

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Section 18 (2) of the Fire Services Act, 1981 states:-

"It shall be the duty of every person having control over premises to which this section applies to take all reasonable measures to guard against the outbreak of fire on such premises, and to ensure as far as is reasonably practicable the safety of persons on the premises in the event of an outbreak of fire".

1.2 Section 37 of the Act enables the Minister for the Environment to make regulations in relation to premises to which Section 18 applies. It is the intention to make Regulations under Section 37 which will give statutory backing to the matters covered by this Code of Practice by providing that compliance with the provisions of the Code will satisfy the requirements of the proposed Regulations. In the meantime the Code in relation to the aspects covered by it is intended to give the necessary guidance to persons in control of places of assembly as to the measures necessary to discharge their existing statutory obligations under Section 18(2) of the Fire Services Act 1981.

2. The premises to which this Code applies are those put to any of the following uses:

- amusement arcade
- art gallery
- assembly hall
- bingo hall
- casino
- concert hall
- conference hall
- cinema
- dance hall (including discotheque)
- ecclesiastical building
- exhibition hall
- funfair building
- grandstand
- gymnasium
- indoor bowling alley
- indoor games court
- library to which the public are admitted
- museum
- non-residential college or school
- non-residential club
- premises licensed for the sale of intoxicating liquor other than an off- licence
- radio or television studio to which the public are admitted
- restaurant, cafe, canteen
- riding school
- skating rink
- sports pavilion
- stadium
- swimming baths (including any swimming pool, changing rooms, or similar facilities)
- tent or marquee to which the public are admitted
- theatre

It should be noted that the Code also applies to these premises where they are part of premises used primarily for other uses e.g. a restaurant, dance hall or premises licensed for the sale of intoxicating liquor etc. contained within a Hotel.

3. This Code relates to the Management of Places of Assembly. Separate Codes are being prepared in relation to -

- Internal Furnishings and Fittings
- Structural Fire Precautions, Means of Escape etc.
- Building Services.

4. It should be noted that compliance with the Code does not absolve management of their

responsibility to comply with any separate measure which a Fire Authority may require in specific cases.

5. The main elements of the Code are as follows:

Section 1 - Management Duties

This section outlines the main responsibilities of management in relation to fire safety. It stresses the importance of undertaking an appropriate fire safety programme, and the need to appoint a responsible person to take charge of it. The various duties are described in general and are outlined, as appropriate, in more detail in later sections.

Section 2 - Fire Prevention

Day-to-day fire prevention measures are a key element in the fire safety management of premises. The Code recommends a number of appropriate precautions including the establishment of good housekeeping practices, periodic inspections, the identification and elimination of potential fire hazards both inside and outside the premises and the application of safety rules.

Section 3 - Staff Training

The safety of users of places of assembly will be enhanced if staff know what to do both before and during an outbreak of fire or other emergency. This can be achieved by ensuring that staff (including temporary and part-time personnel) receive appropriate instruction and training.

Section 4 - Fire and Evacuation Drills for Management and Staff

Management and staff should undertake these drills so that they will be familiar with what should be done in the event of a fire occurring. The section outlines a range of procedures which should be followed in the event of a fire or other emergency.

Section 5 - Informing the Public

It is extremely important that members of the public in a place of assembly should be fully aware of the fire safety precautions in the premises. This can be achieved by the display of notices regarding the action to be taken in the event of a fire or an alarm being given and also by announcements before the commencement of entertainment, etc. and at regular intervals while the public are present.

Section 6 - Escape Routes

The Fire Safety in Places of Assembly (Ease of Escape), Regulations, 1985 provide that certain fire safety precautions related to escape routes and exit doors should be taken by every person having control over a place of assembly and that a person in a place of assembly shall not prevent or obstruct the person in control from complying with the Regulations. The Regulations are repeated in this Code as ease of escape is an integral part of the process of fire safety in places of assembly. Additional management guidance is given as to precautions necessary to ensure the effectiveness of escape routes.

Section 7 - Inspection and Maintenance of Fire Protection Equipment

There is a duty on the person in control of a premises to take all reasonable measures to guard against the outbreak of fire on the premises and to ensure as far as is reasonably practicable the safety of persons on the premises in the event of a fire. This requires the provision of fire protection systems and equipment. The recommended measures for inspecting and maintaining this equipment are set out in the Section.

Section 8 - Assisting the Fire Brigade

This Section details measures which should be taken to assist the fire brigade when it is responding to a fire or other emergency call.

Section 9 - Record Keeping

It is essential that a record should be kept of the actions taken to implement and oversee the fire safety programme. This Section outlines the information that should be recorded.

DEFINITIONS

"Escape Route" means a route by which a person may reach a place of safety and means in relation to any point in a building, a route from that point.

"Management" means the person whether as owner, hirer or lessee having control of any premises to which this Code relates and, where appropriate, includes any manager or other staff employed on the premises or any other person charged by the person having control of the premises with responsibility for fire safety and for ensuring the safety of persons in the event of fire or other emergency.

"Place of Safety" means a place in the open air at ground level in which persons are in no danger from fire and which, if it is an enclosed space, has a means of egress to an unenclosed space by an exit or exits having a width or aggregate width not less than the width of the exit or exits leading from the building to the enclosed space.

SECTION 1: MANAGEMENT DUTIES

- 1.1 A fire safety programme should be undertaken to (a) guard against an outbreak of fire, and (b) ensure as far as is reasonably practicable the safety of persons on the premises in the event of an outbreak of fire.
- 1.2 The fire safety programme should incorporate arrangements for:
 - (a) the prevention of an outbreak of fire through the establishment of day to day fire prevention practices, in accordance with the provisions of Section 2.
 - (b) the instruction and training of staff in accordance with the provisions of Section 3.
 - (c) the holding of fire and evacuation drills in accordance with the provisions of Section 4.
 - (d) informing the public of the procedures to be used in the event of a fire or other emergency in accordance with the provisions of Section 5.
 - (e) the maintenance of escape routes in accordance with the provisions of Section 6.
 - (f) the provision of adequate fire protection equipment and systems, and their inspection and maintenance in accordance with the provisions of Section 7.
 - (g) the provision of assistance to the fire brigade in accordance with the provisions of Section 8.
- 1.3 A Fire Safety Register should be maintained in accordance with the provisions of Section 9.
- 1.4
 - (a) A responsible person should be designated as Fire Safety Manager for the implementation and overseeing of the fire safety programme.
 - (b) The Fire Safety Manager should generally be present when the public are on the premises. In any temporary absence of the Fire Safety Manager, a responsible person should be nominated to deputise.
- 1.5 A sufficient number of staff should be present when the premises are open to the public to ensure the implementation of the measures required for the fire safety programme. Specific duties should be assigned as necessary to designated staff, and such duties should be based on written instructions.
- 1.6
 - (a) A plan of the premises should be displayed permanently inside the main entrance(s) where it will be clearly visible to persons entering the building showing the basement, ground floor, and each upper storey as applicable. This plan should clearly indicate the location of staircases and escape routes, fire fighting equipment, gas, electricity and ventilation shut off devices, the control panel for any fire detection and alarm system, installations such as fuel tanks, boiler houses and areas of high fire risk such as kitchens, projection rooms and scenery stores by reference to the point at which the plan is displayed - that point should be clearly identified on the plan and designated by the words "You are Here".
A copy of this plan should be kept on the premises for the information of the officer-in-charge of the fire brigade.
 - (b) A floor plan should be displayed in a prominent position on each floor indicating the escape routes and the location of fire fighting equipment by reference to the point at which the plan is displayed - that point should be clearly identified on the plan and designated by the words "You are here".
 - (c) All plans should be displayed on durable material, be easily legible, and drawn to a suitable scale.
- 1.7
 - (a) Overcrowding i.e. the presence on the premises of persons in excess of the occupant capacity calculated in accordance with the provisions of Appendix A should not be permitted and admission should be restricted accordingly.
 - (b) Where the maximum number of persons that may be permitted on the premises has been specified by a court or by the fire authority, a notice to that effect should be displayed in a prominent position near the entrance and such numbers should not be exceeded.
 - (c) Management and staff should assist an authorised officer of the fire authority, if requested, in determining the number of persons on a premises.

SECTION 2: FIRE PREVENTION

- 2.1 Rubbish and waste materials should not be allowed to accumulate; such materials should be removed from the premises at regular intervals, and stored in suitable designated areas, pending disposal.
- 2.2 Flammable liquids, gases and other potentially dangerous substances should be limited to small quantities, handled with extreme care, and stored in labelled suitable containers in designated suitable storage areas.
- 2.3 Smoking should be prohibited in stores, plant rooms and other similar areas.
- 2.4 In those areas where smoking is permitted a plentiful supply of non- combustible ashtrays or receptacles should be provided for the safe disposal of cigarettes and other smokers' materials.
- 2.5 Electrical and gas appliances and associated fittings should be checked on a regular basis and defects remedied as soon as possible. Defective items should be rendered safe until repairs are carried out.
- 2.6 Upholstered seating should be inspected regularly and any item which has its infill material exposed should be repaired or removed before the public are admitted to the premises.
- 2.7 Cookers, extractor fans, filters, air ducts and machinery should be regularly cleared of oil, grease and dust. Servicing should be carried out regularly by a competent person.
- 2.8 Open fires, flambé lamps or other sources of ignition should be carefully controlled to minimise the risk of fire.
- 2.9 Fire resisting doors and smoke stop doors should not be propped or wedged open.
- 2.10 Portable gas and liquid fuel heaters should not be used on the premises at any time and other portable radiant heaters should be removed from the premises before members of the public are admitted.
- 2.11 Building and plant maintenance involving the use of equipment such as oxy- acetylene cylinders, welding equipment, liquefied gas appliances and flammable liquid containers should be restricted to those periods when the premises is not occupied by members of the public and the equipment should be removed from the premises before the public are admitted.
- 2.12 Service contractors and outsiders engaged to work on the premises should be informed of the relevant requirements of this section.
- 2.13 Care should be taken to ensure that members of the public are not permitted to enter areas other than those to which they are intended to have access, except when a fire or other emergency requires them to do so to escape from the building.
- 2.14 The premises should be inspected on each occasion immediately after the public has vacated them to remove any potential fire hazard.

SECTION 3: STAFF TRAINING

- 3.1 Staff to whom specific duties have been assigned should be given appropriate instruction and training on the duties assigned. Particulars of such training should be entered in the Fire Safety Register.
- 3.2 All staff (including temporary and part-time staff) should receive training and/or instruction in relation to the following:-
- (a) the fire prevention measures set out in Section 2.
 - (b) the emergency procedures, and fire and evacuation drills devised for the premises, in accordance with the provisions of Section 4.
 - (c) the evacuation of occupants, paying special attention to the young, disabled and infirm.
 - (d) the arrangements for ensuring that escape routes and exit doors are unobstructed and available for use.
 - (e) the arrangements for the provision of assistance to the fire brigade.
 - (f) fire control techniques including:
 - (i) the use of fire extinguishers, fire blankets, and (where installed) hose reels;
 - (ii) closing doors (including those fitted with self closers) and windows to inhibit fire spread; and
 - (iii) shutting off of electricity, fuel supplies, and ventilation systems where applicable.
 - (g)
 - (i) the layout of the building including escape routes.
 - (ii) the location of alarm call points.
 - (iii) the location of fire fighting equipment.
 - (iv) the location of assembly points.

SECTION 4: FIRE AND EVACUATION DRILLS FOR MANAGEMENT AND STAFF

- 4.1 Regular fire and evacuation drills which simulate emergency procedures should be planned and organised in the following manner:-
- (a) Emergency procedures that are appropriate to the premises should be established.
 - (b) Fire and evacuation drills should be held at varying times of day and night simulating conditions in which one or more of the escape routes is obstructed by smoke.
 - (c) Fire and evacuation drills should be announced beforehand only to senior staff.
 - (d) All permanent and temporary staff should be involved in fire and evacuation drills (including those involved in shift work).

- 4.2 The specific actions that staff should be trained to take when a fire breaks out or when there is an alarm are as follows:-

On Discovering a Fire:

- Operate the alarm system*
- Call the fire brigade
- Alert management and other staff
- Inform the public and direct them to the nearest available escape route
- Do not use the lift
- Attack the fire using the nearest suitable equipment (if safe to do so)
- Leave whenever danger threatens
- Close all doors as areas are vacated, checking that nobody is left behind
- Assemble at the designated assembly point
- Assist the fire brigade on arrival (see Section 8).

***Where there is no alarm system, other means should be devised to signal to the occupants that a fire has occurred.**

On Hearing an Alarm or Other Warning:

- Evacuate occupants using the nearest available escape route
- Do not use the lift
- Do not allow anybody to re-enter the premises for any reason
- Determine the location of the fire if possible
- Assemble at the designated assembly point
- Assist the fire brigade on arrival (see Section 8).

- 4.3 Those participating in the fire and evacuation drills should be encouraged to apply the procedures efficiently and promptly.
- 4.4 Each fire and evacuation drill should be reviewed afterwards and the procedures modified if necessary. These modified procedures should be notified to all staff.

4.5 Calling the Fire Brigade:

Where there is an internal telephone system, the switchboard operator should be responsible for dialling 999 and informing the fire brigade of the address of the premises (and the exact location of the fire, if possible).

Where there are no telephone extensions, the person discovering the fire should be responsible for dialling 999 (or sending someone to do this) and informing the fire brigade as described above.

Where there is no telephone line, arrangements should be made to call the fire brigade on a public telephone (identify the location of at least two of these) or a private telephone in other premises (make advance arrangements).

NOTE

It is not necessary to actually call the fire brigade during a drill or other exercise.

SECTION 5: INFORMING THE PUBLIC

- 5.1 Members of the public should be made aware of the safety procedures that apply in the event of fire or other emergency. This should take the form of Fire Instruction notices and/or announcements as appropriate.

Fire Instruction Notices

A fire instruction notice is a printed list of instructions on the actions to be taken when a fire or other emergency occurs. The notice is divided into two parts depending on whether a person discovers a fire or hears a warning of fire. All places of assembly should have fire instruction notices appropriate to the premises displayed in prominent locations. A sample notice is given below.

<p style="text-align: center;">FIRE INSTRUCTION NOTICE</p> <p>On Discovering A Fire</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Activate the nearest alarm* point.• Inform staff of the location of the fire.• Leave the premises immediately using the nearest available exit.• Do not use the lift.• Do not rush.• Do not re-enter the premises.• Obey the instructions of staff. <p>On Hearing An Alarm or Other Warning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leave the premises immediately using the nearest available exit.• Do not use the lift.• Do not rush.• Do not re-enter the premises.• Obey the instructions of staff. <p>*Where there is no alarm system, staff and occupants should be warned verbally.</p>

Safety Announcements

A safety announcement is a verbal message advising the occupants of the procedures that apply should a fire or other emergency occur.

The premises to which safety announcements apply are:

- (a) Premises occupied by a closely seated audience e.g. bingo hall, concert hall, conference hall, cinema, radio or television studio to which the public are admitted, and theatre. Safety announcements should be made in these premises before an event.
- (b) Premises licensed for music or dancing. Safety announcements should be made in these premises at periodic intervals of not more than three hours.

The person making the announcement should appear before the assembled persons, if possible.

A sample safety announcement is as follows:

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

In the interests of safety I would ask you to note the position of, and access to, the exits from this room.

There are (Number of) Exits)	
One there (Pointing to the First Exit))	<u>All</u> Exits should be
Another there (Pointing to the Second Exit))	clearly indicated.
And so on if there are other exits)	

In the event of an emergency please walk quickly to the nearest exit and make your way to the outside following the instructions of staff members. **Do not delay.** **Do not return** unless and until you are advised that it is safe to do so. Now please enjoy yourself in comfort and in safety - Thank you!

Emergency Announcements

Emergency announcements are announcements made to advise occupants that a fire or other emergency exists. These announcements should be made in all premises in such a way that they are audible in all occupied parts of the premises. The person making the announcements should (where possible) appear before the audience or assembled persons.

A sample announcement is as follows:-

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

We have an emergency. Please proceed immediately to the nearest available exit and leave the premises. There are (Number of) **exits - One there,** (Pointing to the first exit), **Another there** (Pointing to second exit) **and so on if there are other exits. Do not use the lift. Do not re-enter the premises. Please obey the instructions of staff.**

SECTION 6: ESCAPE ROUTES

- 6.1 Members of the public cannot be evacuated from a premises quickly and safely if escape routes are obstructed or exits are locked. It is therefore essential for proper fire safety management that all escape routes and exit doors are maintained free from obstruction and immediately available for use while the public are on the premises. The Minister for the Environment made regulations entitled 'Fire Safety in Places of Assembly (Ease of Escape), Regulations 1985, (S.I. No. 249 of 1985)' **which place a specific duty on persons in control of premises** to ensure that escape routes are kept clear and that doors, gates etc. on these routes and exits can be easily opened by persons using the premises. The penalty for breach of the Regulations is up to two years' imprisonment and/or a fine of up to £10,000 on conviction on indictment. The Regulations in question are attached at Appendix B. Additional measures which should be taken are set out in the following paragraphs.
- 6.2 Escape routes outside as well as inside the premises should be kept unobstructed and immediately available for use.
- 6.3 Escape routes should be clearly indicated and adequately illuminated.
- 6.4(a) Fire resisting doors, smoke stop doors, exit doors, self-closing devices, panic bolts and crash bars should be inspected before the public are admitted to the premises and should be maintained in a useable and fault-free condition.
- 6.4(b) Exit doors should be capable of being readily opened at all times and, if inward opening only, should be locked in the open position before the public are admitted and kept locked in that position while the public are on the premises.
- 6.5 Roller shutter doors, (if acceptable to the fire authority) should be locked in the open position before and while the public are on the premises.
- 6.6 Floor coverings, rugs and mats should be fixed or laid so that people will not slip or trip on them during an evacuation and should not be used to keep doors in the open position.
- 6.7 Where exit doors open over matwells, any mat used should be fixed securely in the well.
- 6.8 External areas at or near exits should be kept free of vehicles, and other obstructions to allow unimpeded escape to a place of safety.
- 6.9 Doors, gates and barriers should not impede escape from a concourse or yard which discharges to a place of safety.

SECTION 7: INSPECTION AND MAINTENANCE OF FIRE PROTECTION EQUIPMENT

- 7.1. Adequate fire protection systems and equipment should be provided on a premises. As the protection of the public depends on the reliable operation of this equipment, all such equipment should be inspected and maintained as outlined in the following paragraphs and in accordance with the more detailed guidance in Appendix C.
- 7.2. Fire extinguishers that comply with I.S. 290:1986 should be inspected and maintained in accordance with I.S. 291:1986. Other extinguishers should be inspected and maintained in accordance with BS 5306: Part 3: 1985.
- 7.3. Hose reels, rising mains, and fire hydrants should be inspected and maintained in accordance with BS 5306: Part 1: 1976 (1988).
- 7.4. Emergency lighting systems should be inspected and maintained in accordance with I.S. 3217: 1989.
- 7.5. Fire detection and alarm systems should be inspected and maintained in accordance with I.S. 3218: 1989.
- 7.6. Sprinkler systems including drencher and deluge systems should be inspected and maintained in accordance with BS 5306: Part 2: 1990.
- 7.7. Fire extinguishers, and hose reels should be examined before the public are admitted to the premises to ensure that they are in their designated places and available for use.
- 7.8. Ventilation systems, including haystack lanterns, should be inspected by a competent person at least once every year and should be maintained in a usable condition.
- 7.9. All data relating to the inspection, testing and maintenance of fire protection systems and equipment should be recorded in a Fire Safety Register.

SECTION 8 - ASSISTING THE FIRE BRIGADE

- 8.1. The following measures should be taken by the person in control of the premises to assist the fire brigade in its response to a fire or other emergency:
 - 8.1.1. Access routes should be kept clear for use by fire appliances.
 - 8.1.2. Gates and barriers that are likely to obstruct fire fighting operations should be unlocked or removed when the alarm is raised.
 - 8.1.3. The Fire Safety Manager should meet the officer-in-charge of the fire brigade and provide information on:
 - (a) the number and location of persons still on the premises
 - (b) the location of the fire,
 - (c) any special hazards, e.g. Liquefied Petroleum Gas (L.P.G.) tanks and cylinders etc.
 - (d) entry points to the building,
 - (e) available water supplies including static water sources e.g. swimming pools.
 - 8.1.4. The Fire Safety Manager should make a copy of the Plan referred to at Section 1.6(a) available to the officer-in-charge of the fire brigade.
 - 8.1.5. Oil pipelines and gas mains should be shut off when the alarm is raised. Electricity should be shut off if requested by the officer-in-charge of the fire brigade.

SECTION 9: RECORD KEEPING

- 9.1. The person responsible for the implementation and overseeing of the fire safety programme should keep a Fire Safety Register in the form set out in Appendix D, to record all fire safety matters.
- 9.2. The register should be kept on the premises at all times and should be available for inspection by any authorised officer of the fire authority.
- 9.3. The following data should be recorded in the register:-
 - 9.3.1. The name of the Fire Safety Manager (and those nominated to deputise for him/her).
 - 9.3.2. The details of specific duties that have been assigned to staff.
 - 9.3.3. The details of instruction and training given to staff, and by whom.
 - 9.3.4. The date of each fire and evacuation drill, the names of staff taking part, and the type of exercise held.
 - 9.3.5. The type, number and location of fire protection equipment on the premises including water supplies, hydrants etc.
 - 9.3.6. The date of each inspection and test carried out on fire protection equipment and systems, along with brief comments on the results of the checks and actions taken (and by whom) to remedy defects.
 - 9.3.7. The date of each inspection of upholstered seating and the actions taken to remedy defects.
 - 9.3.8. The details of all fire incidents and false alarms that occur and the action taken.

APPENDIX A - OCCUPANT CAPACITY

The occupant capacity of a premises (or part of a premises) should be calculated as follows:-

- A. In premises or areas where fixed seating is provided -
- (i) If individual seats by the number of seats, and
 - (ii) If bench seats or similar continuous seating, by dividing the length of such seating by 400 mm.
- B. In other premises or areas, including those areas occupied by loose seating, by dividing the floor area in square metres by the relevant occupant load factor given in the following table.

TABLE

Description of storey or room or part thereof	Occupant Load Factor
Area for standing	0.3
Bar	0.3 to 0.5*
Canteen, Dining Room, Restaurant, Lounge Bar	1.0 to 1.5*
Church or other place of public worship	0.5
Common room, conference room, committee room	1.1
Concourse, crush hall, queueing lobby	0.7
Assembly area, dance area	0.55
Library, museum, art gallery	4.6
Exhibition hall	1.5
Studio (radio or TV)	1.4
Lounge, reading room, writing room	1.9

***according to amount and layout of seating and tables.**

The area of any washroom, toilets, cloakroom or a stairway should be disregarded when calculating the occupant capacity of a storey or room.

Note:

Exits of sufficient number and width must be provided in suitable positions for the occupant capacity as calculated above.

APPENDIX B

S.I. No. 249 of 1985

Fire Safety in Places of Assembly (Ease of Escape), Regulations, 1985

The Minister for the Environment, in exercise of the powers conferred on him by section 37 of the Fire Services Act, 1981 (No. 30 of 1981) hereby makes the following Regulations:-

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|-----------------------|---|
| Citation | 1. These Regulations may be cited as the Fire Safety in Places of Assembly (Ease of Escape), Regulations, 1985. |
| Commencement | 2. These Regulations shall come into operation on the 1st day of September, 1985. |
| Interpretation | <p>3. In these Regulations:</p> <p>'escape route' means a route by which a person may reach a place of safety and means in relation to any point in a building, a route from that point;</p> <p>'place of assembly' means a building or any part of a building put to any of the following uses that is to say, as an -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• amusement arcade• bingo hall• bus or train passenger station• casino• cinema• concert hall• dance hall (including discotheque)• ecclesiastical building• exhibition hall• funfair building• grandstand• gymnasium• indoor bowling alley• indoor games court• non-residential club• premises licensed for the sale of intoxicating liquor other than an off-licence• radio or television studio to which the public are admitted• restaurant, cafe, canteen• riding school• skating rink• sports pavilion• stadium• swimming baths (including any swimming pool, changing rooms, or similar facilities)• tent or marquee to which the public are admitted• theatre |

'place of safety' means a place in the open air at ground level in which persons are in no danger from fire and which, if it is an enclosed space, has a means of egress to an unenclosed space by an exit or exits having a width or aggregate width not less than the width of the exit or exits leading from the building to the enclosed space.

Precautions to be taken by persons having control

4. Every person having control over a place of assembly shall take the following precautions that is to say, he shall ensure that, while the place is in actual use as a place of assembly -
 - (i) subject to paragraph (ii), all escape routes are kept unobstructed and immediately available for use,
 - (ii) doors, gates and other like barriers across escape routes are not secured in such a manner that they cannot be easily and immediately opened by persons in the place of assembly,
 - (iii) all chains, padlocks and other removable fastenings for securing doors, gates or other like barriers are removed and kept in a place where they may be readily inspected by an authorised person for the purposes of section 22 of the Fire Services Act, 1981
 - (iv) no hanging or drape is placed across or along an escape route in a manner which would impede or obstruct escape,
 - (v) no mirrors are placed across or along an escape route or adjacent to an exit in such a way as to confuse the direction of escape.

Duty of persons in a place of assembly

5. A person in a place of assembly shall not prevent or obstruct the person having control over the place of assembly from complying with these Regulations.

GIVEN under the Official Seal of the Minister for the Environment
this 29th day of July, 1985.

APPENDIX C - INSPECTION AND TESTS ON FIRE PROTECTION EQUIPMENT

1. Fire Extinguishers

All fire extinguishers, spare gas cartridges and replacement charges should be inspected on a monthly basis to make sure that appliances are in their proper position, and have not been discharged, or lost pressure (in the case of extinguishers fitted with a pressure indicator) or suffered obvious damage. Any extinguishers that are not available for use should be replaced by serviceable extinguishers.

Each year a more thorough examination of extinguishers (a detailed description of which is given in I.S. 291: 1986, and BS 5306: Part 3: 1985) should be carried out by a person with the necessary training and experience, and with access to the requisite tools, equipment and information.

Any extinguisher showing signs of corrosion or damage to the body should be taken out of service and replaced. Faulty or damaged parts should be replaced only by the correct components, recommended by the manufacturer.

The date of the inspection should be noted on a durable adhesive label fixed to the extinguisher.

Extinguishers should be discharged periodically in accordance with the provisions of IS 291: 1986 or BS 5306: Part 3: 1985.

When discharge is taking place the opportunity to train staff in the use of extinguishers should be taken.

2. Hose Reels

Hose reels should be inspected on a monthly basis to ensure that the inlet valve, the automatic on/off valve (if any), glands, tubing and shut-off nozzle are sound and free from leaks; that the outlet of the nozzle is not choked, and that none of the moving parts are seized.

Each year the hose should be completely run out and subjected to operational water pressure to ensure that the hose is in good condition and that all couplings are water tight.

A flow test should be carried out to ensure that a discharge of 30 Litres/min is achieved.

A more detailed description of the maintenance and testing of hose is given in BS 5306: Part 1: 1976 (1988).

3. Rising Mains

The services of a person with the necessary training and experience, and with access to the requisite tools, equipment and information, should be obtained to carry out maintenance and repairs.

(a) Dry Rising Mains

Inlets, landing valves, drain valves, door hinges and locking arrangements to the inlet and landing valve boxes should be inspected every six months. Special attention should be given to all valves, spindles, glands and washers to ensure that they are in satisfactory condition, so that all equipment is ready for immediate use. In addition, it is recommended that wet tests be carried out annually when the main can be checked for leaks.

(b) Wet Rising Mains

Maintenance of wet rising mains involves additional checks from those mentioned in (a) above. These additional checks are:

- (i) check on the cleanliness of storage tanks;
- (ii) thorough check of the booster pumps and their associated mechanical and electrical equipment.

NOTE

Where outlets on either dry or wet rising mains are found to be defective and no replacement is immediately available, the whole valve assembly should be removed from the main and be replaced with a blanking off plate or plug in order that the system remains operative.

4. Fire Hydrants

Fire Hydrants should be inspected on a monthly basis to ensure that there are no obstructions impeding access and that hydrant indicator plates are in position.

Maintenance of Fire Hydrants should be carried out at least once per year in accordance with BS 5306: Part 1: 1976 (1988).

5. Emergency Lighting

WEEKLY: An inspection should be made once every seven days to ascertain that:

- (a) a fault recorded in the Fire Safety Register has been given urgent attention and the action noted;
- (b) every lamp in a maintained system is lighting;
- (c) the main control or indicating panel of each central battery system indicates normal operation;
- (d) the main control or indicating panel of each engine driven generator plant indicates normal operation. After inspection the system should be started and run to recharge the batteries, and to allow each luminaire to be checked for correct operation;
- (e) LED in charging circuit is illuminated;
- (f) any fault found is recorded in the Fire Safety Register and the action taken, noted.

QUARTERLY: The Fire Safety Manager should ensure that every three months the quarterly inspection and test procedures as described in I.S. 3217: 1989 should be carried out by the manufacturer, supplier or installer or by an employee who has received special training with the manufacturer, supplier or installer.

ANNUALLY: The Fire Safety Manager should ensure that every year the annual inspection and test procedures as described in I.S. 3217: 1989 should be carried out by the manufacturer supplier or installer, or by an employee who has received special training with the manufacturer, supplier or installer.

6. Fire Detection and Alarm Systems

DAILY: A check should be made every day* to ascertain that:-

- (a) The panel indicates normal operation: if not, that any fault indicated is recorded in the Fire Safety Register and is receiving urgent attention.
- (b) Any fault warning recorded the previous day has received attention.

***where premises are not used on a daily basis, these inspections should be made on each occasion before the public is admitted on the premises.**

WEEKLY

- (a) Once a week, at least one trigger device or end of line switch on each zone circuit should be operated to test the ability of the control and indicating equipment to receive a signal and to sound the alarm and operate any other warning devices.
- (b) A visual examination of the battery and connections should be made to ensure that they are in good condition. Action should be taken to remedy any defect, including low electrolyte level.
- (c) The fuel, oil and coolant levels of any standby generator should be checked and topped up as necessary.
- (d) Any printer should be checked to ensure that its reserves of paper, ink or ribbon are adequate for at least 2 weeks normal usage.
- (e) Any defect should be recorded in the Fire Safety Register and reported to the responsible person, and action should be taken to correct it.

MONTHLY: If an automatically started generator is used as part of the standby supply, then it should be started up at least once each month by a simulation of a failure of the normal power supply, and allowed to energise the fire alarm supply for a continuous period of at least 1 hour. The fire alarm system should be monitored to identify any malfunctioning caused by the use of the generator. At the end of the test period the normal supply should be restored and the charging arrangements for the starting battery checked for proper functioning. The fuel tanks should be left filled and the oil and coolant levels topped up as necessary.

QUARTERLY: The Fire Safety Manager should ensure that every 3 months the quarterly inspection and test procedures as described in I.S. 3218: 1989 should be carried out by the manufacturer, supplier or installer or by an employee who has received special training with the manufacturer, supplier or installer.

ANNUALLY: The Fire Safety Manager should ensure that every year, the annual inspection and test procedures as described in I.S. 3218: 1989 should be carried out by the manufacturer, supplier or installer or by an employee who has received special training with the manufacturer, supplier or installer.

7. Sprinkler Systems

WEEKLY: Weekly inspections should be deputed to particular persons who understand the functions of the installation and who are made responsible for its maintenance. These inspections should cover:

- (a) water and air pressure gauges on the installation to ensure that proper pressures are maintained;
- (b) the water levels and air pressure in pressure tanks;
- (c) the alarm.

After first seeing that the main stop valve is fully open, the alarm test should be made by opening the test valve and noting the time taken for the alarm gong to sound. The alarm should be allowed to ring for about 30 seconds in order to ascertain that it is not ringing intermittently. This test is equivalent to the opening of one sprinkler head. Repairs, if found necessary, should be carried out immediately after a test. If the system is connected to the fire service, the testing procedure should be agreed with it and to avoid a false call.

QUARTERLY

- (a) Each water supply should be tested individually. Before making the test on any one supply, it is necessary to shut off all others. The main stop-valve should be manipulated to ensure that it is in good working order. After seeing first that the main stop-valve is fully open, the test should be made by opening fully the drain and test valve provided for the purpose. A test should also be made to determine whether the back-pressure valves are working properly. It should also bring into operation any automatic mechanism in connection with the pump or other water supply apparatus, although these appliances may also be brought into operation by means of the alarm test valve.
- (b) Careful inspection should be made to ascertain the condition of the sprinkler heads and pipes, and to make sure that all heads have proper freedom of action.
- (c) Special attention should be paid to signs of corrosion and it is essential to check that sprinkler heads have not received a coat of paint or distemper during any redecoration that may have been carried out since the previous inspection.