

Waterworks (Amendment) Bill 2017 (“The Bill”)

Response to the List of follow-up actions arising from the discussion at the meeting of the Bills Committee on 11 July 2017

Response to item (a)

Pursuant to regulation 36(2) of the Waterworks Regulations (Cap. 102A) (“WWR”), Licensed Plumbers (“LPs”) have to renew their licences annually¹. Currently, 2,969 LPs have renewed their licences for 2017 and 128 LPs have not yet done so.

2. Water Supplies Department (“WSD”) launched the Voluntary Continuing Professional Development (“CPD”) Scheme for LPs in October 2016 and its attendance is not a prerequisite for an LP to renew his/her licence. From October 2016 to May 2017, 30 CPD programmes/courses organised by 7 institutions/organisations have been accredited by WSD with 785 LPs attended.

3. The content of these accredited CPD programmes/courses covers a wide range of topics, such as material control on plumbing works, plumbing design, water quality and water sampling, water safety and risk management, the Waterworks Ordinance (Cap. 102) (“WWO”) and the WWR, standard and requirements of plumbing works, new measures implemented by Water Authority (“WA”) on processing applications for water supplies, and maintenance of inside services, etc.

Response to item (b)

4. Generally, alterations or repairs to inside services or fire services that are of a minor nature are works that will not involve soldering for connecting copper pipes and dismantling of an installed water meter, and also will not-

- (a) materially change the general arrangement of plumbing installation already approved by the WA, for example, changing from indirect supply to direct supply;

¹ Validity of a plumber’s licence is subject to the Water Authority’s power to suspend or cancel the licence under regulation 37 of the WWR.

- (b) cause misuse, wastage and possible contamination of a supply, for example, change in purpose of supply or approved usage, requiring provision of backflow preventive devices for a water using apparatus; and
- (c) materially affect the flow conditions of plumbing system thus causing possible supply problems.

5. Some examples of such works² within a domestic flat, a shop or an office are as follows-

- One-to-one replacement of pipes or fittings, water closet (and associated flushing cistern) or water heater (of the same type only)
- rewashering of a tap
- tightening joints of leaking pipe
- fixing components of leaking fitting
- insertion of a gate valve along the existing pipeline between a kitchen and a bathroom
- extension of pipeline for an additional draw-off point
- shortening and plugging of pipeline supplying a tap

6. Minor alterations and repairs to inside services or fire services shall conform to the requirements of the WWO and the WWR in respect of quality of workmanship and material. In case of doubt, the consumer/agent should consult LP or the WA for advice.

Development Bureau
4 August 2017

² Please also refer to examples of alterations or repairs to inside services or fire services of a minor nature published on WSD's website.