

**Thirty-ninth Meeting of
the Business Facilitation Advisory Committee**

***Agenda Item 3(c): Report on the work of the
Task Force on Business Liaison Groups***

Purpose

This paper reports on the work of the Task Force on Business Liaison Groups (BLGTF) since the last Business Facilitation Advisory Committee meeting on 5 November 2018.

Work progress of the BLGTF

Overall progress of Business Liaison Groups

2. From 1 July to 15 November 2018, six Business Liaison Group (BLG) meetings were held and a total of 20 issues were satisfactorily resolved or clarified. At these meetings, one consultation session on a new regulatory proposal and ten information dissemination sessions on business facilitation/new regulatory requirements were conducted by the departments concerned.

Dutiable Commodities (Amendment) Ordinance 2018 – Prohibition on the sale and supply of intoxicating liquor to minors in the course of business

3. At the BLGTF meeting held on 27 November 2018, the Department of Health (DH) briefed members on the main features and progress of the Dutiable Commodities (Amendment) Ordinance 2018 (Ordinance) which prohibits the sale and supply of intoxicating liquor to minors (persons aged below 18) in the course of business. DH has facilitated stakeholders' understanding of the Ordinance and publicised its implementation through various means including attending meetings of the Wholesale and Retail Task Force and a number of BLGs. DH has also issued guidelines to facilitate compliance of the trades.

Measures to facilitate applications for water supply by trades

4. In response to the trades' request of having early availability of water supply and hence commencement of business operation, the Water Supplies Department (WSD) briefed at the same meeting on a series of measures implemented lately to facilitate the application for water supply. With a view to

avoiding delay in the application processing due to errors in submissions, a submission checklist for plumbing proposals is provided for use by the applicants, the “Technical Requirements of Plumbing Works in Buildings” and “Guide to Applications for Water Supply” are promulgated, and WSD website is enhanced to facilitate searching of pipes and fittings and generation of the required form. Moreover, the application process is streamlined and inspection time reduced by waiving the requirement to submit pipe alignment plans for approval of plumbing proposals and allowing licensed plumbers to carry out interim inspections of underground pipes and final inspections of completed pipes. Furthermore, hotlines for enquiry on the status of new application for water supplies and the information of case officers are available on WSD’s website to provide assistance to the trades when necessary.

Enhancement measures for processing of general building plan approval and acceptance inspections of fire service installations in new buildings

5. The trades would like to speed up the completion of new building projects. In response, the Fire Services Department (FSD) presented at the same BLGTF meeting the collaborative and proactive liaison approach that had been adopted to enhance the work process of general building plan (GBP) approval and acceptance inspections of fire service installations (FSIs) in new buildings. In respect of the processing of GBP submissions, FSD adopts an open policy in plan amendment aiming at reducing abortive work and repeated submissions. Moreover, a Case Officer system is adopted and a notification mechanism is established with the Buildings Department to facilitate communication with the Authorised Persons and expedite BD’s processing. In respect of acceptance inspections, a standard document checklist is launched and pre-inspection meetings will be conducted on a need basis with a view to shortening the processing time. Communication with the trade is also strengthened by conducting seminars and group meetings with the trade on a regular basis.

6. BLGTF appreciated the facilitation efforts of departments concerned.

Way forward

7. Members are invited to note the work progress of the BLGTF. BLGTF will continue to oversee and monitor the work progress of the BLGs.

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