Fact Card 2 - Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order

Giving you the facts about Regulatory Reform Order (Fire Safety)

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, often referred to as FSO applies to all buildings other than domestic housing, and replaces 118 pieces of previous fire legislation, including the old fire certificate. The law now shifts responsibility from the fire authorities for fire safety to whoever has day-to-day control of premises. Each business must appoint a "responsible person", whether it be the owner, manager, facilities manager or an expert consultant to manage the fire risk to the building, including those using the premises and its immediate surroundings.

The emphasis of the FSO is on preventing fires and reducing risk. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), which is responsible for the legislation, divides all non-domestic buildings in to 11 sections, producing a detailed guide for each. The guides are developed to inform the responsible person how to comply with the FSO by helping to carry out a fire risk assessment of the building and identifying the fire precautions which need to be implemented. They have been written for people who have limited training and experience in undertaking a risk assessment, but if you are unsure on how to complete it, you should contact a trained professional.

Failure to comply with the FSO can place property and lives at risk and is likely to result in criminal prosecution.

Fire Safety Order Guides

Guide 1: Offices and shops

Guide 2: Factories and warehouses

Guide 3: Sleeping Accommodation

Guide 4: Residential care premises

Guide 5: Educational premises

Guide 6: Small and medium places of assembly

Guide 7: Large places of assembly

Guide 8: Theatres and cinemas

Guide 9: Open air events and venues

Guide 10: Healthcare premises

The guides are available for download from:

https://www.gov.uk/workplace-fire-safety-your-responsibilities/fire-risk-assessments

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Risk Assessments

A risk assessment is an organised look at what, in your work activities and workplace, could cause harm to people. In the case of a fire, it is identifying possible causes of fire, the precautions you need to take to prevent something igniting and, in the event of a fire how to reduce the risk to the occupants, building and its contents. There are five key steps to undertaking a risk assessment:

1. Identify potential fire hazards
2. Identify the people who might be at risk and their location
3. Evaluate the risks, review your existing fire precautions and take appropriate action
4. Record your findings and tell your employees
5. Review and revise assessment as necessary

Fire Doors

Fire doors are designed to contain a fire to a single compartment of a building, therefore reducing the risk to those in other compartments.

- Properly maintained fire doors should be a part of the fire safety plan for every building.
- A fire door should only be installed with certificated components that will ensure it achieves its fire rating.
- Without the correct maintenance, the fire door could fail, so, as part of your risk assessment, you should complete the maintenance checklist (see over) to ensure your fire doors are still in working order.
- Periodic checks should be carried out at least once every six months. Newly occupied buildings may require more frequent checks in the first year of use. Where a door is heavily used, it should be checked more frequently than other doors in the building. E.g. once per week/ month (depending on usage).
- For replacement fire door components, visit www.firedoors.bwf.org.uk
- Remember a simple checklist does not form a full inspection of the doors. These should be undertaken by competent personnel who are trained to carry out such tasks.

For more information visit the Fire Door Inspection Scheme: www.fdis.co.uk

Example checklist for inspecting fire doors

Label

Has the fire door got a certification bodies mark such as a label, plug or tag? ☐

If not, can you confirm that the door is in fact a fire door and has been certificated as such? ☐

Door leaf

Does the door leaf sit against the door stop and is it free of distortion? ☐

If the door is veneered or lipped, is the glue still holding these products firmly in place? ☐

Is the door free from damage including dents, and holes? ☐

Door frame

Is the door frame firmly attached to the wall? ☐

If a planted door stop is present, is it firmly attached? ☐

Is the frame to door leaf gap consistent? (check the certificate for the allowable gap) ☐

Intumescent/smoke/acoustic seals

Are intumescent seals in place? (if not install immediately) ☐

Are the seals well attached inside the groove in the frame or door leaf? ☐

Are the seals free from damage and paint? ☐

If you have a brush or fin type seal, is it free from damage or breakage? ☐

If fitted are the smoke and acoustic seals continuous around the frame or door leaf? ☐

Hinges

Is there a minimum of 3 hinges with all the screws fitted? ☐

Are all the screws the correct size? ☐

Are the hinges free of metal fragments and oil leakage? (these are signs of wear) ☐

Are the hinges free from non-combustible packing? ☐

Door closers

Open the door to approximately 5 degrees or 75 mm. ☐

Does it close and engage with the latch? ☐

Is the closer securely attached to the door and frame? ☐

Is the closer free from damage and not leaking? ☐

If unlatched, does the closer hold the door in line with the frame and intumescent seal? ☐

If hung in pairs, do they close in line if both opened and released together? ☐

If hold-open device is used, is it electronically released? ☐

Does the hold-open device release the door when required? ☐

Lock and latch

Does the latch hold the door firmly in place without rattling? ☐

Glazing and glass

Is the intumescent seal continuous and attached to the glass and bead? ☐

Are the glazing beads well attached to the frame and free from damage? ☐

Is the glass free from damage and cracking? ☐

If the glass has been replaced, is it fire rated glass? ☐

If glazing panels are below 1500 mm from the bottom of door, is the glass safety glass? ☐

Threshold gap

Is there a consistent gap under the door that allows it to swing without touching the floor covering? ☐

Is the door to floor covering gap consistently 10 mm (3 mm if smoke seals are fitted) or less when the door is closed? ☐

If the door leaf is fitted with a threshold seal, does the seal make contact with the floor covering when the door is closed? ☐

Disclaimer:

Note: Whilst every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of advice given, the BWF cannot accept liability for loss or damage arising from the use of the information supplied in this publication.

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The Building Centre, 26 Store Street, London, WC1E 7BT

t: 020 3870 5020 | **e:** firedoors@bwf.org.uk | **w:** firedoors.bwf.org.uk