



NON-COMPLIANT CLADDING DISCOVERED ON ICON @ INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS PARK

In July 2019, SCDF was alerted by the owner of ICON @ International Business Park ("ICON@IBP")¹ that the composite panels used as cladding on the façade of the building (Alcompo brand) is non-compliant with the Fire Code².

Actions Taken by SCDF to Ensure Fire Safety

2. As a follow-up, SCDF conducted a comprehensive on-site fire safety assessment of ICON@IBP and concluded that the building remains fit and safe for occupancy, based on its existing fire safety provisions. In its assessment, SCDF examined various factors, including the proximity of the cladding to possible ignition sources, the proportion of the external walls covered with the cladding, and the availability of fire protection systems such as fire hose reels, sprinklers and fire alarms.

3. SCDF has also established, based on checks with the local distributor and Certification Body, that this is an isolated case as ICON@IBP is the only building in Singapore that used the Alcompo brand of composite panels as cladding. It is no longer available on the market.

4. SCDF has directed the building owner to remove the non-compliant cladding within 60 days from today, starting from the ground level.

5. In the meantime, SCDF has also directed the building owner to carry out the following fire safety measures within the next 14 days to strengthen the fire safety of the building:

- a. Conduct checks to ensure that the fire safety system is in good working condition;
- b. Conduct evacuation drills to familiarise occupants with the evacuation procedure;
- c. Ensure that personnel are appointed to carry out fire watch regularly; and
- d. Conduct regular checks and remove any fire hazards.

¹ 3A, International Business Park Road, Singapore 609935

² Clause 3.15.13 of the Fire Code (<https://www.scdf.gov.sg/docs/default-source/scdf-library/fssd-downloads/fire-code-2018-edition.pdf>)

Investigations by SCDF

6. SCDF's investigations revealed that in March 2018, the building owner had, of its own accord, conducted a burn test of the composite panels, to ascertain if they conformed to the fire safety requirements stipulated in the Fire Code. The panels failed the test. The Qualified Person (QP) for the development of ICON@IBP was aware of the failed test result in April 2018, but failed to inform SCDF. It was only in July 2019 that the building owner alerted SCDF. This prolonged duration between the burn test and the reporting of the test result is unacceptable. The QP was not involved in follow-up discussions between the building owner and the main contractor about rectification actions, before the building owner informed SCDF of the non-compliant cladding.

7. Under Section 25(4)(b) of the Fire Safety Act (FSA)³, industry professionals (i.e. QPs and Fire Safety Engineers) are required to notify the Commissioner of SCDF immediately if the fire safety works that they have been appointed to oversee, contravene the FSA or Fire Code. The QP in this case had failed to do so.

8. SCDF takes non-compliance with fire safety regulations very seriously. Industry professionals such as QPs have a professional and legal responsibility to ensure fire safety. They possess the necessary technical knowledge and are specifically appointed to supervise fire safety works. SCDF expects these industry professionals to discharge their duties fully and diligently.

9. SCDF has issued a composition fine to the QP for the prolonged delay in reporting the non-compliant cladding. SCDF has also recommended to the Board of Architects (BOA) to suspend the QP in question.

Issued by:

Corporate Communications Department
Singapore Civil Defence Force
Monday, 30 September 2019, 1130hrs

³ Section 25(4)(b): Every qualified person or fire safety engineer appointed under this section in respect of any fire safety works shall notify the Commissioner of any contravention of the provisions of this Act or codes of practice in connection with the fire safety works.