

Passing on the right fire safety details?...



or just passing the buck?

GIVING YOU THE FACTS ABOUT REGULATION 38

Regulation 38 is a requirement under the Building Regulations for England and Wales to provide fire safety information to the 'responsible person' at the completion of a project, or when the building or extension is first occupied.

It links the Building Regulations to the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (known as the RRO or FSO) which places the responsibility of fire safety onto the 'responsible person'. The law now shifts responsibility for fire safety from the fire authorities to whoever has day-to-day control of premises that come under the RRO. Each business must appoint a responsible person, whether it is the owner, facilities manager or an expert consultant, to manage the fire risk to the building (e.g. of a hospital / school / flats), and to people using the building, or its immediate surroundings.

Regulation 38 compliance for fire doors

When it comes to fire doors in a building, the guidance is not specific about the information that should be provided.

However, in order for the responsible person to carry out their role effectively, and to help in future inspections and maintenance of fire doors, it is important that the correct information concerning the fire door assembly is handed to them.

Please note, the term "fire door" always refers to the complete door assembly, not just the door leaf.

Fire doors

Fire doors play a vital role in the fire safety of buildings. Their correct specification, installation and maintenance is paramount to the safety of all those who use the building.

A fire door assembly is made up of components which are required to make it perform correctly in the event of a fire. These components include the door leaf, frame, seals and essential building hardware which are referred to in the door's fire test evidence. Using the wrong components may have a significant effect on the overall performance of the fire door.

It is essential, then, that the information relating to all the components used in the fire door assembly is handed over to the responsible person, since this will be necessary in future inspections and any maintenance which may be required.

Who should receive information?

The contractor is responsible for handing over the correct information to the client or their appointed representative, and this could vary considerably according to the nature of the building or contract. Typical recipients are likely to be a Health and Safety or Environmental Health Officer, client's surveyor or architect, or building project manager responsible for the final sign-off of the building contract.

In turn, the client should then provide the relevant information to the "Responsible Person".

For further information on the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order refer to our "Fire Safety Order" Fact Card

Understanding Regulation 38

Where a building is erected, extended, or has undergone a material change of use, and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 applies to that building or extension, Regulation 38 requires that a package of fire safety information which records the fire safety design of the building or extension must be assembled and given to the responsible person for the premises.

The fire safety information provided should include all fire safety design measures in appropriate detail and with sufficient accuracy to assist the responsible person to operate and maintain the building safely. Where a fire safety strategy or a preliminary fire risk assessment has been prepared these should also be included.

The exact amount of information and level of detail necessary will vary depending on the nature and complexity of the building's design. Appendix G of Approved Document B, Volume 2, 2006 edition (with 2007 and 2010 amendments) provides a guide for the type of information that should be provided which will depend on the complexity of the building. This information includes, among other details, the locations of:

- Escape routes
- Compartmentation and separation
- Fire doors, self-closing doors and other doors with relevant hardware (e.g. panic locks)
- Specifications of any fire safety equipment, in particular, routine maintenance schedules
- Any assumptions in the design of fire safety arrangements regarding building management

You can trust the BWF Fire Door Alliance

Fire doors and doorsets manufactured withing the BWF Fire Door Alliance are required to be Third Party Certificated and be labelled to show the fire door rating, certificate number (prefixed CF), manufacturer's name and telephone number, and a serial number for each door to enable traceability. Any glazed doors will have an additional label stating whether the door leaf has been glazed by the door manufacture, or by a company licensed to undertake this work. In the latter case, the label will show information relating to the licensed converter including their certificate number (prefixed CAF).

All door leaves and doorsets are supplied with the manufacturer's installation and maintenance instructions, providing details of the correct components that should be fitted to that particular door.

It is however important to check that information is provided in its original form and relates to the actual installed product.

Make sure you pass on the correct safety information; someone's life may depend on it.

Useful links

The Planning Portal - Building Regulations (Fire Safety) FAQs

www.planningportal.gov.uk/buildingregulations/approveddocuments/partb

The Planning Portal - Approved Document B : 2006 : Volume 2

www.planningportal.gov.uk/buildingregulations/approveddocuments/partb/bcapproveddocumentsb/

The Planning Portal - Regulation 38

www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/2214/regulation/38

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 www.communities.gov.uk/fire/firesafety/firesafetylaw/

BWF Fire Door Alliance - Fire Door and Doorset Scheme – www.firedoors.bwf.org.uk

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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Use this simple checklist to ensure you have the correct information at handover:

1. The location and rating of every fire door in the building.
2. The fire door certificate – which MUST be relevant to the installed fire door.*
3. The type of seal (intumescent / smoke seal / acoustic) fitted to the door or frame.
4. Details of the door frame (hardwood, softwood, MDF etc.) and how that relates to the fire door test.
5. Details of hinges, closers and other essential building hardware (CE marked) and how that relates to the fire door test.
6. Maintenance information for each component, including the door leaf.
7. Frequency of inspection and maintenance, depending on expected usage of the door.

* See our "fire door certification" Fact Card for further information.