

Republic of the Philippines
Department of the Interior and Local Government
BUREAU OF FIRE PROTECTION NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS
Office of the Chief, BFP
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February 25, 2010

MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR
NUMBER: 2010 - 17

SUBJECT: GUIDELINES IN THE APPROVAL OF ALTERNATIVE AND/OR REMEDIAL FIRE SAFETY MEASURES

I. GENERAL

Pursuant to Section 10 (c) and 54 of Republic Act (RA) 6975 and Section 5 of Republic Act (RA) 9514 otherwise known as The Fire Code of the Philippine of 2008, and in compliance with Section 14.0.0.3 of its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR), these guidelines are hereby prescribed to promote public safety relative to application and approval/acceptance of Alternative and/or Remedial Fire Safety Measures for existing public or private buildings, facilities or structures and their premises or portion thereof.

II. SCOPE

These Implementing Guidelines shall apply to all existing private or public buildings, facilities or structures and their premises or portion thereof erected or constructed before the effectivity of RA 9514 and its IRR, where compliance with the fire safety requirements as specified in the IRR of RA 9514 will compromise the structural stability/integrity of the said buildings, facilities or structures which necessitates Alternative and/or Remedial Fire Safety Measures.

These also apply to existing public and private buildings, facilities, structures and their premises or portion thereof granted with Certificate of Exemption to install Automatic Fire Sprinkler System (AFSS) by the Chief, Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) and/or the Director General of the Philippine Constabulary/Integrated National Police (PC/INP) under Presidential Decree No. 1185.

III. OBJECTIVE

1. To prescribe guidelines in the application and approval of Alternative and/or Remedial Fire Safety Measures.
2. To rationalize the selection or identification of appropriate Alternative and/or Remedial Fire Safety Measures in lieu of the fire safety requirements for installation of AFSS to existing public or private buildings, structure or facilities and their premises or portion thereof.
3. To establish the procedure to be followed by the line units of the BFP prior to the final action of the Chief, BFP.

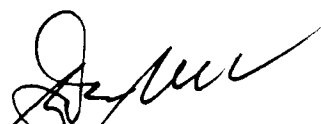
IX. REPEALING CLAUSE

All directives, issuances, memoranda inconsistent with this Memorandum Circular are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

Certificates of Exemption on the installation of Automatic Fire Suppression System (sprinkler system) issued prior to this Memorandum Circular, except those eligible Certificates of Exemption with corresponding BFP Order or PC/INP Order, signed and issued by the Chief, BFP or Director General, PC/INP, respectively, are hereby nullified. However, all eligible Certificates of Exemption issued earlier are subject to review/renewal within sixty (60) days upon effectivity of this Memorandum Circular.

X. EFFECTIVITY

This Memorandum Circular shall take effect immediately.



ROLANDO M. BANDILLA JR., CESO IV
DIRECTOR (DSC) BFP
Chief, BFP

Approved:

BY AUTHORITY OF THE SECRETARY, DILG:



ATTY. MARIUS P. CORPUS
Undersecretary for Public Safety

IV. DEFINITION OF TERMS

1. Republic Act 9514 – The Fire Code of the Philippines of 2008 amending Presidential Decree 1185.
2. Automatic Fire Suppression System- an integrated system of underground or overhead piping connected to a source of extinguishing agent or medium, designed in accordance with fire protection engineering standards to include, but not limited to Automatic Fire Sprinkler System which when actuated by its automatic detecting device suppresses fire within the area protected even without human intervention.
3. Approved Supervised Sprinkler System (ASSS) - an integrated network of hydraulically designed piping system installed in a building, structure or facility with outlets arranged in a systematic pattern. It automatically discharges water when activated by heat or combustion products of fire.
4. Alternative and/or Remedial Fire Safety Measures- set of fire safety rules, regulations, and standards specifically applied to existing public or private buildings, structures or facilities and their premises or portion thereof constructed or erected prior to the implementation of RA 9514, which has no existing ASSS required under the said law.
5. Fire Safety Technical Committee- a group created to evaluate and recommend appropriate action relative to application for Alternative and/ or Remedial Fire Safety Measures.

V. AUTHORITY TO GRANT APPROVAL/ACCEPTANCE

Pursuant to Section 4.0.0.4 of the IRR of RA 9514, only the Chief, BFP may approve the Alternative and/or Remedial Fire Safety Measures in lieu of the fire safety requirements in the installation of AFSS to existing public or private buildings, facilities or structures and their premises or portion thereof constructed or erected prior to the implementation of RA 9514, provided that any aggrieved party may appeal to the Secretary, DILG.

VI. PROCEDURES

A. Requirements of the Application

All applications for Alternative and/or Remedial Fire Safety Measures in lieu of the fire safety requirements pursuant to section 14.0.0.4 of the IRR of R.A 9514 shall be supported by the following documents:

1. Letter request stating the reason/s for applying Alternative and/or Remedial Measures in lieu of the fire safety requirements in the installation of ASSS.
2. As-built plans certified by Architect or Civil Engineer showing among others, the fire exits, floor and/or location of the fire hose, standpipes, valves, fire

D. Means of Egress (Exit Details)

1. Provision/Construction of a minimum of two (2) secondary fire exits, remote from each other, with travel distance of 20% less from the standard requirements.
2. Installation/Provision of all the following in the secondary exits, to wit:
 - a. Fire resistive door with panic hardware.
 - b. Self-closing fire door with minimum width of 20% more from standard requirement.
 - c. Battery-operated emergency light in all of the stair landings.
 - d. Termination of all exits to public egress, continuous and unobstructed at all times.
3. All fire exits must be mechanically pressurized.
4. Installation of illuminated exit signs in conspicuous place leading to emergency exits.

E. Fire Safety and Prevention Programs

1. Creation of fire brigade organization with Certificate of Competency (COC) of members issued by the BFP.
2. Compulsory attendance for all members of the fire brigade in all fire safety seminars conducted in the building, facility or structure.
3. Conduct of fire evacuation drill quarterly with corresponding certification issued by the OC/MFM concerned.
4. Compulsory attendance of all occupants to at least two (2) fire safety seminars in the building annually.
5. Compulsory briefing/orientation of all new tenants and/or occupants on fire safety program of the building within one (1) month upon regular employment in any office/business within the building, facility or structure.

VIII. GRACE PERIOD

The owner/administrator/occupant shall complete the construction/renovation of the building, facility or structure including the installation and final testing of fire protection and warning systems and other requirements in the approved application within six (6) months from the date of approval of the proposed Alternative and/or Remedial Fire Safety Measure, provided, that a duly notarized Affidavit of Undertaking shall be executed by the owner or his authorized representative stating compliance with the conditions set, notwithstanding appropriate measures undertaken to ensure reasonable fire safety during compliance.

alarm bells, call points, switch boxes, fire extinguishers, smoke and heat detectors, emergency lights and source of power and water, and other fire safety requirements.

3. Certified true copies of the building and/or renovation, and Occupancy Permits (OP) issued by the Building Official.
4. Certified true copies of Fire Safety Correction Sheet/Checklist/Clearance and Fire Safety Inspection Certificate (FSIC) (if any) from the Office of the City/Municipal Fire Marshal (OC/MFM).
5. Certified true copy of the latest Fire Safety Inspection Report (FSIR) or Notice to Comply and/or Notice to Correct Violation (NTC/ NTCV).
6. Certification from Structural Engineer, preferably a member of the Associations of Structural Engineers of the Philippines (ASEP), declaring that the said buildings, facilities or structures cannot support additional load for the installation of ASSS.
7. Proposed Alternative and/or Remedial Fire Safety Measures, including designs and specifications, to be installed and/or constructed in lieu of the fire safety requirements, duly certified by Qualified Technical Personnel/ Fire Safety Engineer/ FALAR Practitioners and approved by the owner/authorized representative.
8. Copy of Fire Safety and Prevention Program (Fire Brigade Organization) including evaluation plan certified by the Chief, Fire Brigade/Chief Safety Officer of the buildings, facilities or structures concerned and approved by the owner/authorized representative.
9. Current Certificate of Fire Drill issued by OC/MFM.
10. Affidavit of Undertaking absolving the BFP from any criminal/administrative liability in case of fire and fire related deaths and injuries.

Note: Photocopied documents shall be certified true copy by the authorized official of the issuing office.

B. Processing and Approval of Application

1. All applications for Alternative and/or Remedial Fire Safety Measures together with the required documents shall be submitted to the OC/MFM concerned for pre-evaluation and endorsement to the BFP Regional Director thru the District/Provincial Fire Marshals (D/PFM).
2. The Office of the Regional Director concerned shall evaluate the application and recommend appropriate action (re approval/disapproval) before endorsing the same to the Chief, BFP (ATTN: Chairperson, Fire Safety Technical Committee (FSTC)).
3. The Chairperson of the FSTC or his authorized representative shall conduct physical inspection of the existing public or private buildings, facilities or structure and their premises or portion thereof being applied for and evaluate the proposed Alternative and/or Remedial Fire Safety Measures presented.



VII. ALTERNATIVE AND/OR REMEDIAL FIRE SAFETY MEASURES

A. Fire Safety Construction

1. All interior partitions must be made of fire resistive materials including parts or components, extending from slab to slab.
2. Rooms, vertical and horizontal openings or parts thereof must be totally enclosed.
3. All pipes chase must be constructed with fire collar or fitted with sealant.
4. All exposed steel structure components must be covered/coated with fire resistive materials to protect its structural stability during conflagration.
5. All firewalls must be extended 20% more from the established standard requirement.
6. All other fire safety construction components must be constructed in accordance with established standard requirement for any type of occupancy.

B. Occupancy Load

1. Actual occupant load and egress capacity for all kinds of occupancies must not exceed the established occupant load standard for any type of occupancy.

C. Fire Protection

1. Installation of any or all the following pre-engineered suppression systems:
 - a. Ceiling Type Fire Suppression System using other extinguishing agents with automatic heat and smoke detection.
 - b. Liquefied Gaseous Fire Suppression System in high hazard areas within the building premises or structure.
2. Installation/Provision of portable fire protection (fire extinguisher) for the different types of hazard in any type of occupancy shall be increased by 20% from the standard requirements.
3. Provision/Installation of dry and wet standpipe. Wet standpipe must be operational with fire keys and not through gravity or overhead tanks.
4. Installation of automatic alarm and signaling system according to established standards.



4. The inspection and evaluation reports, together with the application and supporting documents, shall be carefully evaluated and deliberated by the FSTC and thereafter recommend the approval/disapproval of the application by the Chief, BFP.
5. Approved proposed Alternative and/or Remedial Fire Safety Measure shall be properly issued with corresponding Bureau Order enumerating among others the name of the building, facility or structure, location/address, owner/administrator, the Alternative and/or Remedial Fire Safety Measures to be installed/constructed in lieu of the fire safety requirement and the condition of its approval (i.e. grace period to install/construct the alternative and/or remedial fire safety measure, observance of fire safety requirements, etc). Disapproved proposal shall be referred back to the Regional Director concerned for subsequent information to the owner/representative.

C. Issuance of Certificate of Exemption

1. Upon completion of the installation and/or construction of the Alternative and/or Remedial Fire Safety Measures, the owner/representative shall formally request the OC/MFM concerned for an inspection of the completed fire safety measures.
2. An inspection will be conducted by the OC/MFM concerned and endorse its findings to the Office of the Regional Director concerned, thru the D/PFM.
3. The Office of the Regional Director concerned shall evaluate findings and recommend appropriate action (re: approval/disapproval) to the C, BFP (ATTN: Chairperson, FSTC).
4. The Chairperson of the FSTC or his authorized representative shall conduct physical inspection of the existing public or private buildings, facilities or structures and their premises or portion thereof to evaluate compliance with the approved Alternative and/or Remedial Fire Safety Measures.
5. The inspection and evaluation reports shall be deliberated upon by the FSTC. The result of the deliberation will be the basis of the recommendation for the approval/disapproval of the Chief, BFP.
6. Upon approval, a corresponding certificate in the form of Bureau Order shall be issued by the Chief, BFP enumerating among others, the name of building, facility or structure; address/location; owner/administrator; the Alternative and/or Remedial Fire Safety Measures installed/constructed in lieu of fire safety requirement; and the condition of approval/acceptance. Disapproved application shall be referred back to the Office of the Regional Director concerned for subsequent information to the concerned owner/representative.
7. After compliance of the required Alternative and/or Remedial Fire Safety Measures and the corresponding certificate of approval by the Chief, BFP, FSIC may now be issued by the concerned OC/MFM.