SECURITIES AND FUTURES COMMISSION
證券及期貨事務監察委員會

Circular

Revised on 28 October 2026

Circular to applicants seeking SFC authorisation of unit trusts and mutual funds

Launch of a new Fund Authorisation Simple Track (FASTrack)

1. The Securities and Futures Commission (SFC) currently processes new fund applications under a two-stream approach where applications are classified as standard or non-standard.

2. The processing time for all new fund applications has consistently met our target in the past years. The average processing time for standard and non-standard applications in the past five years was less than 1.5 months and 2.5 months respectively. This falls within the SFC's targeted processing time which is on average one to two months for standard applications and within two to three months for non-standard applications.

3. The SFC has entered into mutual recognition of funds arrangements with jurisdictions outside Hong Kong (MRF Jurisdictions)[1]. As the regulatory regimes of these MRF Jurisdictions provide comparable investor protection for retail investment funds to that in Hong Kong and cooperation arrangements between the SFC and home regulators are in place including the exchange of information, the SFC sees room to further expedite the authorisation process for funds from MRF Jurisdictions.

4. The SFC now launches a new "Fund Authorisation Simple Track" ("FASTrack" in short) for simple funds domiciled and regulated in MRF Jurisdictions that seek authorisation for public offering in Hong Kong.

5. FASTrack aims to grant fund authorisations within 15 business days from applications if successful to promote overall fund authorisation efficiency and maintain the competitiveness of the asset management industry in Hong Kong.

Scope of funds and requirements on management company and investment delegates under FASTrack

6. A simple fund from an MRF Jurisdiction will be processed under FASTrack (FASTrack Fund) if the following criteria are met:

Type of funds

a) The fund is (i) an equity, bond or mixed fund; (ii) an exchange-traded fund or unlisted fund tracking an index adopted by other existing SFC-authorised fund(s) or a plain

[1] At present, the SFC has entered into mutual fund recognition arrangements with Australia, France, Ireland, Luxembourg, Mainland, Malaysia, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Taiwan China, Thailand, United Arab Emirates and the United Kingdom.

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vanilla index[2]; or (iii) a feeder fund (where the underlying master fund is eligible for FASTrack); and

b) the fund is not a complex product[3]; and

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Management company and (if any) investment delegate

c) the management company of the fund is located in an MRF Jurisdiction or a jurisdiction with an inspection regime acceptable to the SFC (AIR Jurisdiction)[4] with good regulatory records; and

d) if applicable, (i) the investment delegate is located in an MRF Jurisdiction or an AIR Jurisdiction; or (ii) the investment delegate is an affiliate of the management company or is currently managing other SFC-authorised funds.

7. FASTrack Funds are not expected to contain novel features, have material issues or bear wider policy implications.

Processing time and performance pledges

8. FASTrack Funds are intended to cover simple funds which are already subject to home regulators' supervision. As such, the SFC will adopt a more risk-based approach in vetting the applications and aim to grant authorisation within 15 business days upon receipt of complete and quality submissions from the applicants.

9. Under the expected timeframe for FASTrack, the SFC will:

- take up or refuse to take up an application within five business days upon receipt of the application; and
- grant authorisation within 10 business days from the take-up date, if the application is successful.

10. The SFC will conduct post-vetting to ensure applicable authorisation conditions are complied with.

Implementation

11. FASTrack will take effect on 4 November 2024 (Effective Date) with a six-month pilot period ending on 4 May 2025.

12. Applications meeting the above criteria received on or after the Effective Date will be processed under FASTrack. Otherwise, the fund will be processed under the existing processes for standard or non-standard applications.

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[2] A plain vanilla index will generally include free float market capitalisation weighted equities index and exclude strategy index, smart-beta/value-based index, equal weighted equities index, equities index with covered call and/or hedging elements, etc.

[3] Generally, it refers to a fund without terms, features and risks that are not reasonably likely for retail investors to understand.

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[4] Please refer to the list of AIR Jurisdictions on the SFC website.

13. To facilitate the smooth launch of FASTrack, the relevant Information Checklist and FAQs have been updated and published on the SFC website[5].

14. The SFC will monitor the operation of FASTrack during the pilot period and consider further enhancements prior to formal adoption.

Obligations of applicants

15. Applicants must discharge their responsibility and ensure that their SFC-authorised funds comply with the Code on Unit Trusts and Mutual Funds, the applicable principles and requirements under the SFC Handbook for Unit Trusts and Mutual Funds, Investment-Linked Assurance Schemes and Unlisted Structured Investment Products, as well as other applicable guidelines published by the SFC from time to time. The SFC will take appropriate regulatory actions in cases of non-compliance to ensure that investor protection is upheld.

16. Should you wish to clarify any aspects of this circular, please contact the relevant case officers in charge.

Investment Products Division
Securities and Futures Commission

End

[5] New fund applications can be submitted via e-IP for SFC's processing.