

**Business Facilitation Advisory Committee
Task Force on Business Liaison Groups**

***Exemption of Electronic Sports Venues from Licence Requirement under
the Amusement Game Centres Ordinance (Cap. 435)***

Purpose

This paper briefs members on the exemption of electronic sports (e-sports) venues from licence requirement under the Amusement Game Centres Ordinance (AGCO) (Cap. 435).

Background

2. The Government strives to promote the development of the e-sports. Depending on the actual operation of e-sports venues, their business operation may be subject to the regulation under the AGCO. Some of the licensing requirements under the AGCO applicable to conventional AGCs, if applied to the e-sports venues, may hinder the long-term development of the e-sports industry. As such, the Government has adopted an appropriate mechanism to exempt e-sports venues from the requirements of AGC Licence.

Trade's Concern

3. The e-sports trade is fully aware of the exemption mechanism. They may have questions about the eligibility for particular e-sports venues under the exemption mechanism.

Administration's Response

4. According to the AGCO, any place in which an AGC specified in the Section 2 of AGCO is installed or placed for use or operation for the purpose, in whole or in part, of amusement, recreation or entertainment on payment directly or indirectly of any consideration in money or money's

worth is required to obtain an AGC Licence. Considering that the setting and the mode of operation of e-sports venues are different from that of conventional AGCs, the Government will, in accordance to Section 3 of the AGCO, exempt eligible e-sports venues from the requirements of AGC licence. The exemption mechanism is underpinned by three principles: business facilitation, removing red tape and barriers, and ensuring safety of premises. In determining whether a particular venue is an e-sports venue eligible for an exemption under the AGCO, all the relevant facts and circumstances of each particular case, including but not limited to the equipment and facilities for e-sports, the mode of operation of the e-sports venues, the layout of the premises, compliance with safety requirements for the premises, other requirements on fees and charges and venue management, etc. will be taken into account.

5. To facilitate the trade to submit the applications, the Office of Licensing Authority (OLA) of Home Affairs Department has published the “Guidance Note on Application for Exemption of E-Sports Venues from the Requirement of Obtaining an AGC Licence” which sets out the definition of e-sports and e-sports venues, general considerations to be taken into account when processing the applications for exemption, the safety requirements of the premises and other requirements, as well as the application procedures for the trade’s reference after a briefing for the e-sports trade on the relevant one-stop service arrangement on 30 March 2019. The arrangement is well received by the trade. The OLA will continue to provide one-stop services in the process of exemption applications for e-sports venues and answer any enquiries from the trade in respect of the exemption mechanism.

Way Forward

6. Members are invited to note the content of the paper.

Home Affairs Department
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