

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

***Measures to facilitate licence applications for
hotel/ guesthouse and club premises***

Purpose

This paper briefs members on the measures to facilitate licence applications for hotel/guesthouse and club premises.

Background

2. According to the Hotel and Guesthouse Accommodation Ordinance (Cap. 349) and the Clubs (Safety of Premises) Ordinance (Cap. 376), it is necessary to obtain a hotel/guesthouse licence (licence) or a Certificate of Compliance (CoC), both issued by the Secretary for Home Affairs, for the operation of a hotel/guesthouse or club premises respectively. In general, a new application for a licence and CoC will be submitted to the Office of the Licensing Authority (OLA) for processing under the established procedures. A Letter of Requirements (LoR) for upgrading works for building and fire safety will be issued to the applicant and the applicant has to report completion within a period of time, usually 12 months for hotels and 6 months for guesthouses/ club premises. If all the upgrading works have been completed to the satisfaction of OLA, a licence/CoC will be issued accordingly.

3. Upon the issuance of licence/CoC, no alteration or change of layout shall be made to any part of the licensed premises, except prior approval is obtained from the Authority / Secretary. Alteration proposals should be submitted to OLA for approval before commencement of any addition / alteration works.

Trade's Concern

4. The trade urged OLA to streamline the internal procedures/workflow for new and alteration applications and to provide guidelines for the items to be shown on the layout plans so as to speed up the process.

Administration's Response

5. In response, the OLA has implemented and formulated several business facilitation measures:-

- (a) ***Simplify the standard licensing requirements and supporting documents for Report of Completion (RoC):*** In January 2019, OLA updated and revised the format on the standard licensing requirements for hotels/guesthouses and uploaded it to the OLA webpage (www.hadla.gov.hk/en/related/index.html). The LoR has become more user friendly so that the applicants could clearly understand what kinds of upgrading works are required. The RoC Form was also revised to provide more details on documents, record photos and plans that should be submitted to the OLA upon completion of works. OLA officers will mark by circling the outstanding documents on the same Form if necessary and return the marked Form to the applicant for follow up action. The aforesaid measures would avoid abortive works and/or misunderstanding and hence help keeping the lead time in obtaining a hotel/guesthouse licence to a minimum.

The review of standard licensing requirements for CoC applications is underway and will be completed in November 2019.

- (b) ***Streamline the workflow for new applications and publish a performance pledge on processing RoC:*** OLA has reviewed the workflow for the hotel/guesthouse licence application and streamlined the processing of RoC. A new performance pledge was introduced on 31 December 2018 such that for the application of a new hotel/guesthouse licence, OLA will notify the applicant of the result within 35 working days upon receipt of the RoC.
- (c) ***Encourage the submission of required documents to OLA in one go:*** Supporting documents for a new licence/CoC application have been kept under constant review. Only bare minimum supporting documents are required for ensuring compliance with the building and fire safety standards and for monitoring/enforcement purposes. Relevant documents, plans and recorded photos should be submitted with the RoC Form in one go. This will greatly reduce the waiting time for further submission of outstanding documents and hence the

lead time to obtain the licence/CoC.

- (d) ***Streamline the details to be shown on the layout plans:*** For the ease of reference, OLA has provided in the “Hints on Successful Application for a new Guesthouse Licence” (“Hints”) a sample drawing for indicating what information should be shown on the layout plans for guesthouses. The updated Hints were uploaded to the OLA webpage in October 2018 (www.hadla.gov.hk/en/hotels/index.html).

For club premises, the specification of moveable furniture items on layout plans for CoC of recreational clubs such as sofas, tables and chairs on the layout plans for club licences has been waived since mid 2018 in order to reduce the need for alteration applications whenever there are changes in these items.

In addition, OLA will explore the feasibility of waiving the requirements of registering drainage plans for new licence applications of hotels / guesthouses / club premises at purpose-built premises and submitting drainage alteration plans prior to carrying out improvement works in existing licensed premises (including non-purpose built ones).

- (e) ***Streamline the procedures for alteration works:*** OLA is reviewing and streamlining the procedures for processing alteration proposals for licensed premises. This will enable OLA to approve the alteration applications faster and the operators could obtain the LoR at the soonest for carrying out the alteration works. We aim to implement the streamlined procedures in the first quarter of 2020.

Way Forward

6. Members are invited to note the content of the paper and offer comments, if any.

**Office of the Licensing Authority
Home Affairs Department
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