

Provision of Better Lift Service

Introduction

The lift service in a building has been the subject of complaints from time to time. The Building Authority (BA) accepts that occupants of the building may have legitimate cause for concern in some cases. This practice note introduces guidelines on the provision of lifts in buildings for domestic and office use with a view to enhancing standards of lift services, thereby improving the quality of life for the occupants of domestic and office buildings.

Background

2. Areas of lifts and the lift shafts in a building are measured as gross floor areas (GFA) under Building (Planning) Regulation 23(3)(a).

3. Except for fireman's lifts and those required to be provided for people with a disability, no requirements and dimensions are spelt out in the Buildings Ordinance and regulations to enable an assessment to be made as to the adequacy of a lift service. To maximize on the usable floor area of a building, the practice has been quite common that only the minimum area is allowed for the provision of lifts, occasionally at the expense of comfort and convenience of occupants of the building. The BA considers that there is room for improvement in this area.

Quality of Lift Service

4. In general, the quality of lift service depends on a number of factors including the number and size of the lifts provided, their handling capacity, travelling time and waiting time.

Criteria for Exemption

5. The BA acknowledges that improvement in lift provisions in private developments should be encouraged. Having regard to the effects of increasing building density, the BA will allow the GFA of lift shafts provided over and above the average standard of those currently provided in buildings to be excluded from GFA calculations.

6. Taking into account the average areas of lift shaft in domestic/ composite and office buildings, the BA will, upon application and on the merits of each case, exempt the following from GFA calculation subject to the criteria specified in paragraph 7 and 8:

/Lifts

Lifts serving domestic accommodation in domestic/composite buildings including hotels

- (a) For domestic and composite buildings including hotel buildings, the area of lift shaft over and above 2.5% of the total GFA may be exempted provided that the total lift shaft area exempted should in no case be in excess of 3.5% of the total GFA of the proposed building, i.e. if the lift shaft area is more than 6% of the total GFA, then the maximum exempted area will be 3.5% of the total GFA.

Lifts serving office accommodation in office or office/commercial buildings with GFA of the office floors less than 10,000 m²

- (b) For office and office/commercial buildings, the area of lift shaft over and above 5% of the total GFA for office use¹ may be exempted provided that the total lift shaft area exempted should in no case be in excess of 3% of the total GFA for office use, i.e. if the lift shaft area is more than 8% of the total GFA for office use, then the maximum exempted area will be 3% of the total GFA for office use.

Lifts serving office accommodation in office or office/commercial buildings with GFA of the office floors equal to or more than 10,000 m²

- (c) Subject to (d) below, the area of lift shaft over and above 3.5% of the total GFA for office use may be exempted provided that the total lift shaft area exempted should in no case be in excess of 2.5% of the total GFA for office use, i.e. if the lift shaft area is more than 6% of the total GFA for office use, then the maximum exempted area will be 2.5% of the total GFA for office use.
- (d) For buildings with GFA between 10,000 m² and 12,000 m² for office use, a maximum concession area of 300 m² may be allowed.

7. Modification for exclusion of lift shaft area from GFA calculation will only be considered if the following criteria are met:

- (a) the internal area of each lift car and lift shaft for domestic or composite building is not less than 1.82m² and 4.12m² respectively;

/(b)

¹ includes use and facilities ancillary to office accommodation but excludes other commercial use in the case of office/ commercial building

- (b) the internal area of each lift car and lift shaft serving the office accommodation is not less than 2.1m² and 4.4 m² respectively;
- (c) the application is accompanied by an assessment from a registered lift engineer (means a person whose name is included in the register under section 105 of the Lifts and Escalators Ordinance (Cap. 618)) or a registered professional engineer (means a person whose name is included in the register under section 7 of the Engineers Registration Ordinance (Cap. 409)) in the building services discipline certifying that, according to international codes, the lift service to be provided is above the acceptance level of service in terms of handling capacity and waiting time and that there is adequate maneuvering space for the carrying out of maintenance works.

8. The granting of GFA concessions set out in paragraphs 5 and 7 above is subject to compliance with the pre-requisites and the overall cap on GFA concessions stipulated in PNAP APP-151 on Building Design to Foster a Quality and Sustainable Built Environment.

Application

9. Subject to paragraphs 13 and 14 below, the exemption in paragraphs 5 to 8 above are applicable to building plans for new projects, and major revisions of building plans. Buildings already issued with occupation permits will not be considered for concessions.

10. For approved projects not under construction, there is no objection to amendment plans to be submitted to make improvement to the lift service and apply for the exemption.

11. For new projects on which building works are in progress, an application for concession may also be considered if it can be established that an enhanced standard of lift service has been incorporated in the building under construction.

12. The rules on concessions in this practice note are also applicable to projects under development in phases. For the avoidance of doubt, completed phases will not be considered and there should not be transfer of GFA between any completed phases and other phases yet to be completed. An example illustrating the concessions in phased development is at Appendix A.

13. Paragraph 8 above is applicable to all new building plans or major revision of building plans for development proposals submitted to the BA for approval on or after 1 April 2011. Subject to paragraph 14 below, paragraph 8 is also applicable to building plans which have been previously disapproved and are resubmitted for approval on or after 1 April 2011.

/14.

14. For building plans which have been firstly submitted on or before 31 March 2011 and subsequently disapproved by the BA but not on ground relating to proof of ownership or realistic prospect of control of the land forming the site, the first resubmission of such plans to the BA on or after 1 April 2011, which is submitted within 6 months from the date of disapproval of the firstly submitted plans, would not be subject to the requirements of paragraph 8. For the avoidance of doubt, if such first resubmission of plans eventually has been disapproved by the BA, any further resubmission of the plans would be subject to the requirements of paragraph 8.

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**An Example Illustrating Concessions
for a Phased Development**

I. The Site

- (a) Site area : 10,000m²
PR : 5
Total domestic gross floor areas (GFA) : 50,000 m²
- (b) For development in 3 phases :
- Phase I already completed with an occupation permit issued;
 - Phase II is now under construction; and
 - Phase III has general building plans approved but no building works have commenced.

II. Position on plot ratio and GFA

- (a) Phase I
- GFA shown on approved plans and completed : 10,000m²
 - Lift shaft areas shown on approved plans and included as GFA: 7% of the GFA or 700m². The lift shaft areas are to remain as accountable GFA for plot ratio calculation ie no concession is allowable under this PNAP
 - Plot ratio and accountable GFA left for Phase II & Phase III are 4 and 40,000m² respectively.
- (b) Phase II
- GFA shown on approved plans : 25,000m²
 - Lift shaft areas shown on approved plans and included as GFA: 6% of the GFA of Phase II or 1,500m²
 - Conditions in para. 11 of this PNAP are satisfied
 - Phase II exemption area = 1,500m² - 25,000 x 2.5%
= 875m²* (not exceeding 3.5% of the total GFA of Phase II)
 - GFA used and accountable for Phase II = 25,000m² - 875m²
= 24,125m²
 - Plot ratio and accountable GFA left for Phase III are 1.5875 and 15,875m² respectively.

/(c)

(c) Phase III

- GFA shown on approved plans : 15,000m²
- Lift shaft areas shown on approved plans and included as GFA: 5.5% of the GFA of Phase III or 825m²
- Phase III exemption area = 825m² - 15,000 x 2.5%
= 450m²* (not exceeding 3.5% of the total GFA of Phase III)
- GFA accountable for plot ratio calculation = 15,000m² - 450m²
= 14,550m²
- Concessions available for Phase III = 875m² (from Phase II) + 450m² or 1,325m²
- Overall GFA = 10,000m² (Phase I) + 24,125m² (Phase II) + 14,550m² (Phase III) + 1,325m² (concessions) = 50,000m² (plot ratio = 5 - not exceeding permissible)

* The concession will only be considered if the criteria in paragraphs 7 & 11 of the PNAP are met. The concessions given in Phase II may be transferred to Phase III.

(Rev. 1/2011)