

JD/KL/NSI 031 19

19 November 2019

To: All NSI Fire Gold and Fire Silver approved companies and applicants

Dear Colleague,

BS 8629:2019 - CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THE DESIGN, INSTALLATION, COMMISSIONING AND MAINTENANCE OF EVACUATION ALERT SYSTEMS FOR USE BY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES IN BUILDINGS CONTAINING FLATS

The above standard was published on 11th November 2019 and comes into effect on 30th November 2019.

This is a new standard which gives recommendations for design, installation, commissioning and maintenance of evacuation alert systems for use by the fire & rescue service in buildings containing flats.

Evacuation alert systems are intended to be installed in buildings containing flats where there is a "stay put" policy in place and are provided **for use ONLY by the fire & rescue service** should they deem it necessary during an operational incident to evacuate part or all of the building.

It is important to understand that the Evacuation Alert System does not form part of any fire detection and fire alarm system, and will not be interfaced in any way with any fire detection and fire alarm system which may be present in the building.

Any proposal to install an evacuation alert system should be subject to consultation with the fire and rescue service before proceeding with the design of the evacuation alert system. The importance of this cannot be over-stressed, as such consultation is essential to ensure the system is fit for purpose in relation to use by fire and rescue service crews. It is also essential that fire and rescue service crews are aware of the existence of the system and are afforded the opportunity to make themselves familiar with its access and use.

In Scotland, if there is uncertainty regarding the need for an evacuation alert system for use by the fire and rescue service, reference should be made to the Domestic Technical Handbook that

supports the Building (Scotland) Regulations 2004. Advice can also be obtained from the building standards department of the relevant local authority and from the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

When writing this British Standard, it has been assumed that all fire protection measures in the building, normally provided for compliance with building regulations, are correctly designed, correctly installed and properly maintained. It is not appropriate for the provision of an evacuation alert system for use by the fire and rescue service to be regarded as any form of compensation for reduction in fire protection measures, or as mitigation for defects in construction (e.g. poor installation of compartmentation).

What do I need to do?

This circular letter is for information purposes only as, currently, evacuation alert systems which are designed, installed, commissioned and maintained to the recommendations of BS 8629:2019 fall outside the scope of NSI and BAFE fire certification schemes. But this may change if there is sufficient demand, or legislative requirements, for a third party certification scheme covering evacuation alert systems.

Hard copies of the new BS may be purchased from BSI.

Due to restrictions placed upon us by BSI, the new standard is not currently available via the online NSI Standards on Subscription service. It is anticipated it will be available via our subscription service in April 2020.

For further information on obtaining standards, please visit our website or telephone NSI's Maidenhead office on 01628 637512.

Yours sincerely,



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