



FIRE SAFETY MANAGEMENT GUIDE

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Introduction

On 1 October 2006 all existing fire related legislation was repealed and replaced by the "Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005", (FSO).

The change replaced over a hundred separate pieces of fire legislation with a single set of requirements to be observed in the vast majority of workplaces, including all County Council workplaces.

Whilst the change has been driven by the government's deregulation initiative, it presented an opportunity to rationalise requirements, ensure a consistent application and address issues not previously included.

The most notable changes being:

- The cessation of Fire Certificates administered since 1971 under the now repealed Fire Precaution Act. This had been the primary means of fire safety enforcement for over a hundred years.
- The repeal of the Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations, which required employer's fire risk assessments to be in place since 1997 (1999 in premises having a fire certificate).

Practically, FSO requirements are similar to the previous regulations in operation, being self-compliant, risk assessed legislation imposing "Fire Safety Duties"¹ on a "Responsible Person" (re-defined) but with the "Duty of Care" now extended from employees to include others who may be in or near the building - relevant persons.

In support of physical fire precautions there is a continuing requirement for an effective Fire Safety Management System able to demonstrate management intentions and actions.

Such a system should include the provision of the following documents for inspection & audit by the Fire & Rescue Service during their enforcement activities under the FSO.

RISK ASSESSMENT



Revenues from ongoing businesses⁽¹⁾



by Geographic Area





Fire Safety Management Plan

This is essentially site policy in respect of fire related issues and will take the form of a document indicating management intentions and indicating who's responsible for carrying out and monitoring the various tasks.

Such a plan should include:

Premises fire safety overview - A brief description of the buildings on the site including number of floors, number of staircases, type of fire alarm and amount of fire fighting equipment provided.

Management structure - A statement indicating who is the "responsible person", who has day to day responsibilities for bringing the management plan into effect and others who have managerial responsibilities i.e. fire safety coordinator, etc.

Risk assessment - A statement indicating who will do this, who monitors this is done and the period of review.

An evacuation plan - A statement indicating who will produce this, who monitors this is done and the period of review.

Fire drills - A statement indicating the frequency of drills, the drill monitoring activities, subsequent actions and recording arrangements. Plus, who monitors the process happens and what is done with the findings (i.e. become part of training programme).

Housekeeping and Fire Prevention - Local arrangements regarding such things as storage in vulnerable areas, how flammable materials are to be stored/used, the procedure for collecting refuse and safe storage until disposal plus arrangements for ensuring fire precautions are not compromised i.e. as fire doors being maintained closed, exit route kept unobstructed etc.

Maintenance arrangements - As a minimum who carries out the various tests/checks, who deals with regular maintenance and monitoring arrangements.

Staff training programme - Indication of training frequency, areas of input, who will deliver, who will monitor this, the period of review and recording process.



A Fire Risk Assessment

To demonstrate satisfactory management of this process the assessment must have been carried out by a competent person.

The risk assessment must be:

Current - Within twelve months of the last regular or intermediate assessment/review.

Comprehensive - Risks and controlling measures must be indicated together with dates for controls measures to be established plus identification of who is responsible for bringing these into effect.

Demonstrate Regular Review - Records appertaining to three consecutive years will tend to demonstrate regular review.

FIRE RISK ASSESSMENTS ARE A LEGAL REQUIREMENT IN ALL WORKPLACES AND COMMON AREAS OF RESIDENTIAL AREAS.

THEY MUST BE RECORDED IF YOU HAVE 5 OR MORE EMPLOYEES.

An Evacuation Plan

This should catalogue everything planned to happen during the evacuation plus pre-planned control measures/actions.

Document should indicate:

The evacuation strategy being used, what to do on finding a fire or hearing the alarm, who calls the Brigade, meets them and the information that should be presented to them on arrival.

Who is in overall charge of the evacuation, who coordinated various aspects as well as indicating the fire marshals/wardens and their respective duties.

Local arrangements for securing the safe evacuation of those having special needs, and how visitors and contractors are advised of procedures and safely evacuated.

Details regarding fire fighting and first aid arrangements.

Variations to the plan necessitated by breaks, out of hours use of the building or building use by others should be included.



A Fire Safety Training Programme

A staff fire safety training programme and record system should be produced in accordance with directions contained in the fire safety management plan but the curriculum should contain as a minimum.

General Fire Safety Issues - Extinguisher use, Local Fire prevention / Housekeeping and Arson Prevention measures.

The evacuation plan - General roles and responsibilities with specific attention to those personnel having identified tasks.

Significant issues from the fire risk assessment - To advise should it be necessary of control measures etc.

Issues relating to evacuation drills - To confirm, update and advise as appropriate.
Records of training to be kept in the Fire Safety Manual, they should indicate who attended the training, who gave the training, what it related to and its duration.

Fire Evacuation Drills

To demonstrate compliance records of regular fire drills should be kept within the relevant section of the Fire Safety Manual.

Such records should demonstrate:

Correct frequency of drills -generally six monthly.

Monitored drills - These are pre-planned drills having particular aspects to check. Record sheets should be completed on each occasion by those tasked with monitoring the drill, they should include the narrative, problems noted, remedial actions undertaken together with completion dates and who has been tasked with the actions.

These records should be kept within the relevant section in the Fire Safety Manual.



Effective Records

Testing and maintenance records form an important part of a fire management system, they should be kept in the Fire Safety Manual and demonstrate the following:

Fire alarm checks, tests and maintenance - Weekly tests by site personnel, six monthly maintenance by approved contractors monitored by site staff.

Equipment connected to the fire alarm - Checks, tests and maintenance; weekly tests by site personnel, six monthly maintenance by approved contractors monitored by site staff.

Emergency lighting checks, tests and maintenance - Monthly tests by site personnel, six monthly maintenance by approved contractors monitored by site staff.

Fire fighting equipment - Monthly checks by site personnel, annual maintenance by approved contractors monitored by site staff.

Fire doors - Quarterly / Six Monthly condition checks by site staff of fire resisting doors and final exits to ensure effective operation and maintenance as necessary.

Monitoring and Review system

A system of monitoring fire safety management in premises should be established which includes periodic progress reports to regular management meetings with reports recorded in the minutes of such meetings.

There should also be means for passing issues up the management chain if they are not within the capability/authority of the premises management to deal with.

In such cases, issues should be reported to authoritative individuals or groups via recognised two way communication arrangements capable of conveying (and recording) information from grass routes to the most senior 'responsible person'.