

Bridges over Streets
Buildings Ordinance section 31(1)

There are occasions when bridges may have to be constructed over streets. A bridge may link buildings which have integrated functions and/or associated interests, or may be required by the Director of Lands under the terms of the lease.

2. Where a bridge or associated highway structure is to be constructed **wholly or partly within a private lot or gains support from or is connected to a building resting on a private lot**, exemption under Buildings Ordinance section 31(1) may be given provided that :

- (a) the Building Authority is satisfied that the bridge --
 - (i) is functionally necessary;
 - (ii) is constructed in a suitable location and at an appropriate height; and
 - (iii) is in the public interest.

In this respect, the Building Authority will take into account any advice given by the Director of Lands and the Director of Highways; and

- (b) the design of the bridge and any associated highway structures is acceptable to the Advisory Committee on the Appearance of Bridges and Associated Structures (ACABAS).

3. As part of the centralized processing system, the Building Authority will arrange for the relevant plans to be referred to ACABAS for examination via the relevant authority. In this connection, the building plans should include :

- (a) drawings showing the general arrangement of the bridge;
- (b) the elevations of all parts to be exposed to view together with either a perspective or axonometric view and sufficient information to illustrate the form, texture and colour treatment of the proposed bridge and associated structure;
- (c) comprehensive photographs of the site (to be affixed to the plans); and
- (d) in the case of footbridges, details of anticipated pedestrian flows (to be indicated on the plans) to justify the proposed width, design and location.

Eight sets of building plans should be submitted for reference by each individual ACABAS member.

4. If general building proposals are extensive, it would be more convenient to show all aspects of a proposed bridge (except structural calculations) on a separate drawing, or a separate set of drawings, to which cross-reference to the main building plans should be clearly made. This could then be treated as a separate submission and avoid delays in the building development.

5. In some cases, ACABAS may require the attendance of authorized persons (APs) and registered structural engineers (RSEs) at a meeting to facilitate comprehensive consideration of the proposals. The terms of reference of ACABAS is at Appendix A. If ACABAS does not find a design acceptable, the Building Authority may not allow the exemption requested. Any suggestions for improving a design, to be considered when re-submitting plans, will be passed on to APs and RSEs.

6. Where a bridge or associated highway structure of a free-standing type is to be constructed **entirely on government land or over a public highway**, ie outside a private lot, the structure is exempted from the provisions of the Buildings Ordinance. The Director of Highways is the competent authority for such structures. However, for administrative convenience, it has been agreed that BD should also co-ordinate. Plans should therefore be submitted to BD for referral to the Highways Department.

7. PNAP 92 on the subject of "Structural Design of Bridges and Associated Highway Structures" should be read in conjunction with this practice note.



(Helen C P Lai YU)
Building Authority

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**Terms of Reference of
Advisory Committee on the Appearance of Bridges
and Associated Structures (ACABAS)**

The terms of reference of ACABAS are :

- (a) to enquire into the visual merits, general amenity value and related environmental factors of all proposals for bridges and associated structures over, under, on or adjacent to public roads in the Territory;
- (b) to advise the Director of Highways on standards to be applied and procedures to be adopted to encourage an appropriately high level of aesthetic quality in the design of bridges and associated structures and to promulgate general guidance on such matters;
- (c) to receive and scrutinize individual proposals at the preliminary design stage, to advise designers of their acceptability or otherwise and to make recommendations as deemed necessary; and
- (d) to refer proposals to the Director of Highways where, after consideration by ACABAS, disagreement is found to be irreconcilable either --
 - (i) in principle, because for instance a design is likely to result in disproportionate damage to sensitive historic, scenic, ecological or other environmental features; or
 - (ii) in detail, because for instance the proposed layout, style or surface finishes are considered to be inappropriate,

provided that, should the Director of Highways feel unable to arbitrate, or should the Department or other body responsible for the proposals so request, such disagreement may be referred to Policy Branch for a decision.