

Prefabricated Bathroom Units (PBU)

Frequently Asked Questions

Last updated on 4 August 2015

1. Why should PBU suppliers get the In-Principle Acceptance (IPA) from the Building Innovation Panel (BIP) for their PBU systems?

PBUs granted IPA from the BIP, which the production facilities are accredited under the PBU Manufacturer Accreditation Scheme (PBU MAS) as stated in the Code of Practice are listed on BCA's website to facilitate industry users to source for PBUs which have been accredited. PBUs granted IPA from the BIP usually also get processed faster for approval under the Building Control Act. However, suppliers/users are to note that they still have to ensure that the PBU systems are safe for public use and comply with all regulatory requirements.

As a condition for developments on land sold under the Government Land Sales (GLS) Programme from 1 November 2014, all residential (non-landed) developments including Executive Condominiums and residential non-landed component of mixed-use developments are to adopt PBUs for at least 65% of the total number of bathroom units. The PBU system must be accredited by a body specified in the Code of Practice. This requirement is stated in the Building Control (Buildability and Productivity) Regulations 2011.

With effect from 9 December 2014, residential non-landed developments that wish to tap on the Balcony Bonus Gross Floor Area (GFA) Scheme are required to adopt at least 80% PBUs. The PBU systems adopted for such developments must also be granted with IPA by the BIP and have the production facilities accredited.

Should other development types or residential projects not under the GLS Programme or which did not apply for the Balcony Bonus GFA scheme adopt the PBU systems that obtained IPA from BIP, they will be accorded with higher Buildable Design Scores.

2. Can the PBU suppliers provide different PBU systems from the ones submitted to Building Innovation Panel (BIP)?

In-Principle Acceptances (IPAs) are issued to the PBU suppliers for their PBU systems that have met the requirements for use in residential non-landed projects in Singapore. This means that the BIP has no objection to the use of the specific PBU systems.

Hence, the PBU suppliers should provide the same PBU systems as their submission to BIP. For more information, please visit: <http://www.bca.gov.sg/BuildableDesign/pbu.html>

3. Is it still necessary for the PBU systems that have been granted In-Principle Acceptances (IPAs) from Building Innovation Panel (BIP) to obtain the necessary permits or approval of plans from the relevant regulatory agencies?

Yes, it is still necessary.

Prefabricated Bathroom Units (PBU)

Frequently Asked Questions

Last updated on 4 August 2015

4. Is it necessary to apply to Building Innovation Panel (BIP) under the PBU Acceptance Framework again for different projects?

It is not necessary for the PBU supplier to go through BIP process again for different projects if the PBU system adopted has already been granted with In-Principle Acceptance (IPA) and the PBU supplier engaged is the one issued with the IPA.

While BIP has no objection, the project Qualified Persons (QPs) need to ensure the PBU systems are suitable for use in each specific project.

5. How long is the process of obtaining In-Principle Acceptance (IPA) for PBU system under the Building Innovation Panel (BIP)?

Upon application to the PBU Screening Panel (Stage 1) under the BIP, the secretariat will contact the applicant within three (3) working days to arrange a suitable timeslot for the aforesaid presentation. The waiting time for the presentation is subject to the available timeslots and the number of applicants in the queue. Subsequently, if the BIP has no major concerns with the design of the proposed PBU system, the time required for BIP to evaluate the proposed PBU system and issue letter of IPA is usually three (3) months from the presentation to the PBU Screening Panel .

As the production facilities need to be accredited under the PBU Manufacturer Accreditation Scheme (MAS) before they can begin production of the PBUs for use at the mandated Government Land Sales (GLS) sites¹, it is advisable for industry stakeholders to understand the requirements of the PBU MAS upfront and check that the PBU production facilities have been accredited.

¹The mandated GLS sites refer to all residential (non-landed) developments including Executive Condominiums and residential non-landed component of mixed-use developments that are sold under the GLS Programme from 1 November 2014.

6. When can PBU manufacturer start applying for PBU Manufacturer Accreditation Scheme (MAS)?

The PBU manufacturer can apply for the accreditation under the PBU MAS after it has obtained the IPA from BIP.

For more information regarding the PBU MAS, please refer to the website of Singapore Concrete Institute (SCI) via URL : <http://www.scinst.org.sg/page.php?67>.

7. Is it acceptable for PBUs to be produced at fabrication yard on Temporary Occupation Licence (TOL) land?

It is acceptable for fabrication yard on TOL land to produce PBUs for use at GLS site, as long as the PBU system has been accredited under the PBU Manufacturer Accreditation Scheme (PBU MAS). For the accreditation criteria and other requirements under MAS, please refer to Singapore Concrete Institute (SCI) website via URL: <http://www.scinst.org.sg/page.php?67>.

Prefabricated Bathroom Units (PBU)

Frequently Asked Questions

Last updated on 4 August 2015

8. Must all PBUs be fully-finished and fitted out at the production facilities before delivery to the construction site?

In accordance with Building Control (Buildability and Productivity) Regulations, for non-landed residential developments on land sold under the Government Land Sales (GLS) programme from 1 November 2014, PBU systems adopted need to be preassembled off-site complete with finishes, sanitary wares, concealed pipes, conduits, ceiling, bathroom cabinets, shower screen and fittings before installing in position in order to meet the PBU performance requirements. Please refer to the circular in this link: <https://www.corenet.gov.sg/einfo/Uploads/Circular/CESS141031.pdf>. These performance requirements are stipulated in the Code of Practice on Buildability 2014.

9. Will mock-up of proposed PBU system be required by the Building Innovation Panel (BIP)?

Mock-up of the proposed PBU system might be requested by the PBU Screening Panel in Stage 1 of BIP.

10. Do I need to notify BCA that my project will be using PBUs?

Since 1 September 2013, QPs are required to submit a Buildability Detailed Design and Implementation Plan to BCA during building plan submission together with the Buildable Design Score (B-score) computation form. The Buildability Detailed Design and Implementation Plan (BDIP) shows the basis on how the B-score is computed. Both the BDIP and the B-score would show that PBUs are being used.

11. Do consultant and owner/developer need to notify BCA on PBU supplier engaged? If yes, at which stage and who to notify?

As you are required to indicate the accepted PBU system (i.e. the PBU system has been granted IPA by the BIP) in the B-score form when you submit building plan, it would not be necessary for you to notify BCA separately on the PBU system/PBU supplier to be used/engaged for a project. BCA will also carry out checks including site inspections to verify the PBU system used.

12. Do we need to include full details of the PBUs used in our building plan submission before we appoint the PBU supplier? What information is BCA looking for in the building plan submission on PBU?

In the event that the PBU supplier is not confirmed at the time of structural or building plan submission to BCA, please indicate an accepted PBU system that best suits the project as a preliminary system in the B-score form. Should the PBU system being considered is still pending in-principle acceptance (IPA) and/or provisional certificate, please indicate this PBU system in the form. The Buildability Detailed Design and Implementation Plan should also reflect this preliminary PBU system. However, please note that when the PBU supplier has been confirmed and the PBU system has been accepted by the BIP, you are required to resubmit the B-score form and the Buildability Detailed Design and Implementation Plan to BCA.

Prefabricated Bathroom Units (PBU)

Frequently Asked Questions

Last updated on 4 August 2015

Please also take note that until the PBU has been accepted by BIP and the production facilities have been accredited under the PBU Manufacturer Accreditation Scheme (PBU MAS), you are not allowed to install the PBUs at site.

13. How will BCA enforce that the developers/main contractors are using the PBU systems that have been granted IPA by the BIP, and the production facilities have been accredited under the PBU MAS for the projects mentioned in above-mentioned item 1? Also, what is the penalty for non-compliance?

The Qualified Persons (QPs) are required to indicate the accepted PBU system (i.e. the PBU system has been granted IPA by the BIP) in the Buildable Design Score (B-Score) computation form when they submit building plans to BCA. In addition, QPs also have to indicate the use of PBU in the Buildability Detailed Design and Implementation Plan (BDIP) to BCA together with the B-Score form. BCA will also carry out site checks to verify that the PBU system used has been granted the IPA by the BIP and the production facility has been accredited.

Under the Building Control (Buildability and Productivity) Regulations 2011, the penalty for non-compliance to the above shall be a fine not exceeding \$10,000. Under the Building Control Act, BCA may also issue stop work order for the contravention of the Regulations.