

From: Peter Berney <peter.berney@solutionsie.com.au>

Subject: Are you confused about fire compliance?

Reply: peter.berney@solutionsie.com.au



Are you confused about fire compliance?

The requirements for fire safety in Queensland altered dramatically in July 2008, with the introduction of the Building Fire Safety Regulation 2008 and the adoption, under MP 6.1 of the Queensland Development Code, of AS 1851-2005 (Maintenance of Fire Protection Systems and Equipment) as the standard to which Fire Safety Installations ('FSIs') must be maintained.

The changes aim to greatly increase the safety of people during a fire emergency, by ensuring that buildings have adequate and properly maintained FSIs and by improving the arrangements and training for evacuation in case of an emergency. The owner, occupier and/or manager of a building in Queensland have a legal obligation to ensure the safety of every person in the building in the event of a fire or other emergency. The Body Corporate has control over and is the occupier of the common areas of your property. As such, it must make sure that:

- All FSIs required to be in the common property areas are installed and properly maintained;
- All evacuation routes are safe and free from hazards;
- A Fire and Emergency Plan for the building is developed and maintained;
- The evacuation coordinator, people with responsibilities under the Fire and Emergency Plan and workers receive specific training;
- If the building is a High Occupancy Building, a Fire Safety Advisor is appointed; and
- An 'Occupier's Statement' is submitted to the Commissioner of the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service every 12 months, stating that all FSIs have been properly maintained.

To ensure that all buildings comply with these new requirements, the Queensland Government has set out penalties, under the Fire and Rescue Service Act 1990, of up to \$7,500 for each instance of basic non-compliance and up to \$150,000 or three years imprisonment if the non-compliance causes multiple

deaths.

Outlined below for your convenience are the components of the Fire Services Package that you need to comply with the new Fire Safety Regulation.

Fire Safety Report

FSIs are a lot more than just fire-fighting equipment, such as fire extinguishers and sprinkler systems. They include a wide range of structural features, fire-protection systems, fire-fighting equipment and occupant safety features. In essence, they are the items installed or constructed in a building to make sure it is (adequately) safe in case of a fire. As such, FSIs need to be properly maintained to make sure they can operate and perform to the same standard that they did when the building was constructed or they were commissioned. If an FSI is not properly maintained, the safety of people in the building may be threatened in case of a fire.

The purpose of Solutions ie's Fire Safety Report is to identify shortcomings in the maintenance of existing Fire Safety Installations (FSIs), as well as identifying any FSIs which are required for the building but are not currently in place. It also includes a review of the Fire and Evacuation Plan and training records for the building to determine whether they are up-to-date and appropriate. This, in turn, will help you to manage your maintenance contractors and to prepare to submit the annual Occupier's Statement for your building.

Fire and Evacuation Plans

In a fire or emergency, you will only have one to two minutes from when the alarm is sounded to when your life is seriously endangered by smoke or fire. Even minute concentrations of Carbon Monoxide (which builds up rapidly around fires), as low as 1.25%, can render you unconscious instantly and kill under three minutes. As such, it is very important that your building has a Fire and Evacuation Plan to help ensure the safe, orderly and rapid evacuation of people in an emergency.

A Fire and Evacuation Plan contains a lot more than just the evacuation diagrams displayed on walls in buildings. It also contains:

- Evacuation Coordination Procedures, which are procedures for:
 - Alerting and communicating with people in the building;
 - Alerting the fire service;
 - Arranging for the evacuation of people with special needs, members of the public and other persons;
 - Checking whether all people have been evacuated;
 - Informing the Evacuation Coordinator of how many people have been evacuated, and who is not accounted for;
 - Meeting fire officers who attend the building.
- Instructions for evacuating the building in accordance with the Evacuation Coordination Procedures;
- Instructions for operating fire-fighting equipment and alarms in the building;
- Procedures for giving instructions and training to people working in the building, and to ensure that instruction is given;
- Contact details for the Evacuation Coordinator and other people responsible for evacuating the building, the Fire Safety Advisor (in a high occupancy building), as well as for the people responsible for giving instructions and for developing and reviewing the Fire and Evacuation Plan.

When Solutions IE prepares your Fire and Evacuation Plan, you will receive detailed, laminated

evacuation diagrams (other finishes are also available, on request), as well as comprehensive, yet straight-forward procedures and instructions developed in consultation with your Body Corporate and Manager, to make sure they are entirely relevant to your building. We also provide ongoing support to update your Plan if (and when) there are material changes to your building or to the people with responsibilities under the Plan.

Training for Evacuation Coordinators

All buildings (except for stand-alone and terrace-style houses) are required to have an Evacuation Coordinator and, potentially, other people responsible for carrying out the Fire and Evacuation Plan. The Evacuation Coordinator is commonly known as the Chief Fire Warden for the building, and the other people responsible are commonly known as Fire Wardens, Floor Wardens and/or Deputy Wardens.

The number of people responsible for carrying out the Fire and Evacuation Plan must be determined by a risk analysis of the building, including an analysis of the layout of the building, the number of people in it throughout the day, and the likelihood that each responsible person will be in the building throughout the day. There are no firm rules for determining how many people need to be responsible, except that it must be enough to ensure that their duties may be carried out effectively.

The Evacuation Coordinator and each responsible person must be given training once per year. This training equips these people to effectively coordinate the evacuation of the building in an emergency. In high occupancy buildings, this training must be given by the Fire Safety Advisor or by a person appointed by the Fire Safety Advisor.

Solutions ie provides a range of training options, including CD and online. We also provide hard-copy workbook training, and seminar training on request.

Appointing a Fire Safety Advisor

NB. FSA is only required for High Occupancy Buildings - more than 25m high (generally 9 stories or more) and more than 30 workers (more than 300 m2 of commercial).

The occupiers of a High Occupancy Building must also appoint a Fire Safety Advisor ('FSA') for their building.

A High Occupancy Building is any:

- residential building over 25m in height;
- prescribed workplace under the Workplace Health and Safety Regulation 2008 with more than 30 workers; or
- at-risk licensed building under the Fire and Rescue Service Act 1990,

An FSA is a qualified person who is familiar with all aspects of building fire safety, and whose primary duties are to provide advice to the occupiers to ensure that appropriate emergency planning has taken place and to ensure that appropriate instruction and training is undertaken within the required timeframes. Additionally, any training in a High Occupancy Building must be delivered either by an RTO or by the FSA or a person appointed by the FSA.

The FSA does not need to work or live in the building, as their role is primarily to provide advice on planning and training to more complex, higher-risk buildings. A single FSA can be appointed to multiple buildings.

Solutions IE's inspectors are all qualified FSAs and Workplace Health and Safety Officers. They are all BSA-licensed evacuation planners, and accredited by the Fire Protection Association of Australia as

Workplace Emergency Response Practitioners. As such, we are able to have our inspectors appointed as the FSA for your building at the same time as we carry out our other services.

Throughout the year, your FSA will be available to give advice on fire safety in your building, as well as to review your Fire and Evacuation Plan and organise additional training , should the need arise.

Don't get caught playing with fire

For your complete fire compliance solution contact us on the details below for a obligation-free quotation or to talk to one of our fire safety experts.

All services provided by Solutions IE are supplied on the basis of **Supply Terms and Conditions** which are available from our Office and from our website www.solutionsie.com.au

Solutions IE

Phone: 1300 136 036

Fax: 1300 136 037

Address: 14 Railway Tce, MILTON QLD 4064

Postal Address:

PO Box 1584, MILTON QLD 4064

PO Box 2253, SOUTHPORT BC QLD 4215

PO Box 726, MALENY QLD 4552

PO Box 8002, CAIRNS QLD 4870

Website: www.solutionsie.com.au

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