

ASFP Advisory Notice

Awareness Guidance For The Responsible Person Under The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

In the event of fire, the Passive Fire Protection i.e. the fire resisting walls, floors, doors and other 'Built-in' elements of construction are vital to the stability and integrity of a building by dividing it into areas of manageable risk using compartmentation.



BUILT-IN PASSIVE FIRE PROTECTION

Compartmentation is designed to restrict the growth and spread of smoke and fire giving the occupants time to escape, allowing the fire fighters to do their job and limiting the extent of damage. Protection measures are either provided by the materials from which the building is constructed, or are added to the construction to enhance its fire resistance.

It is vital that these protection measures are correctly designed, specified, installed and maintained if the building is to behave as expected should fire break out. By their nature they are 'passive' until there is a fire and only then will their fire performance in-situ be demonstrated.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (RR(FS)O) provides for a 'Responsible Person' who is the employer and any other person who may have control of any part of the premises (occupier or owner), or the person in control of the premises

WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW?

To ensure that you fully comply with the RR(FS)O it is essential that you ensure that an appropriate Risk Assessment is carried out and maintained on all premises for which you are legally responsible.

As part of this process you should ensure that you hold a fire safety manual that addresses the following:

- ▶ Fire safety policy statement or fire strategy (as appropriate)
- ▶ Fire safety specification for the building, including passive fire safety measures
Note: This should include as-built drawings, specifications and records from contractors and manufacturers (including any instructions, guarantees, certificates of conformity and test reports)
- ▶ Information relating to regulatory requirements (e.g. Building Regulations approvals, certificates of conformity, Construction (Design and Management) Regulations information, licences)
- ▶ Planned inspection, maintenance and testing schedules and records including a log of attendance by contractors and/or workmen

HOW DO I ENSURE THAT PASSIVE FIRE PROTECTION IS INSTALLED CORRECTLY?

Where work is to be undertaken on your premises that may involve the alteration of, or additions to the structure of the fabric of the building, it is vital that the passive fire protection measures are not compromised in any way.

Where such action involves the addition or reinstatement of appropriate passive fire protection measures it is essential that you ensure such work is undertaken by experienced and qualified installers utilising appropriate materials and practices.

To ensure passive fire protection is installed correctly, all ASFP contractors are 3rd party certificated which means that they are audited under a 3rd Party Certification scheme accredited by the United Kingdom Accreditation Services (UKAS).

Such certification ensures:

- ☐ Verification of the skills and training of management (designers and estimators) and installers
- ☐ The use of materials and products which have been shown by certification, testing or assessment to have the appropriate fire performance
- ☐ Operatives and supervisors to be assessed for competence
- ☐ Random inspection of sites to monitor the quality of work
- ☐ Provision of a 'Certificate of Conformity' for completed work
- ☐ Provision of an audit trail

WHO SHOULD CARRY OUT A FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT ON MY BEHALF?

Under the RR(FS)O the 'Responsible Person' may seek to appoint a 'Competent Person' to undertake a suitable fire risk assessment of premises.

Where it is considered that such expertise is not available in-house then the 'Responsible Person' may seek to employ a 'Competent Person' in the form of a consultant or company to undertake the assessment.

It is essential to realise that at present there is no formal qualification required to act as a Risk Assessor so it therefore falls to the 'Responsible Person' to ensure that the appointee is competent to address the specific needs of his premises in relation to all passive fire protection measures installed.

Understanding the design concept of fire-resisting compartmentation as well as the contradictory nature of the need for more open and highly serviced buildings is essential to any risk assessment process. It is therefore imperative that the risk assessor is able to demonstrate that they have the appropriate expertise to undertake the work in question.

Risk Assessors should either be a member of a competent person certification scheme accredited by UKAS to BS EN ISO 17024:2003 (Personnel Certification) or work for a company that has certification to EN 45011 for fire risk assessment.

WHERE CAN I FIND A SUITABLE FIRE RISK ASSESSOR?

Currently, there is no central register of Fire Risk Assessors. However, discussions are ongoing under the auspices of the Department for Communities and Local Government with a view to a register being set up in 2011. In the meantime, 'Responsible Persons' should use the guidance above when choosing an assessor.

For more details on the measures required to ensure that your premises complies with the RR(FS)O please refer to the ASFP website at www.asfp.org.uk and in particular download the document 'Ensuring Best Practice for Passive Fire Protection in Buildings'.



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