

RC66: Recommendations for sourcing fire safety products and services

CERTIFICATE of COMPETENCE

THIS CERTIFICATE IS PROUDLY PRESENTED TO

ATTITUDE

KNOWLEDGE

SKILLS

COMPETENCE

DATE

VALUES

BEHAVIOUR

IMPORTANT NOTICE

This document has been developed through RISCAuthority and published by the Fire Protection Association (FPA). RISCAuthority membership comprises a group of UK insurers that actively support a number of expert working groups developing and promulgating best practice for the protection of people, property, business and the environment from loss due to fire and other risks. The technical expertise for this document has been provided by the Technical Directorate of the FPA, external consultants, and experts from the insurance industry who together form the various RISCAuthority Working Groups. Although produced with insurer input it does not (and is not intended to) represent a pan-insurer perspective. Individual insurance companies will have their own requirements which may be different from or not reflected in the content of this document.

FPA has made extensive efforts to check the accuracy of the information and advice contained in this document and it is believed to be accurate at the time of printing. However, FPA makes no guarantee, representation or warranty (express or implied) as to the accuracy or completeness of any information or advice contained in this document. All advice and recommendations are presented in good faith on the basis of information, knowledge and technology as at the date of publication of this document.

Without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, FPA makes no guarantee, representation or warranty (express or implied) that this document considers all systems, equipment and procedures or state-of-the-art technologies current at the date of this document.

Use of, or reliance upon, this document, or any part of its content, is voluntary and is

at the user's own risk. Anyone considering using or implementing any recommendation or advice within this document should rely on his or her own personal judgement or, as appropriate, seek the advice of a competent professional and rely on that professional's advice. Nothing in this document replaces or excludes (nor is intended to replace or exclude), entirely or in part, mandatory and/or legal requirements howsoever arising (including without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing any such requirements for maintaining health and safety in the workplace).

Except to the extent that it is unlawful to exclude any liability, FPA accepts no liability whatsoever for any direct, indirect or consequential loss or damage arising in any way from the publication of this document or any part of it, or any use of, or reliance placed on, the content of this document or any part of it.

Contents

| | | |
|----------|---|----|
| 1 | Introduction | 3 |
| 2 | Scope | 3 |
| 3 | Synopsis | 3 |
| 4 | Definitions | 3 |
| 5 | Recommendations | 5 |
| 5.1 | Compliance with fire safety legislation | 5 |
| 5.2 | Business continuity | 6 |
| 5.3 | Fire risk assessments | 6 |
| 5.4 | Content and format of a fire risk assessment. | 8 |
| 5.5 | DSEAR assessments. | 9 |
| 5.6 | Significant findings. | 10 |
| 5.7 | Approved fire products and services. | 10 |
| 5.8 | Third party certification and accreditation | 11 |
| 5.9 | Insurers' requirements. | 12 |
| 5.10 | Standards | 12 |
| 5.11 | Markings | 13 |
| 6 | References | 14 |

Summary of Key Points

The table below summarises the key points of the document.

| | |
|---|--|
| Engage a competent person | <ul style="list-style-type: none">A competent person is someone with: 'sufficient training and experience or knowledge and other qualities to enable him properly to implement the measures...' (4.0) |
| Maintain business continuity | <ul style="list-style-type: none">One effective way of minimising threats to business continuity is to engage competent specialists and installers who utilise products of proven quality (5.2) |
| Select a competent fire risk assessor | <ul style="list-style-type: none">There is no official registration scheme for fire risk assessors but there is a Guide for Choosing a Competent Fire Risk Assessor. A number of professional bodies have introduced their own recognition schemes and publish a list of registrants which is available on their web site (5.3.2 and 5.3.3) |
| Ensure that the fire risk assessment addresses the appropriate issues | <ul style="list-style-type: none">A fire risk assessment should contain 'prescribed information' including the general fire precautions that have been or will be taken and any group of persons especially at risk (5.4.3) |
| Source reliable products | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Fire protection products should be carefully selected, manufactured to appropriate British or other recognised standards and installed by competent engineers (5.7.1) |
| Use approved products | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Products with a form of approval provide a higher degree of confidence in their performance than those passing a test (5.7.4) |
| Seek products and services that have independent third party certification | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Third party certification is an independent confirmation that a product, service or installer meets an appropriate standard. This helps ensure through regular audits that the product or service continues to comply with appropriate standards throughout the life of the product or installation (5.8.1). |
| Observe your insurers' requirements | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Wherever possible, installers should be certificated to the appropriate standard by a UKAS accredited third party certification body (5.9.2) |
| Observe recognised standards | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Where no relevant national or other internationally recognised standard exists for the intended purpose, alternative forms of standards may be available (5.10.4) |

Symbols used in this guide



Good practice



Bad practice



Discussion topic



Frequently asked question

1 Introduction

These recommendations concern two subjects that differ in that one involves the acquisition and installation of physical products, and the other the sourcing of services to safeguard the lives of the workforce. Properly sourced and applied, both products and services can also serve to minimise the risk to the company's property and continuity of the business. The aim in all cases should be to make appropriate purchases that provide quality, reliability and longevity.

During the past few years an enormous volume of information has become available on the internet. While much of this is reliable, in some instances it can be confusing or unhelpful. This document aims to provide independent explanatory guidance to insurers and their clients to assist them to obtain reliable, high quality products and services.

Where fire risk assessments or other forms of expert fire safety advice or guidance are sought, a competent, experienced person with a form of professional recognition should be engaged to carry out the task. This person may be from within the company or be sourced externally. In the case of fire risk assessors, additional confidence is provided by assessors being able to provide certification of their work from a third party certification body.

With regard to products, wherever possible, items purchased should be manufactured to an appropriate standard and carry relevant markings. Systems (such as automatic fire detection and alarm systems) should be installed to recognised standards by installers approved by an accredited third party certification or approvals body.

This document aims to explain the terms and procedures to assist in the acquisition of reliable fire related products and services.

2 Scope

These recommendations are directed not only towards managers of large commercial and industrial organisations that are seeking to acquire products and services, but equally to those responsible for small and medium sized enterprises which include healthcare, education and providers of housing, sheltered accommodation and care homes.

3 Synopsis

These recommendations differ in content and style from many in this series in that they do not consider mitigating measures for a specific form of loss or risk. Rather, the document is designed to provide background information to assist a fire safety manager or responsible person who has to facilitate the installation of new products or the acquisition of fire related services, such as fire risk assessments.

The objective is not only to comply with relevant legislation and satisfy the requirements of insurers, but to purchase a quality product, service or installation such that the working environment is resilient and safe for both employees and other relevant persons.

4 Definitions

Accreditation

A form of recognition given to an organisation by an independent body. In the field of fire safety accreditation is provided by the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS) to bodies that aim to provide certification of specific products or services (see Figure 1).

Approval

In the field of fire safety approval is the confirmation by an expert third party that products, systems or companies meet, and continue to meet appropriate standards. Approval provides a higher degree of confidence in the performance than a one off test or inspection as it involves regular auditing to ensure compliance with the prevailing standard.

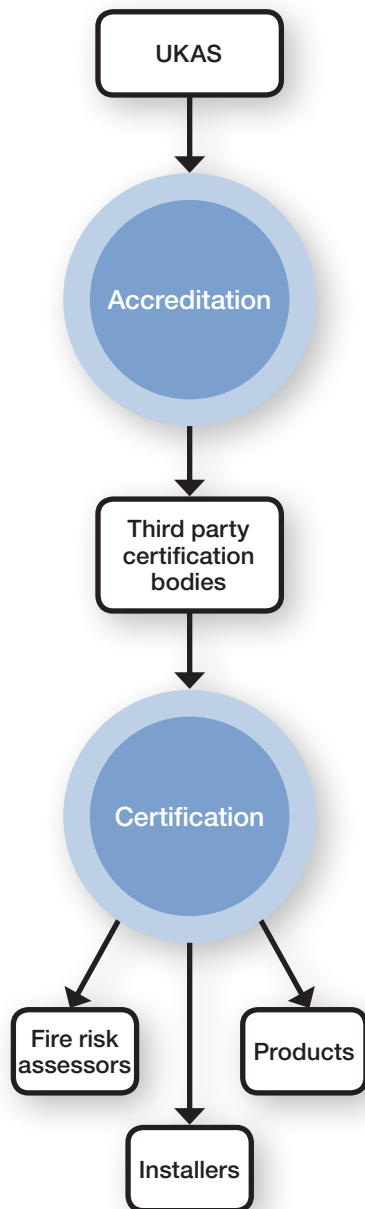


Figure 1: The relationship between accreditation and certification

Certification

A written testament which vouches for the quality or truth of a product or service. In the field of fire safety certification is provided by UKAS accredited independent third party certification bodies to give trust and confidence in a product or provider of a service (see Figure 1).

Quality management system

The management of processes and their interactions with the aim of achieving the intended results in accordance with the quality policy and strategic direction of the organisation.

Third party certification body

An organisation that provides independent auditing and inspection functions with the aim of certifying the quality of a specific product or service.

Several terms used in this document cannot be adequately defined in a short sentence as they have specific interpretations due to the legal framework in which they are introduced. The definitions of these terms therefore require a degree of discussion and explanation. The following terms are relevant in this context:

- Competent
- Proportionate
- Responsible person
- Suitable and sufficient

Competent

The concept of competence is inherent in all safety legislation and regulations but few specifically refer to the need for 'competent persons'. There is no clear definition of competence in most regulations.

When applied to employees, competent persons are specialists who are appointed to specific areas of responsibility. The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (ref. 2) provides a definition of a competent person as someone with: sufficient training and experience or knowledge and other qualities to enable them properly to implement the measures...

The HSE defines competence as the ability to undertake responsibilities and perform activities to a recognised standard on a regular basis. It is a combination of skills, experience and knowledge (ref. 1).

A competent person should know and only work within the limits of their knowledge and experience. But this works both ways, as those making appointments have to take reasonable steps to make sure people who are appointed are competent for what they are being asked to do. At the time of this appointment a reasoned judgement should be made of the competence of the candidate based on evidence.

The evidence will usually be supplied by the person or organisation quoting or bidding for the work, but wherever possible this should be supported by third party evidence, such as a form of recognition by a third party certification/registration scheme (see section 5.8).

Proportionate

The term proportionate is used to relate the level of protection to be applied to compensate for an identified risk. There is no legal guidance on this but the level of protection selected should offer a degree of mitigation which reduces the risk to an acceptable level without over compensating or under compensating with regard to the potential hazard, or being too onerous or costly to apply.

The term recognises that risks cannot always be entirely eliminated but should be reduced to a level that is as low as 'reasonably practicable'.

Proportionate provisions may need to be considered and provided not only in terms of life safety to comply with fire safety legislation, but also in terms of property protection and business continuity.

Responsible Person

In the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (ref. 2) applicable in England and Wales reference is made to a 'responsible person', In the equivalent Scottish and Northern Ireland legislation (refs. 3-6) reference is made to the 'person with duties' and the 'appropriate person' respectively. (Hereafter in this publication the term 'responsible person' is used throughout in relation to all areas of the UK.)

The Responsible Person is defined in Section 3 of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005) as follows:

- (a) in relation to a workplace, the employer, if the workplace is to any extent under his control;
- (b) in relation to any premises not falling within paragraph (a)—
 - (i) the person who has control of the premises (as occupier or otherwise) in connection with the carrying on by them of a trade, business or other undertaking (for profit or not); or
 - (ii) the owner, where the person in control of the premises does not have control in connection with the carrying on by that person of a trade, business or other undertaking.

Where there are people with specific responsibilities for aspects of safety such as the maintenance of fire protection systems, they may also be deemed to be Responsible Persons as defined by the legislation. There may thus be more than one 'Responsible Person' for a building.

Suitable and sufficient

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992 (ref. 6) introduced the term 'suitable and sufficient' when referring to risk assessments but no definition of the term was included in the original or subsequent 1999 Regulations (as amended in 2003).

The term also appears in the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005) (ref. 2), with again no definition. Interestingly, neither the equivalent legislation in Scotland (refs. 3 and 4) nor that in Northern Ireland (refs. 5 and 6) uses this phrase.

In the absence of a legal definition the term tends to be interpreted somewhat differently by different groups and organisations

5 Recommendations



- Ensure that your fire risk assessment is 'suitable and sufficient' and subject to periodic review (5.1 and 5.2)



- Where hazardous materials are present an assessment should also be undertaken in accordance with the Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations 2002 (DSEAR) (as amended in 2015) (5.1.3)

5.1 Compliance with fire safety legislation

- 5.1.1 A suitable and sufficient fire risk assessment should be undertaken for all premises to which the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (or equivalent legislation in Scotland and Northern Ireland) applies (refs. 2-6).
- 5.1.2 The assessment should be subject to periodic review, including at the time when there are changes in the number, alertness or mobility of the persons in the workplace or when plans are being made to make changes to the contents or processes carried out. Information regarding fire risk assessments and engaging fire risk assessors is set out in sections 5.3 and 5.4 of this document.
- 5.1.3 Where hazardous materials are present in the workplace an assessment should be undertaken in accordance with the Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations 2002 (DSEAR) (as amended in 2015) (ref. 6). A key feature of this assessment is that it should identify hazard zones in the workplace which in turn will impact on the equipment installed in those locations. In common with the fire risk assessment, this should be undertaken by a competent person. Further information regarding engaging specialist DSEAR assessors is set out in section 5.5 of this document.



- All businesses should take steps to maintain the continuity of their operations by making a suitable emergency plan (5.2.3)



- Responsible persons do not have to do the fire risk assessment themselves, they should engage a competent person to undertake the task (5.3.1)



- Engage a fire risk assessor that has professional recognition (5.3.3)



- How do we identify a competent fire risk assessor? (5.3.3)

5.2 Business continuity

- 5.2.1 Even a small fire can have a disproportionate effect on a business if it occurs in a critical area and thus every avenue should be explored to reduce the risk of a fire occurring, and the extent of the damage in the event of such an incident.
- 5.2.2 Business continuity may be effected by three elements: property loss prevention, property loss reduction and business recovery. One effective way of minimising threats to business continuity is to engage competent specialists and installers who utilise products of proven quality.
- 5.2.3 All businesses should take steps to maintain the continuity of their operations by making a suitable emergency plan. Guidance for this is set out in Business resilience: A guide to protecting your business and its people (ref. 8). The emergency plan should be compiled by a competent person and address the implications of a fire, flood or other perceived disaster on all facets of the business model. It should indicate the lines of communication that should be followed and the contact details for competent fire safety specialists and approved installers of replacement fire protection equipment.
- 5.2.4 Consideration may be given to applying commercially available computer programs, such as ROBUST (Resilient Business Software Toolkit), or similar product, by a business or a competent person to develop and check the adequacy of the plan. The ROBUST software is available free of charge (ref. 10),

5.3 Fire risk assessments

- 5.3.1 As indicated in paragraph 5.1.1 a fire risk assessment should be carried out for virtually every workplace in compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire safety) Order 2005 (ref. 2) or the equivalent legislation in Scotland and Northern Ireland (refs. 3-6).

Responsible persons do not have to do the fire risk assessment themselves, but the assessments do have to be 'suitable and sufficient' and thus by implication should be undertaken by a competent person. This person may be an employee or a specialist sourced externally.

- 5.3.2 Despite pressure from a number of sources, the Government decided not to require any specified form of certification and thus there is no official registration scheme for fire risk assessors.

The industry subsequently held a series of meetings, with representatives from a large number of fire related organisations in a forum that became known as the 'Fire Risk Assessment Competency Council'. The outcome was a document setting out Competency Criteria for Fire Risk Assessors (ref. 11).

Sitting alongside this is A Guide for Choosing a Competent Fire Risk Assessor (ref. 12) designed to assist Responsible Persons in commerce and industry in selecting a suitable fire risk assessor.

- 5.3.3 A number of professional bodies have introduced their own recognition schemes. Although each of these schemes has a different approach, each publishes a list of registrants which is available on their website.
- 5.3.4 Each of these lists has been prepared by professional bodies following a form of peer review of the assessors' work.

Lists are currently available from the following organisations:

Institution of Fire Engineers (IFE) maintains a register for both fire risk assessors and auditors. (Auditors in this context are officers of enforcing authorities, who enforce legislation, but do not carry out fire risk assessments.)

Applicants are required to provide evidence in the form of sample assessments that they have undertaken to demonstrate their competence in the stream(s) on which they wish to be recognised. They also have to provide evidence to include relevant fire safety education, training and experience, plus details of any specific fire risk assessment training, and experience in carrying out fire risk assessments.

A Peer Review Panel assesses the submissions from the applicants and may also call the applicant in for interview.



- How do we know that the products and services we have selected will be acceptable to our insurers?

Every two years registrants are required to re-register and supply a record of relevant continuing professional development (CPD) undertaken during the previous period of registration.

Warrington Certification operates two schemes, a scheme for individual assessors and one for companies.

The Fire Risk Assessors Certification Scheme (FRACS) aims to provide a standardised and nationally recognised certificate of competence for fire risk assessors who have completed their comprehensive technical evaluation successfully and achieved certification.

For companies, the assessment procedure for certification not only examines the competence of the employees but also assesses the quality management systems and procedures operated by the company, thus assuring that high standards of service and competence can be delivered by the company to their clients on a reliable basis.

Institute of Fire Safety Managers (IFSM) provides a fire risk assessors' register listing those who have been through a process which is accredited by a UKAS accredited, third party certification body.

IFSM have not been accepting applicants to their original register since December 2011 and have encouraged those listed to migrate onto a new register developed in conjunction with the Warrington Certification FRACS scheme which is known as the 'Nationally Accredited Fire Risk Assessors Register of The Institute of Fire Safety Managers' (NAFRAR). The current register will continue to run concurrently with the NAFRAR.

The Institution of Fire Prevention Officers (IFPO) operates a register of fire risk assessors based on candidates having demonstrated their competence to an adjudication panel in line with the requirements of the Competency Council. Registered assessors may be asked to provide details of their continuing professional development (CPD) at any time during their period of registration.

Fire Industry Association (FIA) Fire Risk Assessors Register is working towards basing recognition on third party certification to a UKAS accredited fire risk assessment company scheme.



- 5.3.5 A relatively recent development has been the introduction of BAFE SP205, a Fire Protection Industry Scheme standard for Life Safety Fire Risk Assessment (ref. 13). A number of UKAS accredited third party certification bodies provide certification to organisations undertaking fire risk assessments in compliance with BAFE 205. The organisations providing assessment under this scheme are required to have a regularly audited quality management system in place and are subject to a rigorous series of head office audits and witnessed assessments.



- Where there are less than five employees it is good practice to record the fire risk assessment even though there is no legal requirements to do so (5.4.2)

FAQ

- What is meant by 'suitable and sufficient'? (Section 4.0 and 5.4.5)

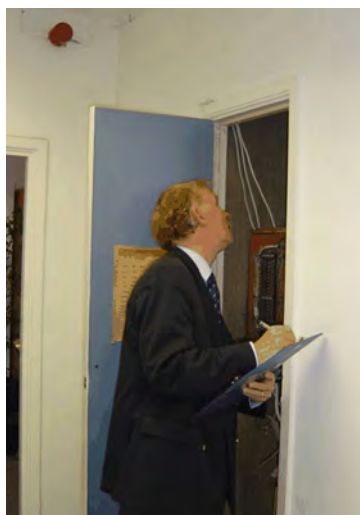


Figure 2: Inspecting service cupboards for integrity of fire stopping is important for property protection as well as for life safety

5.4 Content and format of a fire risk assessment

- 5.4.1 Fire safety legislation such as the Fire Safety Order is only concerned with life safety and thus the primary focus of any fire risk assessment undertaken to comply with this legislation is life safety. Many businesses, however, benefit from assessments undertaken with a wider remit to include findings with regard to property protection and business continuity.
- 5.4.2 The Responsible Person must record the fire risk assessment where there are five or more employees. An assessment must nevertheless be undertaken where there are less than five employees and the best way of proving to the enforcing authority (normally the local fire authority) that an assessment has been carried out is to record it. Where there are less than five employees it is therefore strongly recommended that a record is made of the assessment, even if it is a short narrative supplemented by a tick boxes-style questionnaire. Simple fire risk assessment templates suitable for use by small enterprises are available on the internet.
- 5.4.3 Although the Regulatory Reform (Fire safety) Order 2005 is not prescriptive as to the content or format of the fire risk assessment, section 9(7) introduces 'prescribed information' to be included, which is:
- the significant findings of the assessment including general fire precautions that have been or will be taken
 - any group of persons especially at risk.

In addition the assessment must address:

- various matters in relation to dangerous substances
 - various matters in relation to young persons.
- 5.4.4 It is good practice for each assessment to include an overall fire risk rating with regard to life safety for the premises. This is often a 'low', 'medium' or 'high' indication supported by a simple form of matrix. Property protection can be considered and rated in a similar manner.
- 5.4.5 While there is a legal requirement for a fire risk assessment to be carried out, there is no guidance on the precise information that has to be recorded or the manner in which it has to be set out. Despite this, competent assessors would be expected to record details of:
- means of escape, with particular attention to the sleeping risk
 - floor, wall and ceiling surfaces and coverings
 - fire compartmentation
 - fire detection and alarm systems
 - firefighting equipment
 - emergency escape lighting
 - fire safety signs and notices
 - evacuation procedures
 - record keeping
 - staff training
 - housekeeping, including hot work and the management of waste
 - electrical equipment and gas installations
 - the storage of hazardous materials
 - protection against deliberate fire raising
 - external fire spread

Many of these headings have an impact on property protection as well as life safety. Other headings may be beneficial on assessments relating to particular occupancies or where hazardous processes are carried out.



- The key product of a fire or DSEAR assessment should be a record of the significant findings; ensure that these are addressed in a timely manner.

5.4.6 Good practice suggests that when preparing a fire risk assessment:

- insignificant risks can usually be ignored
- the level of detail should be proportionate to the risk
- the period of time for which the document is likely to remain valid should be indicated
- the assessment should include a record of the preventive and protective measures that are in place.

For small businesses, the assessment process can be based on informed judgement and reference to appropriate guidance.

5.4.7 Good practice also recommends that assessment reports be validated by a second qualified assessor prior to issuing the document to their client. Both the assessor and the validator should sign and date the document.

5.5 DSEAR Assessments

5.5.1 The Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations 2002 (as amended) (known as DSEAR) requires that 'where a dangerous substance is or is liable to be present at the workplace, the employer shall make a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks to his employees which arise from that substance'.

In common with the Fire Safety Order there is a requirement that the assessment be reviewed 'regularly' so as to keep it up to date. DSEAR also requires the significant findings of the risk assessment to be recorded where the employer employs five or more employees.

DSEAR requires that the employer should make a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks to his employees which arise from hazardous substances. The assessment should be undertaken or verified by a competent person.

5.5.2 There is no official register of DSEAR assessors but the Royal Society of Chemistry (ref. 14) has a Directory of Consultants, some of whom undertake this form of work.

5.5.3 In the case of a DSEAR assessment competent assessors would be expected to record details of:

- the hazardous properties of the substances present
- information on safety provided by the supplier, including information contained in any relevant safety data sheet;

The assessment will also include an outline of:

- the work processes and substances used and their possible interactions;
- the amounts of the substances involved
- where the work involves more than one dangerous substance, the risk presented by such substances in combination
- the arrangements for the safe handling, storage and transport of dangerous substances and of waste containing dangerous substances
- activities, such as maintenance, where there is the potential for a high level of risk
- the likelihood that an explosive atmosphere will occur and its persistence
- the likelihood that ignition sources, including electrostatic discharges, will be present
- the scale of the anticipated effects of a fire or an explosion;
- any places which are or can be connected via openings to places in which explosive atmospheres may occur
- any additional safety information that the employer may need
- the effect of recommended remedial measures

5.5.4 A key element of the DSEAR assessment will be a zone plan identifying and showing the extent of the relevant hazard zones.

5.6 Significant findings

- 5.5.1 The key product of a fire or DSEAR assessment should be a record of the significant findings. The key findings are normally a summary of the actions that the Responsible Person should take to improve or maintain the fire risk rating of the premises. This information is often set out in a tabular form to allow the Responsible Person to describe, date and sign off the remedial actions identified in the assessment. This allows an audit trail to be established to show that the Responsible Person has 'taken ownership' of the assessment.
- 5.5.2 The significant findings are the information that an inspecting officer from the enforcing authority will look for when visiting the premises to view the assessment. They will then make an initial judgement as to whether the fire risk assessment is suitable and sufficient.
- 5.5.3 There are no rules for formulating this judgement; it varies across different fire and rescue services and even within a single service. There is thus no uniformity in the criteria used for making this judgement across the enforcing authorities.

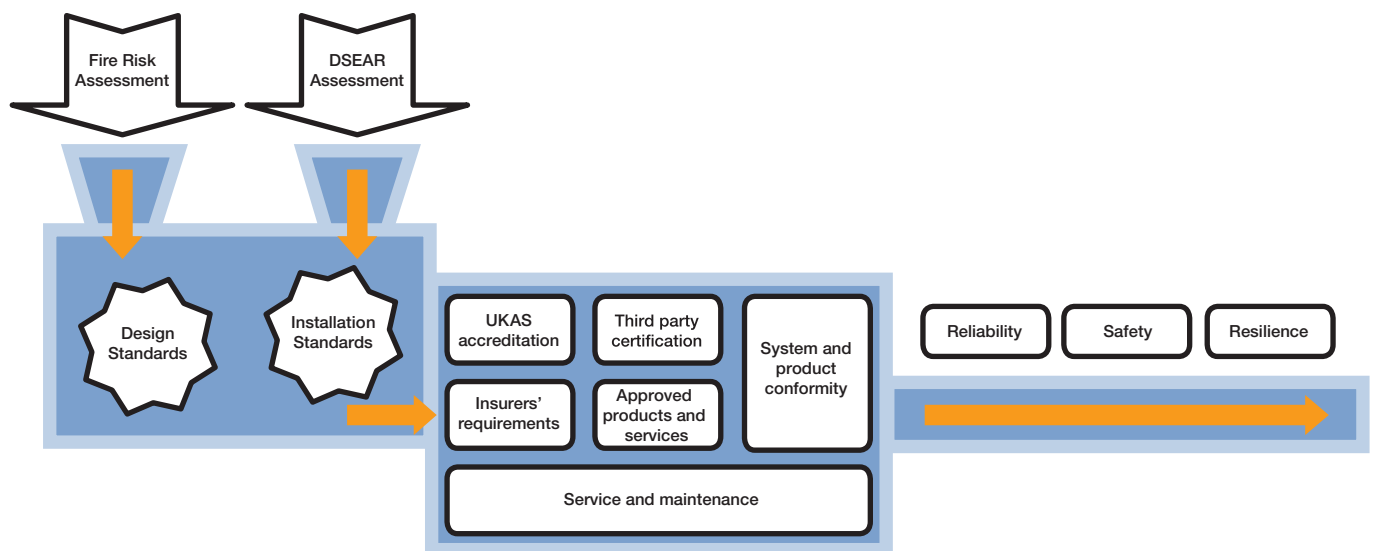


Figure 3: The route to a reliable, safe and resilient product

5.7 Approved fire products and services

In addition to decisions taken at the time a premises is designed and built, in terms of fire safety-related features and systems to be implemented, the need for additional or upgraded general fire precautions may be identified as a result of the fire risk assessment a DSEAR assessment or alteration/refurbishment works. In all such circumstances it is critical for both life safety and property protection that:

- only products and systems with independent third party certification are specified and used
- products and systems are installed to recognised standards by competent contractors.



- Select and use products that are manufactured to appropriate British or other recognised standards (5.7.1 and 5.7.2)

- 5.7.1 Where products are to be purchased for an active fire protection system to be installed by competent company engineers they should be carefully selected and be manufactured to appropriate British or other recognised standards. Where appropriate, components and cables should be manufactured to appropriate standards and have been tested together against an appropriate standard to ensure their compatibility.
- 5.7.2 Building products to be employed in a fire resistant construction should have third party certification to indicate that they meet appropriate specified standards and are marked to this effect. Products should be installed by competent tradesmen and be utilised in accordance within the scope of their certification.



- How do we design a novel installation for which there is no British Standard?

- 5.7.3 Particular care should be taken when selecting products for sealing around services (fire stopping) and sealing linear gaps. To provide the degree of protection that is required the products must be selected as meeting an appropriate standard and be applied strictly in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions by competent, often specialist, tradesman.
- 5.7.4 Although all products to be used should be tested so that it is known that they meet a relevant standard, products with a form of approval provide a higher degree of confidence in their performance than those passing a test. This is because approval schemes involve regular auditing of the manufacturer to ensure compliance with the prevailing standards continues to confirm that the product on the market is exactly the same as the original sample that was tested.
- 5.7.5 Approval benefits everyone in the supply chain as it gives peace of mind that the product consistently meets the standard.
- 5.7.6 The performance of a product or system not only depends on its approval, but is also dependent upon competence being demonstrated through the design, installation, commissioning and maintenance phases of a project. Hence the use of installers and maintenance firms who have also been subject to an approval scheme will provide confidence that appropriate standards of workmanship are provided in the initial installation and are maintained thereafter during the life of the system.
- 5.7.7 There are a number of organisations providing lists of approved products and services, among the best known are the British Board of Agreement, Warrington Certification and the Loss Prevention Certification Board (LPCB). The LPCB publish their Red Book of Approved Fire and Security Product and Services (ref. 15) annually and update it online. This is also a reference book containing details of approved products, services and suppliers. Warrington Certification through their FIRAS and CERTIFIRE schemes provide lists of approved installers and products respectively and make these registers available online (ref. 16).



- How do we identify a UKAS accredited third party certification body? (5.8)

5.8 Third party certification and accreditation

- 5.8.1 Conformity assessment is important in providing confidence in products and services, management systems and people. This form of evaluation can apply to products, equipment, people, management systems or organisations. Most familiar in this respect is BS EN ISO 9001: Quality management systems (ref. 17).
- 5.8.1 A commonly encountered form of conformity assessment in the fire protection field is known as third party certification. This is an independent confirmation by a third party that a product, service or installer meets an appropriate standard. It is different from a one-off test or inspection because approval via certification helps ensure through regular audits that the product or service continues to comply with the standards, which are subject to periodic revision and update, throughout the life of the product or installation.
- 5.8.2 It is important that the conformity assessment is carried out by an independent, third party organisation. For confidence in the conformity assessment process the third party certification bodies themselves must also operate to acceptable standards, this is the purpose of accreditation.



- Products and installations should comply with relevant standards and be installed and maintained by competent persons (5.9.2)
- Wherever possible, installers should be certificated to the appropriate standard by a UKAS accredited third party certification body (5.9.2)



- All the requirements for the product or installation must relate to the standard selected. It is not permissible to 'mix and match' sections of different standards in the same installation (5.10.3)
- Where no relevant national or other internationally recognised standard exists for the intended purpose, seek an alternative form of standard (5.10.4)
- Standards often refer to methods for testing products. Where this is the case, the products concerned must be used in precisely the same configuration as that in which they were tested without any modification (5.10.6)

5.8.3 In the UK, accreditation is undertaken by the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS), which is the sole national accreditation body recognised by government to assess, organisations that provide services such as fire risk assessments and certification, testing, inspection and calibration services against recognised standards. UKAS works to ensure that recognised standards are implemented correctly and in a uniform manner by the accredited organisations. UKAS is, in turn, periodically audited by its international compatriots to assure the quality of its services.

5.9 Insurers' requirements

- 5.9.1 It is always a requirement that the insured should comply with relevant legislation relating to buildings and fire safety; other conditions may also be included in the policy documents.
- 5.9.2 Wherever possible, products and installations should comply with relevant standards and be installed and maintained by competent persons. Wherever possible, installers should be certificated to the appropriate standard by a UKAS accredited third party certification body.
- 5.9.3 The use of the Fire Protection Association's (FPA) Design Guide for the fire protection of buildings (ref 18) is supported by insurers for providing guidance to building designers. Insurers also support the principle that only third party certificated fire protection products and services should be specified.
- 5.9.4 Even where this is planned, in the case of high fire risk premises it is still advisable to consult the insurer(s) of the premises and contents when planning costly general fire precautions in response to the significant findings of the fire risk assessment before making financial commitments.
- 5.9.5 In some cases where property protection and business continuity factors are a major issue, insurers may require additional measures to those identified as being necessary for life safety in line with their own higher standards before accepting the insurance risk.

5.10 Standards

- 5.10.1 Whenever products are specified or an installation is planned, reference should be made to the relevant standards for the product or form of installation. While there is no legislation requiring the use of British Standards in the UK, it is common practice to do so but other standards may be used to evidence good practice in terms of both product choice and system implementation.
- 5.10.2 Thus while in the UK reference is normally made to British Standards some organisations with an international presence may as a matter of internal policy refer to other standards, such as National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) or Underwriters Laboratories (UL) standards.
- 5.10.3 Where another form of standard is adopted all the requirements for the product or installation must relate to the standard selected. It is not permissible to 'mix and match' sections of different standards in the same installation.
- 5.10.4 Where no relevant national or other internationally recognised standard exists for the intended purpose, alternative forms of standards may be available. These include, for example, Loss Prevention Standards available from BRE Global. (These are available to download free of charge from the Redbooklive website (ref. 15).
- 5.10.5 In the absence of any form of standard, reference should be made to Codes of Practice and recognised guidance documents available from professional organisations such as RISC Authority (ref. 19).
- 5.10.6 Standards often refer to methods for testing products. Where this is the case, the products concerned must be used in precisely the same configuration as that in which they were tested without any modification. For example, a fire door tested to provide 30 minutes fire resistance may not provide this level of protection if fitted with door furniture different from that present when the door was tested. Where any form of modification is considered, the manufacturer or supplier of the product must be consulted.



- Why does the CE mark not necessarily indicate a product of recognised quality?



5.11 Markings

- 5.11.1 The BSI Kitemark confirms that a product or service has been thoroughly tested and checked and been shown to consistently meet the requirements of appropriate standards. It is a voluntary mark used by manufacturers and service industries to demonstrate quality, safety and reliability. Many products, such as those associated with fire fighting equipment, emergency lighting and fire detection and alarm systems carry the BSI Kitemark.



BSI Kitemark



CE mark

- 5.11.2 CE marking on a product is a manufacturer's declaration that the product complies with the essential requirements of the relevant European health, safety and environmental protection legislation. CE marking on a product indicates to the relevant government authorities that the product may legally be placed on the market in their country. (It is a legal requirement for construction products within the scope of harmonised European Standards to carry CE marking if they are to be placed on the market in the UK or Europe.)
- 5.11.3 In contrast to the BSI Kitemark, the CE mark is not a quality mark and does not necessarily relate to the functional performance of the product. Despite this, there are benefits in specifying CE marked products as these may be used with confidence that they have been designed and tested to perform to a recognised standard.
- 5.11.4 The use of fire protection products that do not carry CE marking should be avoided.
- 5.11.5 The Construction Products Regulation (CPR) (ref. 20) requires all construction products covered by a harmonised European standard to have a declaration of performance (DoP) drawn up and to be CE marked. Construction products covered by this regulation cannot be legally sold in the UK or within the rest of the Europe if they do not comply, even if the product is an established one. (A guidance note is available from the Construction Products Association ref. 21).



- The use of fire protection products that do not carry CE marking should be avoided (5.11.4)

1. HSE online: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/competence/what-is-competence.htm>
2. Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, SI 2005 No 1541, The Stationery Office.
3. The Fire (Scotland) Act 2005, asp 5, The Stationery Office.
4. Fire Safety (Scotland) Regulations 2006, Scottish SI 2006 No 456, The Stationery Office.
5. Fire and Rescue Services (Northern Ireland) Order 2006, SI 2006 No 1254 (NI9), The Stationery Office.
6. Fire Safety Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010, SI 2010 No 325 (NI), The Stationery Office.
7. Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992, SI 1992 No 2051, The Stationery Office.
8. Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations (DSEAR), 2002, SI 2002 No 2776, The Stationery Office.
9. **Business Resilience: A Guide to protecting Your Business and its People**, 2005, Fire protection Association.
10. The ROBUST software (Resilient Business Software Toolkit) may be found at <https://robust.riscauthority.co.uk>
11. **Competency Criteria for Fire Risk assessors**, Version 1, 2011, Fire Risk Assessment Competency Council, (Download available from www.cfoa.org.uk)
12. **A Guide for Choosing a Competent Fire Risk Assessor**, Version 2, 2014. Fire Risk Assessment Competency Council, (Download available from www.cfoa.org.uk)
13. **Life Safety Fire Risk Assessment, Scheme SP205**, (Part 1 Version 4(a) July 2015 and Part 2: Version 3 July 2015), BAFE (Download available from www.bafe.org.uk)
14. Royal Society of Chemistry Directory of Consultants may be viewed on www.rsc.org
15. List of Approved Fire and Security Products and Services, Loss Prevention Certification Board, www.redbooklive.com
16. FIRAS and CERTIFIRE approved installer and product registers, www.warringtoncertification.com
17. BS EN ISO 9001: 2015: **Quality Management Systems. Requirements**, British Standards Institution.
18. **Design Guide for the Fire Protection of Buildings** (various parts), Fire Protection Association.
19. A wide range of guidance documents may be downloaded from www.riscauthority.co.uk
20. Construction Products Regulations 2013, SI 2013 No 1387, The Stationery Office.
21. **Guidance Note on the Construction Products Regulation**, Version 3, 2014, Construction Products Association. (This may be downloaded from www.constructionproducts.org)



Fire Protection Association

London Road
Moreton in Marsh
Gloucestershire GL56 0RH
Tel: +44 (0)1608 812500
Email: info@riscauthority.co.uk
Website: www.riscauthority.co.uk

2018 © The Fire Protection Association
on behalf of RISCAuthority