

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

***Measures to Facilitate Licence Application and Business Operation of  
Hotels, Guesthouses, Clubhouses, Karaoke Establishments and  
Family Amusement Centres***

**Purpose**

This paper reports to members a number of initiatives devised by the Home Affairs Department (HAD) to facilitate the licence application and business operation of multiple trades including hotels, guesthouses, clubhouses, karaoke establishments and family amusement centres.

**Background**

2. The Office of Licensing Authority (OLA) of HAD is currently the licensing authority for a number of licences, including the Hotel/Guesthouse Licence, Clubhouse Certificate of Compliance, Bedspace Apartment Licence, Karaoke Establishment Licence/Permit, Amusement Game Centre Licence and Amusement with Prizes Licence, which are essential licences for business operations for several major trades of the Business Liaison Groups (BLGs). Over the years, OLA has continuously improved its licensing services through enhancing the regulatory regimes, streamlining procedures, enhancing transparency as well as greater use of I&T. Members have been briefed on the salient measures taken forward by the Office to enhance the licensing regimes and facilitate business vide BLGTF [Paper No. 107](#) and [Paper No. 112](#).

**Trade's Concern**

3. The trade welcomes further facilitating measures to streamline procedures and requirements, remove red tape as well as strengthen guidelines so as to further enhance the efficiency and transparency of the licensing services as well as reduce their compliance and operating costs.

## **Administration's Response**

4. In response, the OLA has recently implemented and formulated further business facilitation measures as detailed below.

### ***Waiving the requirements of registering drainage plans for new licence applications***

5. Trade operators used to be required to (i) register drainage plans for new licence applications of hotels/ guesthouses / club premises / karaoke establishments at purpose-built premises; and (ii) submit drainage alteration plans for OLA's prior agreement in existing licensed premises (including non-purpose built ones) when carrying out improvement works. In view of the drainage works involved have been completed and acknowledged by the Building Authority either through formal approval process or under the minor works control system (MWCS), OLA has waived the above requirements with effect from January 2020. Under this initiative of regulatory change, licence applicants of eligible premises will not be required to submit a corresponding drainage plans of those drainage works involved for OLA's registration. Double regulation on drainage works will be avoided.

### ***Streamlining the procedures for alteration works for licensed premises***

6. For operational needs and improvement of services, the licensed premises may carry out renovation and alteration works from time to time. It is a mandatory requirement for the licensees to seek prior approval for the alteration works. To facilitate the trades, OLA has reviewed and streamlined procedures for the application, vetting, site inspections and approval to simplify and speed up the processing. The streamlining measures cover (i) the introduction of a standard form for user convenience; (ii) adoption of a simplified Letter of Requirements (LoR) for applicants' easy reference and compliance check; and (iii) revision of the processing workflow to step up monitoring of progress to facilitate applicants to complete their alteration works without unnecessary delay, etc.

7. These initiatives 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. The streamlined procedures have been put in place since January 2020.

***Relaxing document submission requirements for minor works of low complexity for hotels, guesthouses, clubhouses and bedspace apartments***

8. Trade operators undergoing Class III minor works for licence applications or alteration applications used to be required to submit supporting documents such as photos, layout plans, certificate of certain materials etc., and OLA would conduct inspection of the works carried out and full checking of all supporting documents submitted. In view that Class III minor works are of lower complexity and risk, OLA has relaxed the above requirements by requiring the trades to submit only the prescribed forms under the MWCS and BD's corresponding acknowledgement letters for this type of minor works. OLA will still conduct site inspections to ensure the works are carried out in accordance with the registered plan but OLA will not conduct any audit check on the supporting documents. This will avoid double-handling on Class III minor works by BD and HAD. The new arrangement has been put in place since July 2020.

***Standardising drainage works requirements in guesthouses***

9. Drainage defects and water seepage are frequently found building problems in guesthouses. To facilitate the trade in early and easy identification of any pipe blockage or leakage and early attention to drainage defects and seepage problems, the OLA has introduced a set of standard requirements of demountable cladding or equivalent approach to applicable drainage works for new guesthouse licences since July 2020. The new requirements provide easy access to pipes and ducts which will make future maintenance become easier, enable earlier identification of possible water sources related to the seepage problem and allow quicker rectification with less disruption of business and disturbance to the neighbour units in the building.

***Setting a new performance pledge on new application for Clubhouse Certificate of Compliance***

10. Following the streamlining of the processing of reports of completion and publication of a new performance pledge for hotels/guesthouse licence application, OLA has also streamlined the workflow for processing Clubhouse Certificate of Compliance application and will introduce a new performance pledge such that OLA will notify the

applicants of the result within 35 working days upon receipt of the report of completion of the required upgrading works. The initiative will enhance the transparency of the licensing process and provide greater certainty to applicants on OLA's processing time before commencing business operations. OLA aims to launch the new performance pledge by the first quarter of 2021.

***Strengthening sample game descriptions for applications for Amusements with Prizes Licence (AWPL)***

11. Any person who wants to organise or conduct a game of amusement with prizes has to apply for an AWPL from the OLA. The information to be provided on the method of operation of the games of amusement with prizes (i.e. descriptions of the playing methods of the proposed games) is part of the core information required for completion of the application for AWPL. To allow applicants to understand better the requirements of the game descriptions, the OLA will strengthen the current sample descriptions of the playing methods in the application guidelines for applicants' reference. The initiative will facilitate their preparation of application submissions, minimise the time to be spent on clarifications of the playing method with the OLA and thereby enabling smoother processing of the applications. Given the numerous types of games of amusement with prizes in the market, the OLA has been evaluating those games proposed or approved in the past/current applications to select the most typical/common ones for the new sample descriptions. It is expected that the enhanced guide will be available by the first quarter of 2021.

**Way Forward**

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

**Home Affairs Department  
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