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To: All Professional Engineers (Civil & Structural) and Industry Stakeholders

For enquiry, please contact:  
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<https://www2.bca.gov.sg/feedback/>

## REMINDER ON PROPER CONDUCT OF PERIODIC STRUCTURAL INSPECTIONS (PSI) AND PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS EXPECTED OF STRUCTURAL ENGINEERS

### Objective

The Building and Construction Authority (“**BCA**”) issues this circular to remind all Structural Engineers (“**SEs**”) of the critical importance of SEs’ proper conduct of Periodic Structural Inspections (“**PSI**”) in safeguarding the continued structural safety and integrity of buildings and structures. This circular highlights shortcoming and reiterates the professional standards expected of SEs in the conduct of PSI.

### Background

2 PSI is a key component of Singapore’s building safety regime, ensuring that our built environment remains structurally sound through prompt identification and rectification of deterioration, defects, or structural vulnerabilities before they compromise safety. Given this objective, BCA requires the appointed SE to personally conduct the PSI and be physically present during inspection, as the SE’s professional judgment, expertise, and direct observation are fundamental to a meaningful and effective inspection. SEs may refer to BCA’s circular dated 02 December 2024 on “BCA’s Findings Following the Implementation of the Enhanced Periodic Structural Inspection (PSI) Guidelines and Introduction of the Standard PSI Report Template” for effective strategies for complying with PSI requirements.

### Shortcomings Observed

3 BCA has observed the following unacceptable practices by some SEs that undermine the intent, spirit, and requirements of the PSI framework:

- **Absence of Personal Involvement:** SEs have been found delegating inspections entirely to staff or third parties while not being present during inspection, demonstrating a lack of direct professional oversight during critical inspection activities.
- **Fraudulent Documentation:** Inspection photographs from previous PSI cycles were passed off as photographs purportedly taken in later PSI.
- **Inadequate Inspection Coverage:** Some SEs have failed to meet the minimum inspection coverage requirements stipulated in the PSI Guidelines. The PSI framework establishes these minimum requirements based on the building’s age, exposure class, and structural typology to ensure that inspections are sufficiently comprehensive to accurately assess the building’s structural condition.

- **Inadequate Assessment of Concealed/Cladded Structures:** Some PSI reports contain photographs of architectural finishes without adequate assessment of concealed structural elements. SEs must recognise that architectural finishes alone do not indicate structural condition and may mask underlying structural defects. Where necessary, appropriate inspection tools such as borescopes, scanners, and miniature robotic cameras must be used to examine concealed or hard-to-access structural components.
- **Failure to Report Unauthorised Structures:** Some SEs have failed to report on unauthorised structures i.e. building works that are not reflected in plans approved by the Commissioner of Building Control (“**CBC**”), which can adversely affect existing buildings. SEs must provide assessments on the structural condition of all unauthorised structures identified, including details such as structural framing, area, and effects on the main building.
- **Failure to Detect Change of Use and Verify Imposed Loading:** SEs are reminded to refer to plans approved by the CBC including approved structural plans to assess the imposed loading and report any deviation from design loading. This is particularly critical where buildings have undergone changes in use resulting in higher imposed loads, such as conversions from residential to commercial spaces in shophouses. SEs should ensure that in every storey of a non-residential building, owners exhibit a floor diagram with markings of the design load. The design loads should be verified against the plans approved by the CBC (which building owners can purchase from the CBC). If loading plans are not displayed, SEs should advise owners to display them and report accordingly in the PSI. The Annex A - checklist for PSI will be updated accordingly to capture these details.

## REMINDER TO UPHOLD PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

4 The proper conduct of PSI is essential to upholding public confidence in Singapore's building safety. SEs should allocate adequate time, personnel, and resources to conduct PSI thoroughly, and SEs should price inspection fees to reflect the professional expertise and rigour required. BCA seeks the full cooperation of all SEs to maintain the professionalism and standards expected. Enforcement action will be taken against errant SEs who fail to comply with PSI requirements in the Building Control Act and regulations.

## Clarification

5 Please bring the contents of this circular to the attention of your members. For further clarification, you may submit your enquiry through BCA's Online Feedback Form at <https://www2.bca.gov.sg/feedback/> or call us at 1800 342 5222.

Yours faithfully



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