

Government representatives:

Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD)

Mr CHENG Chok-wing, Superintendent(Licensing)1
Mr CHAN Ka-kui Superintendent (Hygiene)1
Mr YIP Kwok-cheung Superintendent (Hygiene)2

Buildings Department (BD)

Mr NG Kwok-kei, Kim Building Surveyor/Licensing(SD)

Fire Services Department (FSD)

Mr LO Kam-wing Sr Divisional Officer (Hong Kong & Kowloon West Fire Protection Regional Office)

Efficiency Office

Mr Sunny YU Chief Management Services Officer (Secretary)
Ms Pinky Lee Business Facilitation Officer

In attendance:

Mr Eddy Chen Member, Task Force on Business Liaison Groups
Ms CHAN Yuen-ming, Mary Chief Building Surveyor/New Territories East 1 & Licensing, Buildings Department
Ms NG Siu-ling, Elaine, Building Surveyor/Licensing 5, Buildings Department

Action

1. The **Chairman** welcomed all to the meeting.

Agenda 1 – Briefing by Department

1.1 Measures to facilitate food business licence applicants to obtain a full licence timely

- 2. FEHD briefed the trade on the subject with the presentation slides at **Annex 1**. The FEHD, FSD, BD and the Independent Checking Unit¹ (ICU) have reviewed the application procedures for food business licence and proposed the following measures to facilitate applicants to obtain a full licence before expiry of the provisional licence:
 - (a) FEHD will send copy of the notification of outstanding licensing requirements to the premises under licence application in addition to the applicant's correspondence address and remind the applicants via email and short message services at various time slots about the expiry date of the provisional licence so

¹ The ICU is set up directly under the Office of the Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing) to advise the FEHD on building safety matters relating to licence applications for premises on existing and divested properties of the Housing Authority.

that the applicants can keep abreast of the situation and can take appropriate action where necessary;

- (b) The departments concerned have reviewed the referral criteria for processing revised layout plans to streamline the procedures. Moreover, if the revised plans do not involve changes to some fundamental issues (such as means of escape of premises and structural stability etc.), the applicants may choose to appoint Authorized Persons and Registered Structural Engineers (AP/RSE) as necessary to certify whether the revised plans comply with the building safety requirements without referring the revised plans to the BD/ICU for processing;
- (c) FEHD will provide applicants through email with the prescribed forms containing relevant application details (such as the name of the applicant, address of the premises etc) maintained in the department's computer system, so as to minimize the need for re-submission due to typos; and
- (d) The departments concerned would enhance publicity and education on good practices of licence application to serve as reference for applicants.

1.2 Measures to expedite the processing of applications for alteration to the layout plans of food premises

- 3. FEHD briefed the trade on the subject with the presentation slides at **Annex 2**. The FEHD, FSD, BD and ICU have proposed the following enhancement measures after reviewing the existing system and procedures for processing applications for alteration to the layout plans:
 - (a) The departments concerned will expand the list of items not of a permanent and substantial nature that may be added or altered to the arrangement of appliances/furniture without prior approval from the licensing authority, so that the trade will benefit from greater flexibility in the layout of the premises;
 - (b) The departments concerned have reviewed the inter-departmental referral criteria for processing alteration to the layout plans to streamline the referral procedures;
 - (c) Regarding applications for alteration that do not involve changes to some fundamental issues (such as means of escape of premises and structural stability etc.), the applicants may continue to appoint AP/RSE to certify whether the alteration plans comply with the building safety requirements without referring the revised plans to the BD/ICU for processing; and
 - (d) FEHD will clear the backlog of long-outstanding cases with potential public safety implications in batches under a special arrangement.
- 4. FEHD advised that the implementation details of the measures concerning applications for full licences and applications for alteration to the layout plans are being finalized with other concerned departments. These measures are expected to roll out gradually

from late 2018 to late 2019.

Agenda 2 – New Issues

2.1 *Streamlining the procedure of renewing Places of Public Entertainment Licence (PPEL) involving temporary structures*

5. The trade expressed that PPEL for events involving temporary structures (“temporary PPEL”) are issued for a period of no longer than one month and the short licence period cannot meet their operational need because many of the seasonal events last for more than one month. In order to continue the operation, the trade has to submit renewal application for the purpose of extending the event period. The trade asked if there is any room to simplify the procedure.
6. FEHD responded that it is a legislative requirement to issue PPEL for events involving temporary structures for a period of no longer than one month. To facilitate the trade to hold temporary events, the applicant can make new and renewal applications of temporary PPEL in one submission and FEHD would process them in one-go provided that the applicant indicate the event period on the application form and declare no change would be made to the layout plan. FEHD will issue temporary PPEL for a maximum validity period of one month at a time subject to no objection raised by the concerned departments.
7. FSD remarked that they would issue one fire safety certificate covering the whole event period provided that there was no change to the layout and temporary structures. In addition, the applicant should ensure all fire safety requirements for the temporary PPEL are complied with continuously during the event and provide valid certificates of fire service installation and equipment which covers the whole event duration.
8. BD supplemented that the AP/RSE is accountable for certifying the stability and safety of the temporary structures shown on the licensed plans during the licence period. From structural safety viewpoint, BD might accept a submission of structural justification of the stability and safety for the temporary structures covering the whole event period provided that there is no change to the licensed plans and temporary structures.
9. FEHD advised that the initiative would be launched after they have updated the existing application form and the internal procedures with relevant departments for the new arrangement.

2.2 *Flexible arrangement in submission of revised layout plans for temporary events*

10. In regard to the trade's enquiry about flexible arrangement in the submission of revised layout plans where alteration works are required during the temporary event, the Chairman enquired if the concerned departments would allow the applicant to submit all alteration proposals in one submission and provide comments for all the proposals in one-go. The FEHD, FSD and BD advised that they would process the proposals and provide comments in one-go provided that all the proposed layout plans are submitted in advance of the commencement of the events and the duration of each layout proposal is clearly stated in the application.
11. The trade enquired if the FSD would allow flexible arrangement in the storage of carbon dioxide gas cylinders at their food kiosks for selling soft drinks by relaxing the existing statutory exempt quantity of storage of carbon dioxide gas in premises without a dangerous goods licence, which is currently one cylinder, so that the trade could store backup carbon dioxide gas cylinders at their food kiosks to ensure continuous business operation. The FSD responded that they would advise the trade after consulting the dangerous goods licensing unit of the department.

Agenda 3 – Date of the next BLG meeting

12. The Chairman thanked all for their attendance and active participation. The Secretary would inform trade members of the date of the next meeting in due course.

Efficiency Office

April 2019