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Building Engineering Division (#05-00)

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Dear Sir/Madam

SUPERVISION OF BUILDING STRUCTURAL WORKS

We have received feedback from the industry that some site supervisors are not present at the sites to provide supervision of structural works, especially critical structural works that require immediate supervision. Examples of critical structural works include concreting, piling, pre-stressing, tightening of high-friction grip bolts. Failure to supervise structural works is an offence under the Building Control Act.

2 We like to remind Qualified Persons (QPs) for structural works that site supervisors work under their supervision and direction. Hence, it is the responsibility of the QP for structural works to ensure that his appointed site supervisors are at the site to supervise the structural works. The site supervisor too has a responsibility to inform the QP for structural works if he or she, for whatever reason, is not able to supervise the structural works. In such circumstances, the QP for structural works shall arrange to station an accredited site supervisor as temporary replacement on site and inform BCA of such temporary arrangement.

3 Site supervisors are to ensure that the builder carries out the structural works in accordance with the approved structural plans. Prior approval from BCA is required before any major deviation to the structural plan is to be carried out. If deviations from approved structural plans are to be implemented on site, there should be a written consent from the QP. One particular area commonly overlooked is the construction of earth-retaining and stabilising structure (ERSS) for supporting the face of an excavation made for the purpose of constructing any pile cap, footing, sump, lift pit or trench if it exceeds 10 square metres in area or 2 metres in depth. Such ERSS work requires the submission of plans for approval. Site supervisors should report to BCA if excavation is carried out prior to obtaining approval of ERSS plan or not in accordance with the approved ERSS plan.

4 BCA has taken prosecution action against QPs and site supervisors for contravening the building regulations. Some past prosecution cases include QP being convicted for permitting builder to carry out structural work without approved plans, site supervisors for failure to supervise the structural works in accordance with the approved structural plans, and failure to provide immediate supervision for critical structural works, such as concreting and piling works. The errant site supervisors were also suspended for 3 months by the IES-ACES Joint Accreditation Committee. BCA would like to work together with the QPs and site supervisors to ensure building safety during construction and they should report to BCA should there be any contravention of building regulations found on site.

5 We would appreciate it if you could disseminate the contents of this circular to your members. Please contact Mr Shee Siu Ming at Tel. 63257583 or email: shee_siu_ming@bca.gov.sg if you need further clarification. Thank you.

Yours faithfully



ANDRIS LEONG (MS)
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for COMMISSIONER OF BUILDING CONTROL

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