

ADVISORY NOTE 42

ASFP commentary on the republication of BS 8524 series of standards in November 2025

The publication of the revised suite of British Standards BS 8524 was completed by the British Standards Institution (BSI) on 21st November 2025. This long-awaited update to the UK's definitive series of standards for active fire curtain barriers follows an extended delay caused by concerns over scope overlaps with a relating BS EN designated product standard — concerns that have now been fully resolved.

BS 8524 remains the leading reference point for the design, specification, testing, application, installation, and maintenance of active fire curtain assemblies in the UK. The series comprises two parts:

- Part 1 – Product specifications and performance requirements
- Part 2 – Code of practice for application, installation, commissioning, and maintenance

Both parts have been republished to the 2025 iteration. A major challenge for industry compliance has been the lack of UKAS-accredited third-party certification schemes, following the withdrawal of previous bodies in 2023. The ASFP is pleased to note that UL has now achieved UKAS accreditation to certify products to BS 8524-2013 and is accepting new applications—an important step in supporting consistent, independent verification of product performance.

Debate has continued regarding the interaction between BS 8524 -1 and the harmonised European Standard EN 16034, which is also designated in the UK as BS EN 16034.

The work done in redrafting the BS 8524 series of standards addressed the scope clash and sought to differentiate applications where the different standards are appropriate.

BS 8524 includes unique and more stringent testing requirements — notably cycle and independent 'hot' motor testing — that are not covered within EN 16034, except in specific cases such as pedestrian door set applications as installed in shopping malls, where the EN standard is a legal requirement.

The revised BS 8524 standard also references ISO 21524, the new international standard for fire curtains. This includes updated test methods addressing features such vision panels, ensuring stronger alignment between UK practice and global standards.

Scope and Application of BS 8524-1:2025

BS 8524-1:2025 sets out the requirements for the design, testing, and classification of active fire curtain barrier assemblies. It addresses performance criteria including:

- Reliability and durability
- Fire resistance
- Smoke containment
- Force-gauge resistance
- Performance of control devices and ancillary equipment

The standard applies to active fire curtain barrier assemblies made of any material and intended to provide fire resistance in most end-use applications.

It does not apply to:

- Barriers forming part of a building's structure
- Theatre/proscenium textile curtains (see BS 5867-1)
- Fabrics for curtains, drapes, and blinds (see BS 5867-1 and BS 5867-2)
- Smoke barriers (see BS EN 12101-1)
- Operable fabric curtains used in retail settings for pedestrian access (see BS EN 16034)

The republication of the BS 8524 series is expected to resolve long-standing regulatory uncertainty, support consistent compliance pathways, and raise standards for the design, testing, installation, and ongoing maintenance of active fire curtain systems across the UK.

Disclaimer

©2026 Association for Specialist Fire Protection – All Rights Reserved.

This publication and its content are the copyright of the Association for Specialist Fire Protection © (Company number 01292282) ("ASFP") 2026. ASFP is the owner or the licensee of all intellectual property rights in this publication, and in the material published in it. These works are protected by copyright laws and treaties around the world.

Without in any way limiting the ASFP's exclusive rights under Copyright, any use of this publication to "train" generative artificial intelligence (AI) technologies (whether 'open' or 'closed' state systems) is expressly prohibited. The ASFP reserves all rights to license uses of this work for generative AI training and development of machine learning language models

To view the full ASFP Copyright and Disclaimer statement(s), please view via the link:

<https://asfp.org.uk/page/disclaimer-and-copyright-statement>