

Buildings Department launches Stage 3 of Electronic Submission Hub

The Buildings Department (BD) today (June 30) launched the final stage, i.e. Stage 3 of the Electronic Submission Hub (ESH) (esh.bd.gov.hk) to accept all types of plan submissions and related applications, including general building plans and plans for alteration and addition works, under the Buildings Ordinance (Cap. 123) (BO). The 35 government departments and organisations responsible for processing such plans, building professionals and stakeholders could witness enhanced efficiency through ESH adoption.

While paper submission is allowed, building professionals are encouraged to opt for ESH to fully utilise its many features and enjoy its benefits, including:

(a) Enhanced efficiency of the Centralised Processing System (CPS) in full electronic form

Thirty-five government departments and organisations (CPS participants) including the BD may instantly and concurrently receive all types of building plans and documents via the electronic platform, obviating the need for transmission of paper documents between BD and CPS participants, thus enhancing efficiency. The ESH allows easy tracking of progress at different departments and more convenient and direct communication between the applicants, BD and CPS participants, thus enhancing transparency of plan processing.

(b) Promoting greater use of Building Information Modelling (BIM) technology

In March 2024, the BD officially launched the BIM Area Tool for design review and compliance checking of floor area calculations in general building plans using BIM. This BIM Area Tool saves time and manpower in verifying numerical accuracy of the calculations for compliance with the BO. The full implementation of ESH will further promote the use of BIM technology and pave the way towards the goal of full adoption of BIM for preparation of electronic submission of building plans.

(c) Environmental friendliness

Since the launch of the first and second stages of ESH in 2022 and 2023 respectively, the ESH has saved over 66,000 sheets of A1 sized paper drawings and over 4.8 million pages of paper documents. With the launch of Stage 3 of ESH covering general building plans, registered building professionals no longer have to print some 10 copies of the plans for BD and different CPS participants to process the submissions. Not only will paper be saved, the need for printing and transportation for deliveries will also be saved, further contributing to a more environmentally friendly and sustainable development.

The launch of Stage 3 of ESH marks a significant milestone in achieving the initiative under the Smart City Blueprint for Hong Kong. The BD will continue to enhance and improve the system's capacity in light of users' feedback to pave the way for mandating e-submissions of building plans in 2027.

Starting in 2024, the BD organised a series of briefing sessions and workshops for building professionals and stakeholders to introduce the features of ESH and highlight its benefits. Additionally, the BD arranged multiple visits to provide technical support and hands-on assistance at their offices as well as to gather feedback for further system improvement. Such promotional activities will continue after the launch of Stage 3 of ESH.

The BD strongly encourages registered building professionals to submit plans electronically via the ESH. Practice Note for Authorized Persons, Registered Structural Engineers and Registered Geotechnical Engineers ADM-17 and Practice Note for Registered Contractors 42 have been published on the BD website (www.bd.gov.hk). A dedicated hotline at 3580 1000 and an email address at esh-helpdesk@bd.gov.hk have also been set up to provide technical support to users.