

**Lighting and Ventilation
of rooms used for habitation or as an office or kitchen**

Under Building (Planning) Regulation (B(P)Reg) 31 no prescribed window required under B(P)Reg 30 shall be deemed to face external air unless:

- (a) it faces into a street; or
- (b) it faces into a rectangular horizontal plane (RHP) which is uncovered, unobstructed and of minimum dimensions stipulated in B(P)Reg 31(2); and
- (c) it is so placed such that inclined planes protruding from the RHP at a position where the RHP intersects with the window sill or the lot boundary, as the case may be, are not obstructed by any building.

2. In recent years there is a tendency for developers to build tall residential buildings and consequently the authorized persons for such proposals often find it difficult to comply with all the requirements in para. (c) above, in particular when a prescribed window is facing another building on the same site. To allow flexibility in the planning and design of buildings, the Building Authority is prepared to consider granting modifications of the relevant parts of the regulations to allow a room used for habitation, office or kitchen not meeting the full requirements of prescribed window if:-

- (a) the room is provided with a window facing a RHP complying with the minimum dimensions stipulated in B(P)Reg 31(2);
- (b) the RHP has a longitudinal dimension of not less than 30m; and
- (c) there is ample open space for free flow of air with a minimum clear distance between buildings not less than 4.5m wide.

3. Acceptance of windows, which do not comply fully with the prescribed requirements in B(P)Reg 31(2), is generally subject to proof that the performance of such windows is not inferior to those meeting the prescriptive requirements of the regulation. A window would, however, be accepted as complying with statutory requirements, if it can be demonstrated by a notional scheme which is able to meet the prescriptive requirements of B(P)Reg 31(2) when the window angled at not more than 15° from the external wall.

4. The Buildings Department is currently conducting a consultancy study on the provision of lighting and ventilation in buildings. Therefore, the above flexible application of the B(P)Reg 31 should only be taken as an interim measure. We would need to review this practice note upon the completion of the consultancy study.

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(C M LEUNG)
Building Authority

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