

## Provision of Better Lift Service

### Introduction

The lift service in a building has been the subject of complaints from time to time. The Building Authority (BA) accepts that occupants of the building may have legitimate cause for concern in some cases. This practice note introduces guidelines on the provision of lifts in buildings for domestic use with a view to enhancing standards of lift services, thereby improving the quality of life for the occupants of domestic buildings.

### Background

2. Areas of lifts and the lift shafts in a building are measured as gross floor areas (GFA) under Building (Planning) Regulation 23(3)(a).

3. Except for fireman's lifts and those required to be provided for people with a disability, no requirements and dimensions are spelt out in the Buildings Ordinance and regulations to enable an assessment to be made as to the adequacy of a lift service. To maximize on the usable floor area of a building, the practice has been quite common that only the minimum area is allowed for the provision of lifts, occasionally at the expense of the comfort and convenience of occupants of the building. The BA considers that there is room for improvement in this area.

### Quality of Lift Service

4. In general, the quality of lift service depends on a number of factors including the number and size of the lifts provided and their handling capacity, travelling time, waiting time, etc. The following indicate the average standards of lift service :-

- (a) the average internal sizes of a lift car and its shaft should be  $1.82 \text{ m}^2$  and  $4.12 \text{ m}^2$  respectively in order to provide a comfortable lift service (according to the advice of the Director of Electrical and Mechanical Services);
- (b) the number of lift to be provided is primarily governed by the building population and the number of storeys to be served; and
- (c) dimensional standards in relation to rated load, handling capacity and rated speed are specified in the Code of Practice on Building Works for Lifts and Escalators.

### Criteria for Exemption

5. The BA acknowledges that improvement in lift provisions in private developments should be encouraged. Having regard to the effects of increasing building density, and in line with the policy of encouraging the provision of amenity features in buildings, the BA will allow the GFA of lift shafts provided over and above the average standard of those currently provided in buildings to be excluded from GFA calculations.

6. Research by Buildings Department on the existing buildings has revealed that the average area of lift shafts in domestic/composite buildings is around 3% of the total GFA. Taking into account that developers may suffer loss in GFA as a result of having to increase the size of a service core to accommodate the enlarged lift shafts and also to provide some incentive to encourage developers to provide better lift service, the BA will, upon application and on the merits of each case, give a modification of B(P)R 23(3)(a) to exempt the area of lift shaft in **domestic and composite buildings including hotels** over and above 2.5% of the total GFA from GFA calculations when the following criteria are met :-

- (a) the internal area of each lift car and lift shaft is not less than 1.82 m<sup>2</sup> and 4.12 m<sup>2</sup> respectively; and
- (b) the standards of the lift service are provided to the satisfaction of the Building Authority.

7. The total exempt area for lift shaft should in no case be in excess of 3.5% of the total GFA of the proposed building, i.e., if the lift shaft area is more than 6% of the total GFA then the maximum exempt area will be 3.5% of the total GFA.

### Application

8. The guidelines in para. 5 to 7 are applicable to building plans for new projects, and major revisions of building plans. Buildings issued with occupation permits will not be considered for concessions.

9. For approved projects not under construction, there is no objection to amendment plans to be submitted to take advantage of the revised arrangement.

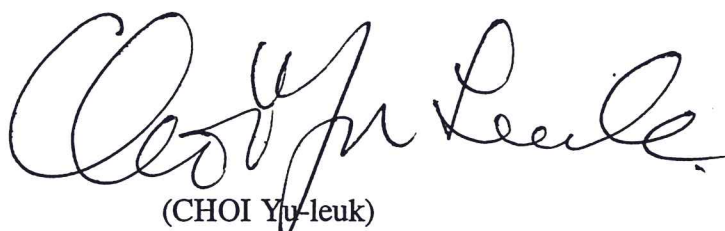
10. For new projects on which building works are in progress, application for concession may also be considered if it can be established that :

- the plans were prepared and submitted after September 1996, and
- an enhanced standard of lift service has been incorporated in anticipation of the grant of concessions.

11. The rules on concessions in this practice note are also applicable to projects under development in phases. For the avoidance of doubt, completed phases will not be considered and there should not be transfer of GFA between any completed phase and other phase yet to be completed. An example illustrating the concessions in phased development is at Appendix A.

### Review

12. The situation will be reviewed and subject to there being no abuse and the objective of enhancing standards of lift service being achieved, consideration will be given to extending the scope of this practice note to cover other types of buildings in future.



(CHOI Yu-leuk)  
Building Authority

Ref. : GP/BREG/P/35

First issued August 1997 (AD/D)

This issue November, 1997 (paras. 8 - 11 added)

Index under : Lift car and shaft



**An Example Illustrating Concessions  
for a Phased Development**

**I. The Site**

- (a) Site area :  $10000\text{m}^2$   
PR :5  
Total domestic gross floor areas (GFA) :  $50000\text{m}^2$
- (b) For development in 3 phases :
  - Phase I already completed with an occupation permit issued;
  - Phase II is now under construction; and
  - Phase III has general building plans approved but no building works have commenced.

**II. Position on plot ratio and GFA**

- (a) Phase I
  - GFA shown on approved plans and completed :  $10000\text{m}^2$
  - Lift shaft areas shown on approved plans and included as GFA: 7% of the GFA or  $700\text{m}^2$ . The lift shaft areas are to remain as accountable GFA for plot ratio calculation ie no concession is allowable under this PNAP
  - Plot ratio and accountable GFA left for Phase II & Phase III are 4 and  $40000\text{m}^2$  respectively.
- (b) Phase II
  - GFA shown on approved plans :  $25000\text{m}^2$
  - Lift shaft areas shown on approved plans and included as GFA: 6% of the GFA of Phase II or  $1500\text{m}^2$
  - Conditions in para. 10 of this PNAP are satisfied
  - Phase II exemption area =  $1500\text{m}^2 - 25000 \times 2.5\%$   
=  $875\text{m}^2$  \* (not exceeding 3.5% of the total GFA of Phase II)
  - GFA used and accountable for Phase II =  $25000\text{m}^2 - 875\text{m}^2$   
=  $24125\text{m}^2$
  - Plot ratio and accountable GFA left for Phase III are 1.5875 and  $15875\text{m}^2$  respectively.

(c) Phase III

- GFA shown on approved plans :  $15000\text{m}^2$
- Lift shaft areas shown on approved plans and included as GFA: 5.5% of the GFA of Phase III or  $825\text{m}^2$
- Phase III exemption area =  $825\text{m}^2 - 15000 \times 2.5\%$   
=  $450\text{m}^2$  \*(not exceeding 3.5% of the total GFA of Phase III)
- GFA accountable for plot ratio calculation =  $15000\text{m}^2 - 450\text{m}^2$   
=  $14550\text{m}^2$
- Concessions available for Phase III =  $875\text{m}^2$  (from Phase II) +  $450\text{m}^2$  or  $1325\text{m}^2$
- Overall GFA =  $10000\text{m}^2$  (Phase I) +  $24125\text{m}^2$  (Phase II) +  $14550\text{m}^2$  (Phase III) +  $1325\text{m}^2$  (concessions) =  $50000\text{m}^2$  (plot ratio = 5 - not exceeding permissible)

\* The concession will only be considered if the criteria in paragraphs 6,7 & 10 of the PNAP are met. The concessions given in Phase II may be transferred to Phase III.