



Informal Interpretation Report Number 7388



Date September 02, 2014

Edition 2010

Section 403.1

Question:

Is it the intent of Table 403.1 to define a bar as serving alcoholic drinks only, without having a food menu?

Answer

The answer to the question is "maybe."

The intent of 403.1 is to provide a larger number of fixtures wherever a higher patron density is expected. One would expect bars, taverns and nightclubs to have higher densities than restaurants.

In the end, which category applies to a particular facility will be a judgment call on the part of the authority having jurisdiction and the responsible design professional. A restaurant with two bars could be classified as a restaurant. Conversely, a night club that sells food as an ancillary activity is still a night club.

Commentary:

An interesting question and interpretation for the designer and AHJ. There are a number of unknowns such as size and occupant load, if there is live entertainment, the ratio of seats at the bar to seats in the restaurant, etc. making a definitive answer harder. A restaurant with two bars may be very rather large in area. Webster's Third International dictionary defines bar as: "a counter at which food or especially alcoholic beverages are served." It defines bar room as: "a place where alcoholic drinks are served." A full definition of barroom appears as: "a room or establishment whose main feature is a bar for the sale of liquor."

In summary, this would be up to the local jurisdiction and design professional. Since there are no rated separations to divide the uses, the entire occupancy could be classified a bar just as easily as a restaurant depending on the items mentioned earlier.

Notice:

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