

**Application for Registration as Authorized Persons,
Registered Structural Engineers and Registered Geotechnical Engineers**

Under section 3 of the Buildings Ordinance (BO), the Building Authority (BA) shall keep an authorized persons' register, a structural engineers' register and a geotechnical engineers' register. This practice note sets out the registration requirements for authorized persons (AP), registered structural engineers (RSE) and registered geotechnical engineers (RGE).

Requirements for Registration as AP/RSE/RGE

2. Under section 3(7) of the BO, a person must not be included in the AP/RSE/RGE register unless:

- (a) he has obtained the prescribed qualifications; and
- (b) he is recommended by the respective Registration Committee for inclusion.

Qualifications for Registration as AP/RSE/RGE under Building (Administration) Regulation 3

3. The prescribed qualifications for registration as AP, RSE or RGE are as follows:

- (a) A person shall not be included in the AP register unless he is a registered architect, a registered professional engineer (RPE) in the structural or civil engineering discipline or a registered professional surveyor;
- (b) A person shall not be included in the RSE register unless he is an RPE in the structural or the civil engineering discipline, and in the latter case unless he has such practical experience in structural engineering as may be approved by the Registration Committee; or
- (c) Save for the transitional arrangements described in paragraphs 8 and 11 below, a person shall not be included in the RGE register unless he is an RPE in the geotechnical engineering discipline; and

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- (d) In addition the person should have, for a continuous period of 1 year within the 3 years preceding the date of his application, had such practical experience gained in Hong Kong as the Registration Committee considers appropriate.

Registration Committees

4. Under section 3(5) of the BO, the BA is to establish 3 panels with sufficient members from whom he is to appoint committees to be known respectively as Authorized Persons Registration Committees (APRC), Structural Engineers Registration Committees (SERC) and Geotechnical Engineers Registration Committees (GERC).

5. The function of the Registration Committee is to assist the BA in considering applications for inclusion in the relevant register. The Registration Committee will examine the qualifications and experience of the applicants and conduct professional interviews with the applicants.

Professional Interviews

6. The scope of professional interviews for AP, RSE and RGE is detailed in Appendix A.

Application for Registration as AP/RSE/RGE

7. Application for registration as AP, RSE and RGE should be submitted in the specified form (Form BA 1) together with the prescribed application fee. In preparing the application documents, applicants should make reference to the "Advisory Notes for Completion of Form BA 1" which is distributed with the specified form.

Transitional Arrangement for RPE in the Structural or Civil Engineering Discipline to Apply for Registration as RGE

8. The registration system for RGE is established under the Buildings (Amendment) Ordinance 2004. Upon commencement of this new registration system for RGE on 31 December 2004, an RPE in the structural or civil engineering discipline may, within 12 months, i.e. on or before 30 December 2005, apply for registration as RGE under section 53I of the BO, so long as the applicant complies with the following conditions:

- (a) He has such practical experience in geotechnical engineering as may be approved by the GERC; and

/(b)

- (b) For a continuous period of 1 year within the 3 years immediately preceding the date of his application, he has had such practical experience in geotechnical engineering gained in Hong Kong as the GERC considers appropriate.

9. Applicants complying with paragraph 8 above shall be deemed to have satisfied the prescribed qualifications for registration as RGE. The applicants are required to attend a professional interview conducted by the GERC. The scope of the professional interview is detailed in Appendix A.

10. Upon registration as RGE through the above transitional arrangement, the registration shall be valid for 3 years provided that he remains as an RPE in the structural or civil engineering discipline. However, RGE registered through this arrangement shall, within 3 years from the date of registration as RGE, obtain the qualification of RPE in the geotechnical engineering discipline in order to apply for renewal of his registration.

Transitional Arrangement for AP in the List of Engineers and RSE to Apply for Registration as RGE

11. Upon commencement of the registration system for RGE on 31 December 2004, AP in the list of engineers and RSE may, within 12 months, i.e. on or before 30 December 2005, apply for registration as an RGE under section 53I of the BO. If the applicant complies with the conditions specified in section 53I(2)(a) of the BO and the detailed requirements as stipulated in PNAP 293 on "Registration of Authorized Persons and Registered Structural Engineers as Registered Geotechnical Engineers", the applicant shall be deemed to have satisfied the prescribed qualifications for registration as RGE. The BA will consider the applications without seeking the advice of the GERC. Attendance of professional interview with the GERC is therefore not required. Upon registration as RGE through this arrangement, the registration will be valid for 5 years which is renewable as long as his name remains in the register of AP/RSE.

Retention and Restoration of Names in the Registers

12. Save for the RGE registered through the transitional arrangement mentioned in paragraphs 8 to 10 above, the registration of AP, RSE or RGE shall be valid for 5 years.

13. An application for retention of name in a register (i.e. renewal of registration) should be submitted in the specified form (Form BA 1A) in accordance with sections 3(9B) and 3(9C) of the BO. Retention applications received by the BA outside the specified time limit (i.e. not earlier than 4 months and not later than 28 days prior to the date of expiry of the relevant registration) under section 3(9C)(b) of the BO will not be accepted.

14. A person whose name is removed from a register under section 3(11A), 3(11B) or 3(11C) of the BO may, within 2 years beginning on the date the relevant registration expires, apply for restoration of his name to the relevant register. Application for restoration should also be submitted in the specified form (Form BA 1B) in accordance with sections 3(12) and 3(13) of the BO.

(Marco M H WU)
Building Authority

Ref: BD GR/AP/21
BD GR/CC/57

First issue: August 1977
Last revision: July 1994 (AD/SE, AD/LM)
This revision: effective from 31 December 2004 (AD/Sup)
– Registration of RGE added.
Overall content revised.

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Scope of Professional Interviews for Registration as AP, RSE and RGE

An applicant must satisfy the Registration Committee on his suitability for inclusion in the relevant register for which he applies. In this context, an applicant has to demonstrate that he has adequate practical experience and general knowledge in his profession to meet local requirements and to discharge his duties in Hong Kong. He will also be expected to have acquired a working knowledge of the BO and allied matters: the main criterion is a thorough understanding of general principles and fundamental requirements.

2. The principal subjects upon which the Registration Committee is likely to test an applicant's knowledge include:

- (a) The objectives of the BO and Regulations and the mechanism of control;
- (b) The statutory role, functions and duties of an AP, RSE or RGE, as the case may be, and those of the BA in respect of private building development in Hong Kong;
- (c) Sufficient general awareness of local conditions to practise efficiently and effectively in Hong Kong without having to make frequent enquiries on matters of common local knowledge;
- (d) For registration as AP:

A working knowledge of the BO and Regulations, relevant codes of practice and such allied matters as the Town Planning Ordinance and outline zoning plans, lease conditions and the usual requirements of other authorities relevant to an AP in Hong Kong; (An applicant should therefore be familiar with all the processes from the evaluation of development potential of a private lot through to the issue of an occupation permit.)
- (e) For registration as RSE:

A working knowledge of the BO and in particular those Regulations and relevant codes of practice pertinent to the design and supervision of structural works;

/(f)

- (f) For registration as RGE:

A working knowledge of the BO and in particular those Regulations, relevant codes of practice, geotechnical standards and technical guidance documents pertinent to the design and supervision of geotechnical works;
- (g) The procedures for an AP, RSE or RGE to follow in order to meet local statutory requirements; and
- (h) Practice notes, circular letters and other advisory information published by government departments which are relevant to an AP, RSE or RGE.

Reference Materials

3. A list of legislation and publications affecting the building industry can be found in Practice Note for Authorized Persons and Registered Structural Engineers 115.