水 務 署
Water Supplies Department

總部 Headquarters

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Our ref.

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Your ref.

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25 June 2019

Distribution: All Licensed Plumbers and Authorized Persons

Dear Sirs,

Circular Letter No. 4/2019
Plumbing Products with Product Certification under the
Surveillance Programme on General Acceptance Products

The Water Supplies Department (WSD) has implemented a surveillance programme of plumbing materials with General Acceptance (GA) in October 2017. As promulgated in the WSD Circular Letter No. 8/2017, WSD will randomly take samples of different types of plumbing products with valid GA in the market to confirm that their compliance with the statutory requirements are maintained.

2. For GA products with product certification, WSD consider that the regular monitoring of the product quality in the product certification schemes serves the same purpose as the Surveillance Programme and hence will be considered as satisfying the surveillance requirement.

Product Certification

3. Product Certification is the process whereby a product is certified to

achieving prescribed standards and quality requirements, through regular factory surveillance and periodic sampling and testing of products by independent accredited certification body. A recognized Product Certification Scheme organized by a certification body shall be accredited by an accreditation body in accordance with BS EN ISO/IEC 17065 "Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services" or equivalent. Moreover, the Product Certification Scheme shall assess products based on BS EN ISO/IEC 17067 "Conformity assessment – Fundamentals of product certification and guidelines for product certification schemes" or equivalent. The benefits of product certification are to promote industrial quality through control at the upstream, continuous surveillance of production process in factory to ensure consistent production quality and compliance with the recognized standards.

Requirement for GA Product Satisfying the Surveillance Requirement

4.   GA plumbing products that satisfy the following criteria will be considered as satisfying the GA surveillance requirement and will not be further sampled by WSD in the market for compliance monitoring purpose:

(a) possess a valid product certificate based on British Standards; or

(b) possess a valid product certificate based on non-British Standards acceptable to WSD and evidence[1] of compliance with material standards specified in the Waterworks Regulations (Cap. 102A).

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[1] Plumbing products with GA status are deemed to comply with the prescribed requirements of Waterworks Regulations (Cap. 102A)

5.   Currently the following Product Certification Schemes to Scheme Type 5 in BS EN ISO/IEC 17067 are acceptable to WSD:

	Product Certification Scheme	Certification Body	Country
(a)	BSI Kitemark	BSI Group	United Kingdom
(b)	Benchmark	BSI Group	Australia
(c)	Watermark	Australia Building Codes Board	Australia
(d)	DVGW	German Technical and Scientific Association for Gas and Water	Germany

6.   The list of Product Certification Schemes acceptable to WSD will be posted to the WSD website. WSD will continue to identify other acceptable Product Certification Schemes and the list will be updated from time to time.

Application

7.   Both existing holders and new applicants of GA may submit product certification documents of their GA plumbing products to the Material Control Unit of WSD for consideration for confirmation of satisfying the GA surveillance requirement by completing the application form in the existing voluntary General Acceptance Plus (GA+) Scheme. The detailed information of the GA+ Scheme is shown in the **Annex** and can be found in the following website :

https://www.wsd.gov.hk/en/plumbing-engineering/pipes-and-fittings-to-be-used-in-inside-service-or/voluntary-quality-assurance-information-scheme-ga/index.html

8.   GA plumbing products with acceptable product certification status will be given a "Two Stars" status in the GA+ Scheme. Products in this category will

be considered as satisfying the surveillance requirement of the GA Surveillance Programme.

Enquiry

9.   Should you have any enquiry, please contact our Mechanical Engineer/Material Control at telephone no. 2294 2656.

Yours faithfully,

(Original Signed)

(CHAN Chung Kun)
for Water Authority

Encl.
(with Chinese translation)

c.c.   Housing Department (Attn: SM/QM)
Buildings Department
Architectural Services Department
Fire Services Department
The Hong Kong Housing Society
The Hong Kong Institute of Architects
The Hong Kong Institution of Engineers
The Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors
The Chartered Institute of Plumbing and Heating Engineering - Hong Kong Council
Hong Kong Plumbing and Sanitary Ware Trade Association Ltd
Hong Kong Licensed Plumbing Professionals Association Ltd
Hong Kong Plumbing General Union
Hong Kong Water Works Professionals Association Ltd
The Hong Kong Institution of Plumbing and Drainage Ltd
Plumbing Technology Student Association
The Association of Registered Fire Service Installation Contractors of Hong Kong Ltd
Real Estate Development Association of Hong Kong
Hong Kong Institute of Vocational Education
Construction Industry Council
The Hong Kong Construction Association Ltd
Hong Kong General Building Contractors Association Ltd
The Hong Kong Federation of Electrical & Mechanical Contractors Ltd
Contractor's Authorised Signatory Association Ltd
Registered Minor Works Contractor Signatory Association Ltd
Hong Kong Registered Contractors Association Company Ltd
Building Services Operation and Maintenance Executives Society
The Hong Kong Air Conditioning and Refrigeration Association Ltd
Hong Kong Licensed Plumbers Union Limited
Li Ka Shing Institute of Professional and Continuing Education, The Open University of Hong Kong
The Association of Electrical and Mechanical Engineering (Hong Kong) Ltd

WSD 3318/15/81

Voluntary General Acceptance Plus (GA+) Scheme

Quality Assurance Information

The General Acceptance Plus (GA+) Scheme is a voluntary scheme launched in 2017. The GA+ Scheme built on the existing General Acceptance (GA) System. The Scheme encourages quality assurance in the manufacturing stage of plumbing products. All pipes and fittings under the current GA System and new applications are eligible to apply for the GA+ Scheme. In addition to the supporting documents for the GA application, GA applicants who wish to join the voluntary GA+ Scheme are required to submit quality assurance information of their plumbing products in the manufacturing stage. After acceptance by WSD, the quality assurance information of the GA product will be posted on the Search Directory of the WSD website and the WSD mobile app for "Water Supply Pipes and Fittings with Valid General Acceptance".

The quality assurance information will be considered under the following categories:

1. Valid Certificate showing compliance to a Quality Management System with the scope of the certificate on the plumbing product concerned, e.g. ISO9001 or equivalent.

2. Valid Certificate of a Product Certification Scheme acceptable to WSD for the plumbing product concerned.

The quality assurance information submitted to WSD will be presented graphically by yellow stars.

No. of Stars		Quality Assurance Information Submitted to WSD
No Star	☆☆	The GA applicant has not submitted any quality assurance document under the voluntary scheme
One Star	★☆	Possess relevant Quality Management System in Production
Two Stars	★★	Possess relevant Product Certification System and Quality Management System in Production

The number of stars possessed represents the product manufacturer's effort in achieving quality assurance of the product in the production stage. Comparatively speaking, the requirement for a Product Certificate Scheme is more stringent than that for a Quality Management System. In brief, the more stars the product possesses represents a higher degree of assurance on product quality.