

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

New Guide to Licence Applications for Holiday Flats

Background

The Office of the Licensing Authority (OLA) under the Home Affairs Department (HAD) is responsible for administering the Hotel and Guesthouse Accommodation Ordinance (Cap. 349) (“the Ordinance”). Under the Ordinance, any person who intends to provide sleeping accommodation at a fee must obtain a licence before commencing operation, unless all accommodation in the premises are provided with a tenancy period of 28 consecutive days or more for each letting. To facilitate the trade to apply for a licence, HAD has promulgated “A Layman’s Guide to Licence Applications under the Hotel and Guesthouse Accommodation Ordinance (Cap. 349)” (the layman’s guide) which contains general requirements and procedures of licence application.

Trade’s Concern

2. At a Business Liaison Group meeting for guest houses, holiday flats and holiday camps, the trade raised their concern that the layman’s guide was too general and only covered the general requirements for a variety of premises types (i.e. hotels, guest houses, holiday flats and holiday camps). As different premises types might have different peculiar requirements to be observed before a licence could be issued, the trade enquired if a more detailed and premises type specific licensing guide would be provided by HAD.

Administration’s Response

3. The Ordinance requires premises to be used as guesthouses to comply with the building and fire safety standards set out in the Buildings Ordinance and the Fire Services Ordinance. The OLA has all along adopted a flexible and pragmatic approach in processing

guesthouse applications in the country side and in rural areas. In the light of the size and design of village type houses, OLA has already drawn up a set of basic and practicable building and fire safety requirements applicable for guesthouse in village-type house.

4. To address the trade's concern, HAD has prepared a draft guide for licence applications in village-type houses. It includes more technical details and premises type specific information (e.g. the width of exit route required for the holiday flat, etc.). With the assistance from the Economic Analysis and Business Facilitation Unit, the trade members of the holiday flats were invited to comment on the draft guide. Having incorporated the trade's comments, the guide is being finalized by HAD and is targeted to be introduced to the trade in 2014. The new guide would facilitate the trade in applying licence for village-type houses.

Way Forward

4. Members are invited to note the above business facilitation measure.

Home Affairs Department
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