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Tel : 2835 1373

Fax : 2591 6002

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Legislative Council Secretariat
Council Business Division 2
3rd floor, Citibank Tower
3 Garden Road
Hong Kong
(Attn: Miss Flora TAI)
(Fax No : 2509 9055)

Dear Miss Tai,

**Subcommittee on Places of Public Entertainment Ordinance
(Amendment of Schedule 1) Regulation 2002 and
Places of Public Entertainment (Exemption) Order**

Meeting on 25 October 2002

I write to confirm that in the captioned meeting, the Administration further undertakes the following:

- (a) The building and fire safety requirements for Place of Public Entertainment (PPE) licence applications for dance party will be similar to those currently applicable to other PPE licences, which have been promulgated in the Code of Practice for Dance Organizer published by the Narcotics Division, Security Bureau. However, for dance party to be held in community / school halls, a simplified set of fire services requirements for dance parties as shown in **Annex A** would apply because these premises are designed/built for assembly of people and have been provided with appropriate type of fire service installation (FSI). On the side of building safety, the standards as described in **Annex B** will apply to premises for dance activities;
- (b) For those premises already possessed PPE Licences and found

suitable for dance party, these Licences could be amended to allow "dance party" by paying an amendment fee according to the prevailing regulation to the FEHD; and

- (c) New applications for PPE Licence for dance party would be given a 12-month licence. The Administration will review, within one year's time, extending the valid period of the licence to at least 24 months and eliminating the fee discrepancy between licences for the urban and New Territories areas.

Yours sincerely,

(Charles CHAN)
for Secretary for Home Affairs

**FIRE SERVICES REQUIREMENTS
FOR DANCE PARTIES
IN COMMUNITY/SCHOOL HALL
(In Simplified & Generic Form)**

A. Location

The premises shall not be located:-

- (a) at any buildings/structures which are of substandard construction;
- (b) on level 4 of basement or below;
- (c) in areas designated for emergency use such as buffer or refuge floor.

B. Core Requirements

1. Fire Service Installation (FSI) and Equipment

- (a) All FSI and equipment provided for the premises in accordance with the latest approved building plans shall be overhauled, tested and maintained in efficient working order.
- (b) Additional fire extinguisher(s) shall be provided as required.

2. Ventilation System

All ventilation systems shall comply with Ventilation of Scheduled Premises Regulations, Chapter 132 or Building (Ventilating Systems) Regulations, Chapter 123, as appropriate.

3. Fire Safety Precautions

- (a) All exit and exit routes shall be kept free from obstruction at all times;
- (b) All exit doors must remain unlocked throughout the dance party, and they shall be openable from inside without using a key.
- (c) No naked light shall be allowed on the premises.

- (d) No decoration of a readily combustible nature shall be permitted.
- (e) No storage or use of dangerous goods exceeding the exempted quantity in accordance with the Dangerous Goods (General) Regulations (Cap.295) shall be allowed.

C. Specific Requirements

1. An emergency evacuation plan should be prepared and all staff should be conversant with such plan so that they would assist the patrons in evacuation in case of emergency.
2. If linings for acoustic, thermal insulation and decorative purposes are provided within the premises, such linings shall meet British Standard B.S. 476 Part 7 or be brought up to that standard by treating with approved flame retardant paints/solutions.
3. If draperies and curtains are provided, they shall be made of materials containing flame resistant fabric and conform to British Standard BS 5867: Part 2 or be brought up to that standard by treating with approved fire retardant solution.
4. If PU foam filled mattresses and upholstered furniture are used in the premises, they shall meet the flammability standards as specified in British Standard BS 7177 : 1996 and BS 7176 : 1995 for use in medium hazards premises/building or standards acceptable to the Director of Fire Services.

Fire Services Department
October 2002

Building Safety

The following requirements in respect of building safety have to be met before a PPE Licence for dance party will be granted:

Structural Safety Requirements

- The minimum designed loading of the premises should not be less than 5 Kpa.
- In cases where heavy equipment will be used, the dance party organizers should forward, together with their applications, information on the weight and dimensions of the equipment for Buildings Department's consideration.
- The erection of any supporting structures for sound and lighting installations more than 3m high and any temporary stage more than 600mm high should be under the supervision of an authorized person/registered structural engineer (AP/RSE) and no members of the public should be allowed on the stage at all times.
- No part of the premises should be located in, under or over any structures built without the approval and consent of the Buildings Department.

Fire Resisting Construction Requirements

- The premises should be designed and constructed of fire resisting construction which satisfy the provisions of the Building (Construction) Regulations and the Code of Practice for Fire Resisting Construction 1996 issued by the Buildings Department.
- The general requirements on fire resisting construction include :-
 - The premises should be separated from the adjoining occupancy by walls and floors having adequate fire resistance period.
 - The internal corridor serving the premises and other occupancies should be provided with walls and self-closing doors having an fire resisting period of not less than 1 hour and 1/2 hour respectively. For premises situated in a shopping arcade, such separation is normally not required between the premises and the

arcade.

- In case where new fire resisting walls and doors are involved, an AP/RSE should certify the fire-resisting period of the fire resisting components.
- All fire resisting doors for the exit staircases and protected lobbies should be self-closing and kept in a closed position.

Means of Escape Requirements

- The premises should be provided with adequate means of escape in accordance with Part V of the Building (Planning) Regulations and the Code of Practice for the Provision on Means of Escape in case of Fire 1996 (MOE Code) issued by the Buildings Department.
- The total population admitted should not exceed the designed capacity for that particular floor and the building as a whole.
- The general requirements are listed below :-
 - The width and number of exit routes and exit doors for the premises should be sufficient.
 - Any room with a capacity exceeding 30 persons should be provided with at least two exits. The exit doors should open in the direction of exit and should not obstruct any part of the exit route by swing of the doors. The lines of direct distance between the two exit doors should form an angle of not less than 30°.
 - Normally, the minimum width of an exit route should not be less than 1050 mm and greater width would be required depending on the total capacity of the premises.
 - The exit doors should have a minimum width of not less than 750 mm for capacity of 30 persons or less; and 850 mm for capacity between 31-200 persons with a total width of 1750 mm. Reference should be made to MOE Code for the detailed requirements.
 - All exit routes should have a clear height of not less than 2 m and be kept free from obstruction.

- Every part of each exit route should be provided with adequate artificial lighting and backed up by an emergency lighting system providing a horizontal illuminance at floor level of not less than 2 lux.
- All exit doors should be capable of being readily opened from the inside without the use of a key.
- Security shutters across exits must be kept open during business hours.
- Where the direction of travel from an exit door of a room to a staircase is possible in one direction only (i.e. dead-end), the distance from any part of a room to an exit or a point, from which travel in different directions to two or more exits are available, should not exceed 18 m. In other cases, where alternative exit routes are available in more than one direction, it may vary from 30 m to 45 m depending on the fire resisting construction of the exit routes.
- For the purpose of determining the adequacy of means of escape, actual counting of the population may be acceptable. In normal circumstances, the population density for dancing area is 0.75 m²/person and for premises subject to a liquor licence, the factor is 1 m²/person.

Unauthorized Building Works

- The existence of unauthorized building works on or affecting premises to be used for dancing party may pose a risk to the safety of the staff and participants. If the premises contain unauthorized building works listed at Annex B1, the party organizer should remove such works or submit structural justification as required.
- Unauthorized removal or alteration of existing approved access and facilities (such as ramps and toilets) for persons with a disability may be subject to enforcement and prosecution actions under the Buildings Ordinance.

**UNAUTHORIZED BUILDING WORKS
AFFECTING PUBLIC SAFETY**

1. The following unauthorized building works in the premises may constitute a risk to the safety of employees and participants. The party organizers should remove such works unless stated otherwise.

(a) Unauthorized rooftop/flat roof/yard structures forming part of the venue of the party.

[Exception : lightweight covers over yard in good and structurally sound condition, e.g. open shelters with wire-mesh, plastic or thin metal sheet covers]

(b) Structures on or suspended from approved canopies including air-conditioning/mechanical plants and advertising signs

[Exception : single split-type air-conditioning unit or cooling tower not exceeding 1 m in diameter on approved canopies subject to certification by AP/RSE that such canopies are in structurally sound condition and that the air-conditioning plants would not cause overloading or overstressing of such canopies]

(c) Unauthorized canopies/projections over pavements or common areas

[Exception (1) : lightweight shopfront projections/extensions projecting not more than 300 mm beyond the building line; lightweight overhead projections of not more than 600 mm beyond the building line, having a minimum vertical clearance of 2.5 m and not accommodating any air-conditioning plants]

[Exception (2) : lightweight covers in good condition projecting not more than 600 mm beyond the building line or retractable canopies projecting not more than 2.0 m beyond the building line and having a minimum vertical clearance of 2.5 m and a minimum horizontal clearance of 600 mm from the curb of a pavement]

[Exception (3) : advertising signs which are not in a dangerous condition]

- (d) Air-conditioning plant and its accessories (e.g. cooling towers and associated supporting structures) projecting over pavement/service lane or suspended from approved canopy and balcony.

[Exception : split-type air-conditioning units attached to external wall which are not in dangerous condition, do not obstruct pedestrian or vehicular traffic and do not project more than 600 mm from external wall]

- (e) Overhead air-conditioning plants and associated supporting structures installed within the premises.

[Exception : unless otherwise certified by AP/RSE as being structurally safe with supporting calculations]

- (f) Unauthorized obstruction to smoke vents.

- (g) Unauthorized alteration or removal of compartment walls or fire resisting walls and doors.

- (h) Unauthorized openings or slabs over existing floors for food hoists and pipe ducts.

[Exception : unless otherwise certified by AP/RSE as being structurally safe with supporting calculations]

- (i) Unauthorized reinforced concrete slabs filling up approved cockloft and staircase voids.

- (j) Unauthorized cockloft, immediate floors and floor extensions.

- (k) Unauthorized staircases; unauthorized openings through existing slabs for staircases.

- (l) Unauthorized removal, partial removal or major alteration of structural members.

- (m) Unauthorized building works in common areas resulting in obstruction of the means escape from the venue or the building.
 - (n) Unauthorized sub-division of a floor into separate units without the provision of internal corridors protected by fire resisting walls and doors.
2. If the removal or rectification of the unauthorized building works involves the carrying out of building works not exempted under section 41 of the Buildings Ordinance, it will be necessary for the party organizer to appoint an AP and/or RSE and to obtain the prior approval and consent of the Building Authority for such works. Copies of “Guidelines for the Removal of Typical Unauthorized Building works” can be obtained from Buildings Department for reference.