

MEDIA RELEASE

New pro-enterprise measures to accelerate Built Environment Sector Transformation

- *Cease overseas testing for new Construction Work Permit holders progressively from January 2027.*
- *New Buildability Type Approval will streamline approval process for developers and project teams adopting a “Kit-of-Parts” (KoP) approach. Major public sector developers plan to adopt the KoP approach to reap productivity gains.*
- *Consultancy firms will be able to rate government agencies’ practices from May 2026.*

Singapore, 30 April 2026 – The Building and Construction Authority (BCA) is rolling out new pro-enterprise measures to accelerate the Built Environment sector’s transformation. At the BuildSG LEAD Summit today, Minister for National Development Mr Chee Hong Tat unveiled several measures, as part of the [Action Team to Improve Built Environment Productivity](#) (“Action Team”)’s efforts to create a more pro-enterprise ecosystem and to unlock further productivity gains for the sector.

Progressive Removal of Overseas Testing for New Construction Work Permit Holders (WPHs)

2. To expedite the process of bringing in new workers, the mandatory pre-entry Skills Evaluation Certificate (Knowledge) (SEC(K))¹ testing in source countries will cease for the People’s Republic of China (PRC) and Thailand in January 2027, before being extended to all source countries in January

¹ The SEC(K) trade test evaluates foreign workers' trade knowledge and craft-skills competencies. It ensures workers possess the foundational skills required for safe and effective construction work in Singapore's Built Environment sector. It is currently administered by the Building and Construction Authority (BCA) through appointed Overseas Testing Centres (OTCs).

2028. Under the new process, firms may bring in new Construction WPHs directly and obtain the SEC(K) locally.

3. From January 2028 onwards, to be eligible for Work Permit renewals, new Construction WPHs must pass the SEC(K) in Singapore within one year from Work Permit issuance. Firms are to reserve a test slot before the workers enter Singapore. Firms will pay the prevailing R2 (Basic-skilled) levy rate for new Construction WPHs brought in without SEC(K) for the first six months. The WPHs will need to pass the SEC(K) conducted in Singapore within six months to maintain the levy rate. Otherwise, the firms will be liable for a higher levy rate after the six-month grace period.

4. This enhancement will significantly reduce hiring timelines to bring in new Construction WPHs to Singapore, from the current four months to about one month, while maintaining the quality of new workers. It will also provide greater flexibility for firms to conduct on-the-job training that best meet their projects' needs. BCA will also adjust the testing capacity in Singapore to ensure new Construction WPHs can obtain SEC(K) locally and in a timely manner.

5. To recruit new Construction WPHs with skills on par with SEC(K) standards, firms can tap on Alternative Entry Pathways (AEP).²

- a. Firms can bring in new Construction WPHs who possess the vocational certification recognised by BCA. As their skills have been proven to be on par with existing standards, these workers will not be required to obtain SEC(K) overseas or locally.
 - b. For firms who want to source for new workers beyond the vocational certification recognised by BCA, they can also apply to BCA to pilot their own pathways under AEP by demonstrating how they intend to select and train better quality new Construction WPHs in specific trades.
6. More information on bringing in new Construction WPHs will be shared when ready.

² The Alternative Entry Pathway (AEP) programme allows Construction WPHs with relevant experience in specific trades, training and/or vocational certifications to work in Singapore in lieu of passing the SEC(K) test overseas.

Launch of New Buildability Type Approval to Incentivise Adoption of “Kit-of-Parts” Approach

7. The Buildability Type Approval is a new regulatory pathway that will benefit developers and project teams adopting the “Kit-of-Parts” (KoP) approach across their projects. The KoP approach involves the use of pre-designed and prefabricated standard building components across multiple projects to reap greater efficiencies in manufacturing and assembly. While the components may be standardised, consultants can vary their building layouts and façade designs to differentiate their projects and cater to users’ needs.

8. From 30 April 2026, developers will only need to submit a Design Standardisation Plan (DSP) outlining typical spatial grids and sizes, and a catalogue of standardised/modularised parts once for BCA’s acceptance, instead of making individual Buildability and Constructability submissions for multiple projects using the same KoP.

9. Consultants are expected to save around 320 man hours per project from the streamlined approval process. The KoP approach is expected to lower precast components’ manufacturing costs by at least 10%³ and reduce manpower needs by at least 20%⁴. It could also facilitate access to a greater variety of precast sources.

10. Major public sector developers are in the process of adopting the KoP approach. For example, the Housing & Development Board (HDB) is developing an Enhanced Precast Components Catalogue (EPCC) comprising building components with established specifications such as standard dimensions, material content and connection details. The Ministry of Education (MOE), Ministry of

³ Precasters can expect at least 10% lower manufacturing cost in precast components, attributed to reduced number of moulds (repeatedly using high quality moulds), reduced manpower and less material wastage.

⁴ Precasters can expect at least 20% manpower savings from potential reduction in workers with fewer design variations to manage and the use of automated processes in moulds.

Health Holdings (MOHH),⁵ the Land Transport Authority (LTA), and JTC⁶ are also embarking on similar efforts for schools, healthcare facilities, commuter facilities (e.g. bus shelters and covered walkways), industrial buildings, and workers' dormitories respectively.

Annual Rating Survey for Consultants to Provide Feedback to Public Agencies

11. In May 2026, BCA will launch a new annual rating survey for consultants working on public sector projects to provide feedback on public sector agencies' practices. Together with the prevailing Consultants Performance Appraisal System (CPAS) that allow public agencies to rate consultancy firms, the two-way feedback is expected to help both parties improve their respective practices and deliver better projects to benefit the public.

12. Quotes from industry partners regarding the announcements can be found in Annex A.

Action Team to Improve BE Productivity

13. Several of the above initiatives have been developed from industry feedback and suggestions. Going forward, the Action Team will continue to consult industry stakeholders and develop further measures to improve BE productivity.

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Factsheets

ANNEX A – QUOTES FROM INDUSTRY PARTNERS REGARDING ANNOUNCEMENTS MADE

⁵ MOHH has developed their Healthcare Facilities Design Standards (HFDS) for adoption in hospital projects which are expected to reduce delivery timelines.

⁶ JTC has included the development of KoP solutions as part of their consultancy tenders for industrial buildings, while both JTC and BCA, as land sales agents, have launched land sales tenders for workers' dormitories to be built with KoPs.



ANNEX B – PROGRESSIVE REMOVAL OF OVERSEAS TESTING FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION WORK PERMIT HOLDERS

ANNEX C – LAUNCH OF BUILDABILITY TYPE APPROVAL TO INCENTIVISE ADOPTION OF KIT-OF-PARTS APPROACH

ANNEX D – ANNUAL RATING SYSTEM ON PUBLIC SECTOR AGENCIES AND PROJECTS

About BCA

The Building and Construction Authority (BCA) champions a safe, sustainable, and liveable built environment for Singapore. As a leader in the sector, BCA is dedicated to driving industry transformation and setting rigorous standards in building safety, quality, and environmental sustainability. By advancing innovation, digitalisation, and the development of a skilled workforce, BCA fosters a dynamic industry that is ready to meet the evolving needs of the nation and build a resilient and progressive built environment for all. For more information, visit www.bca.gov.sg

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