

**Business Facilitation Advisory Committee  
Food Business and Related Services Task Force**

***Expanding the scope of the “Professional Certification System” to  
cover General Restaurants***

**Purpose**

This paper briefs members on the introduction on expanding the scope of the “Professional Certification System” (PCS) to cover General Restaurants (GRs) as an additional option for obtaining full licences issued by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD).

**Background**

2. The FEHD introduced the PCS on 1 March 2023 for Light Refreshment Restaurants (LRRs) and Food Factories (FFs) with a view to streamlining procedures, shortening processing time, as well as facilitating compliance with the licensing requirements. Full licence applicants thereof can choose to use the PCS and adopt an approach of “licence first, inspection later” for the issue of full licences. FEHD will expand the scope of the PCS to cover GRs in the first quarter of 2024. Applicants of all these three types of full licences can choose either to follow the original system or the PCS for issue of full licence.

**Introduction of a “Professional Certification System” for the Issue of Full Licences**

3. The PCS adopts an approach of “licence first, inspection later” for the issue of full licences. The FEHD accepts a Certificate of Compliance and final layout plans provided by an authorized person registered or a registered structural engineer (AP/RSE)<sup>1</sup> as the certification for compliance with all health requirements for the issue of a full licence. The prerequisite is that the applicant must comply with all licensing

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<sup>1</sup> “Authorized Person” means a person whose name is on the authorized persons’ register kept under section 3 of the Buildings Ordinance (Cap. 123) as an architect, an engineer or a surveyor; “Registered Structural Engineer” means a person whose name is for the time being on the structural engineers’ register kept under section 3(3) of the same Ordinance.

requirements imposed by other relevant government departments. After issuing the full licence, the FEHD staff will conduct on-site audit checks to confirm premises' compliance with all health requirements. Subject to smooth implementation and support from the trade, the FEHD will extend the new measure to other food business licences.

### **False Certification**

4. If any information in the relevant documents certified correct by an AP/RSE is found to be incorrect, false or misleading, or if the declaration made is found to be false after on-site audit checks, the FEHD will carry out follow-up action, such as consideration of instigating prosecution, cancellation of the licence issued or referring the case to other departments concerned for follow-up.

### **Advice Sought**

5. Members are invited to note and give comments on the contents of this paper.

**Food and Environmental Hygiene Department**  
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