

[RESOLUTION NO. FCTS-01-2017, January 18, 2018]

"A RESOLUTION RECOMMENDING THE AMENDMENT OF SECTION 10.2.8.2 PARA H (1) AND SECTION 10.2.8.8 OF THE IMPLEMENTING RULES AND REGULATIONS OF REPUBLIC ACT 9514"

Adopted: 20 December 2017

Date Filed: 18 January 2018

WHEREAS, it is a well-entrenched constitutional principle that "The maintenance of peace and order, the protection of life, liberty and property, and the promotion of the general welfare are essential for the enjoyment by all the people of the blessings of democracy" (Sec. 5, Art. 11, 1987 Philippine Constitution);

WHEREAS, the Bureau of Fire Protection shall be responsible for the prevention and suppression of all destructive fires on buildings, houses and other structures, forest, land transportation vehicles and equipment, ships or vessels docked at piers or wharves or anchored in major seaports, petroleum industry installations, plane crashes and other similar incidents, as well as the enforcement of the Fire Code and other related laws (Sec. 54, R.A. 6975);

WHEREAS, the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) is mandated to enforce the provisions of the Fire Code of the Philippines (FCP) pursuant to Republic Act 6975 and Republic Act 9514;

WHEREAS, the Fire Code Technical Staff (FCTS) was created pursuant to Section 6 of RA 9514 and Division 2, Rule 5 of its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) to study, review and evaluate latest developments and standards on fire technology and to advise the Chief, BFP on any matter brought to his attention as among its functions;

WHEREAS, there are issues raised before the FCTS from the United Architects of the Philippines and other major stakeholders seeking approval to design a theater and performing arts center particularly on seating capacity, with the recent NFPA 101-Life Safety Code and the National Building Code as their reference;

WHEREAS, Section 10.2.8.2 para H (1) of the IRR of RA 9514 limits the number of seats for public assembly buildings, structures or facilities to fourteen (14) seats between aisles and seven (7) rows of seat opening onto an aisle at one side only;

WHEREAS, NFPA 101-Life Safety Code of 2015, allows more than fourteen (14) seats between aisles provided that the aisle access way are increased as a function of row length, thus:

Section 12.2.5.5.2 The aisle access way between rows of seating shall have a clear width of not less than 12 in. (305mm), and this minimum shall be increased as a function of row length in accordance with Sections

12.2.5.5.4, 12.2.5.5.5 and 12.2.5.5.6.

Section 12.2.5.5.5.1 The 12 in. (305 mm) minimum clear width of aisle access way specified in 12.2.5.5.2 shall be increased by 0.3 in (7.6mm) for every seat over a total of 14 but shall not be required to exceed 22 in (560mm)

Section 12.2.5.5.6 Rows of seating served by an aisle or doorway at one end only shall have a path of travel not exceeding 30 ft (9.1m) in length from any seat to an aisle.

12.2.5.5.6.1 The 12 in. (305 mm) minimum clear width of aisle access way specified in 12.2.5.5.2 shall be increased by 0.6 in. (15mm) for every seat over a total of seven.

WHEREAS, the National Building Code of the Philippines provides that:

"The number of seats between aisles may be increased to thirty (30) where exit doors are provided along each side aisle of the row of seats at the rate of one (1) pair of exit doors for every five (5) rows of seats, provided further that the distance between seats back to back is at least 1.00 meter. Such exit doors shall provide a minimum clear width of 1.70 meters".

WHEREAS, the increase of number of seats to more than fourteen in a row would mean an increase of occupants and it will decrease the movement of the occupants during fire evacuation. Chapter 12.4.2.1 of the NFPA 101-UFC SAFETY CODE requires Smoke Control as one of the safety features for New Places of Assembly.

WHEREAS, Smoke management or smoke control is meant to protect its occupants from the adverse effect of smoke inhalation when there is delay in the movement during fire evacuation. In order to simplify and provide uniform application of smoke control, the FCTS patterned the smoke control requirement for high-rise building as provided under Section 10.2.19.3 of the IRR of RA 9514, otherwise known as the Fire Code of the Philippines of 2008 as part of the smoke management requirement for the Places of Assembly with increased seating capacity in rows of seating served by aisles as it will affect occupants mobility during evacuation.

WHEREAS, as can be gleaned from the aforementioned standards, both NFPA 101 and National Building Code allows number of seats that is more than the limit prescribed by the FCP provided that aisles between seats are increased in width;

WHEREAS, there is a need to harmonize the provision of the FCP with that of other Internationally Accepted Standard in order to cope up with recent trends in building design on theaters and to be at par with international standards on theater type seating;