respective views and suggestions. Since FSD was conducting a review of the arrangements following the two-year trial period pertaining to the FSD Circular No. 1/2022, further consultation with the trade would be arranged after the meeting.

**Remark: To avoid confusion, the appendix was not attached.*

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