

Application of the Revised Fire Safety Codes

The Building Authority has updated and revised the three codes of practices relating to fire safety in buildings. These codes are :

- Code of Practice for Means of Access for Fire fighting and Rescue 1995
- Code of Practice for Fire Resisting Construction 1996
- Code of Practice for the Provision of Means of Escape in Case of Fire 1996

Application of the revised Codes

2. This practice note provides guidance on the application of the revised codes in situations not explicitly stated in the relevant Ordinances or Regulations :-

(i) **Alterations and additions in existing buildings**

Generally only the areas affected by the proposed alteration and addition works (including shared exits) will need to comply with the requirements of the revised codes. The remaining parts of the building unaffected by the proposed works need not follow the revised codes.

(ii) **Licencing of restaurants**

Similar to (i) above only the areas in a building subject to a new licence application will need to comply with the requirements of the revised codes.

(iii) **Consent for works shown on plans approved prior to effective date of the revised Codes**

There is generally no objection to issue consent to commence building works shown on plans approved prior to the respective effective dates of the revised codes, provided that a consent application is made within two years of the date of approval and the application is in order in all other aspects.

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(iv) **Occupancy factor**

Buildings Department will have no objection in principle to the assessment of population in a submission of plans by using “head counts” in the premises where alteration works are proposed or in comparable premises, provided that the authorized person could demonstrate that the comparables are suitable for use in the circumstances of the submission. In this regard, the following considerations should be noted :

- (a) Every building is unique. There must be sufficient demonstration that the location, management, patronage, class, type and age of buildings etc. are similar; and
- (b) For the design of a new building, it may be in the developer’s interest to use prescriptive value to assess population such that there will be sufficient margin to cater for future alterations and changes.

Fire Engineering Approach

2. The three codes of practice recently revised by the Building Authority contain provisions for the adoption of Fire Engineering Approach as an alternative to complying with the prescriptive provisions. Guidelines on the administrative procedures for making submissions to the Building Authority based on Fire Engineering Approach will be issued separately.

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