



# Home Office

## Fire Safety Reform Programme Bulletin

Welcome to the Home Office's fire safety reform programme bulletin, which is for anyone who is interested in keeping updated on any changes to fire safety legislation and guidance.

Issued: **22 February 2024**

Please do share this with anyone who may find this information useful.

We would welcome your feedback, so please feel free to get in touch with us via the following email address in order to sign up to these bulletins or let us know what you are interested in hearing about: [firesafetyreform@homeoffice.gov.uk](mailto:firesafetyreform@homeoffice.gov.uk)



### Fire Risk Assessor Capacity and Capability

As our work to develop a commencement and implementation plan for Section 156(4) of the Building Safety Act 2022<sup>1</sup> progresses, we are introducing a new Interim (Fire Risk Assessor) Competence Verification Board (ICVB). This will allow us to work more closely with industry leaders to refine and finesse the delivery plan and monitor progress. The ICVB will be jointly chaired by Home Office and Fire Sector Federation and membership will include the FRA certification bodies and schemes, UKAS, the NFCC and Devolved Administrations.

Alongside the ICVB we are establishing an Industry Engagement Group (IEG) that will provide a forum through which members of the wider fire and building safety sectors and anyone else with an interest in this work, can be kept up-to-date on developments and an early opportunity to influence the direction of travel. The IEG will also replace the Competence Steering Group's Working Group 4 which focused on the fire risk assessor role. We encourage attendees from this group to attend the IEG.

The first (virtual) meeting of the IEG took place on 19 February, and the next will be on **15 April 2024 at 14:00**. We would like to invite anyone who has an interest in fire risk assessor competence to attend. Please contact [colin.coxon@homeoffice.gov.uk](mailto:colin.coxon@homeoffice.gov.uk) for an invitation.

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<sup>1</sup> Section 156(4) of the Building Safety Act 2022 will amend the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (FSO) to place a new legal duty on Responsible Persons not to appoint a person to assist them with making or reviewing a risk assessment under Article 9 of the FSO unless that person is competent.

## BSI work to develop the Industry Benchmark Standard for Competence into a BSI Code of Practice

An Industry Benchmark Standard for Fire Risk Assessors has been developed by the Fire Risk Assessor sector through the CSG's Working Group 4 and is now available on the Fire Sector Federation website [here](#). Work is now underway within the British Standard's Institute to build on this by developing a Code of Practice for fire risk assessor competence.



The BSI drafting panel met for the first time in November 2023 and work to produce a first draft of the COP is expected to start in earnest this spring.



### Fire Safety Debate

On 14 December 2023, the House of Lords held a debate on the current state of fire safety regulations in England and the case for a new integrated review to update fire safety guidance. The debate covered a wide range of fire safety related topics including personal light electric vehicles, product fire safety and fire safety in schools. It provided an excellent opportunity to reflect on the progress that has been made since the Grenfell Tower Fire, but also highlighted the challenges that remain and the significant work that is ahead for us all. You can find the Hansard record of the debate [here](#).



### Fire Safety Surveys 2023

Thank you very much to everyone who responded to our Fire Risk Assessor and Responsible Person surveys last year. We are now reviewing the responses we received and hope to be able to publish the findings this Spring.

### New and Revised Fire Safety Guidance

As part of our fire safety guidance review programme, over the next year we will be working to publish updates to the suite of premises specific guides that we publish under Article 50 of the FSO. The current guides are split into two parts, with part one focusing on fire risk assessment and part two focusing on specific considerations needed in each particular type of premises. To help make them more accessible and reduce duplication, we intend to introduce a new overarching guide to fire safety which will replace the generic aspects covered in part one of the existing guides. This will then be supplemented with shorter guides covering issues that are specific to particular premises types.



An initial draft of the overarching guide is now complete, and it is currently undergoing an internal review ahead of stakeholder engagement. Drafting is also underway on revised guidance in relation to healthcare premises and sleeping accommodation. We expect to commence stakeholder engagement on all three guides in the Spring.



The comments received as part of the engagement exercise on the draft revised guide to fire safety in purpose-built blocks of flats are currently being reviewed by our Guidance Technical Group - an independent body of building and fire safety experts and wider industry representatives. The draft guide will then be updated to reflect this stakeholder feedback.

Links to the recently published and updated guides can be found below:

- [People with duties under fire safety laws - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/people-with-duties-under-fire-safety-laws)
- [Fire Safety Order: enforcement and sanctions for non-compliance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/fire-safety-order-enforcement-and-sanctions-for-non-compliance)
- [Check your fire safety responsibilities under Section 156 of the Building Safety Act 2022 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/check-your-fire-safety-responsibilities-under-section-156-of-the-building-safety-act-2022)
- [Check your fire safety responsibilities under the Fire Safety \(England\) Regulations 2022 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/check-your-fire-safety-responsibilities-under-the-fire-safety-england-regulations-2022)
- [Fire Safety \(England\) Regulations 2022: fire doors - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/fire-safety-england-regulations-2022-fire-doors)
- [Fire safety risk assessment: 5-step checklist - GOV.uk \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/fire-safety-risk-assessment-5-step-checklist)
- [Making your small block of flats safe from fire - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/making-your-small-block-of-flats-safe-from-fire)
- [Making your small paying guest accommodation safe from fire - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/making-your-small-paying-guest-accommodation-safe-from-fire)
- [Making your small non-domestic premises safe from fire - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/making-your-small-non-domestic-premises-safe-from-fire)