

24 April 2017

To: All Authorized Persons
Registered Structural Engineers
Registered Geotechnical Engineers
Registered Inspectors
Registered General Building Contractors
Registered Specialist Contractors
Registered Minor Works Contractors

Dear Sir/ Madam,

Code of Practice for Foundations 2017

I have pleasure to announce the publication of the Code of Practice for Foundations 2017 (the 2017 Code), which may be used with immediate effect.

Subsequent to the publication of the Code of Practice for Foundations (the 2004 Code) in 2004, a technical committee was set up in February 2012 with a view to keeping the code of practice abreast of the latest development in design and technology. The 2017 Code is the result of a comprehensive review of the 2004 Code by the technical committee.

Major Revisions Incorporated in the 2017 Code

I would like to draw your attention to the following major revisions incorporated in the 2017 Code:

- (a) Introducing the bearing capacity equation method for assessment of allowable bearing pressure for shallow foundations (clause 2.2.4) with the guidelines on the design procedures of shallow foundations (clause 4.2), and the corresponding acceptance criteria of plate load test (clauses 4.2 and 8.2);

/(b) ...

- (b) New guidelines for checking foundation settlement, including guidelines on estimation of settlement and guidelines on the acceptable settlement (clause 2.3);
- (c) New design guidelines for foundations in Scheduled Area Numbers 2 and 4 (clauses 2.8.2 and 7.8.2);
- (d) More guidelines on checking of piles providing resistance against uplift, overturning and buoyancy, including guidelines for the use of the highest possible groundwater table and guidelines for general checking of overall stability (clauses 2.5.4, 5.1.6 and 5.3.3);
- (e) More guidelines on the design and construction of various types of piles (clause 5.4);
- (f) More guidelines on the re-use of existing foundations (clause 6.5);
- (g) Stipulating the requirements of monitoring plan, and the suggested vibration and ground settlement limits (clauses 7.2.3, 7.2.4 and 7.2.6);
- (h) Stipulating the requirements of public relations plan for piling works (clause 7.2.7); and
- (i) More guidelines on the testing of foundations and ground (section 8).

Application of the 2017 Code

The 2017 Code may be used with immediate effect. Submission of plans for foundation works designed to the 2004 Code will be accepted during a 12-month grace period commencing on the date of this circular letter. After the expiry of the 12-month grace period, only submission of plans for foundation works designed to the 2017 Code will be accepted, except for amendment submissions where approval for plans with the original design adopting the 2004 Code has been given.

Access of the 2017 Code

The 2017 Code is available in the Buildings Department website <http://www.bd.gov.hk> under the “Codes of Practice, Design Manuals and Guidelines” page of the “Publications and Press Releases” section. The document may be downloaded subject to the terms and conditions stipulated in the website.

Yours faithfully,



(Cheung Tin-cheung)
Building Authority