

Legislation for implementing Registered Fire Engineer Scheme submitted to Legislative Council

The Fire Services (Registered Fire Engineers) Regulation (the Regulation) was submitted by the Security Bureau to the Legislative Council (LegCo) today (May 28) with a view to implementing the Registered Fire Engineer (RFE) Scheme.

A spokesperson for the Security Bureau said, "Currently, a person who intends to run various types of licensed premises can only rely on the services of the Fire Services Department (FSD) in making a fire safety risk assessment of the relevant premises and certifying compliance with the relevant fire safety requirements.

"To facilitate business operations and make good use of professional and qualified human resources in the market, we propose to introduce the RFE Scheme to leverage professional engineers and qualified persons in the market for the provision of fire safety risk assessment and certification services. The FSD will continue to deliver fire safety risk assessment and certification services to members of the public if they so choose. The Scheme will thus offer an additional option to the market for completing the fire safety risk assessment and certification procedures, providing facilitation to both the public and businesses. The implementation of the Scheme could promote the development of the fire engineering profession. The fees of services provided by RFEs would be determined by the market forces of supply and demand."

The Scheme requires legislative backing. In this connection, the Government has been carrying out the legislative work in phases. The Fire Services (Amendment) Ordinance 2017 was enacted by the LegCo to provide a basis for the making of new regulations for the RFE Scheme.

The spokesperson added, "One of the key considerations for the Government in introducing the RFE Scheme is that it must not compromise fire safety and public safety. Hence, the making of the Regulation by the Government aims to regulate the registration of RFEs and to set out the regulatory regime of their professional activities. The provisions of this new Regulation will cover the implementation details of the Scheme, including the registration mechanism and duties of RFEs, the disciplinary and appeal mechanisms, as well as the issue of the code of practice in relation to the Scheme. The above principles of the regulatory regime were supported by the relevant Bills Committees of the LegCo when the Fire Services (Amendment) Bill was scrutinised."

The Regulation is subject to LegCo's scrutiny by the positive vetting procedures. The Government will introduce into the LegCo at a later stage the other three pieces of subsidiary legislation which are relevant to the

implementation of the RFE Scheme for negative vetting procedures. Separately, the Secretary for Security will specify November 1, 2025, as the commencement date by notice in the Gazette, thereby enabling the implementation of the Scheme on that day.

The spokesperson added, "In terms of implementation, the RFE Scheme will apply to licensed premises. The FSD proposes a phased implementation, starting with licensed food premises regulated under the Food Business Regulation. The FSD will conduct a review to evaluate the effectiveness of the Scheme after the first phase has been implemented for a period of time and, subject to the evaluation results, consider extending the Scheme to other licensed premises."

The implementation of the RFE Scheme will facilitate business operations on the one hand, and promote the development of the fire engineering profession of Hong Kong on the other, assisting the industry in exploring new opportunities while not compromising fire safety, making it a win-win scheme.