



POLICY INSTRUCTION

Automatic Fire Detection in Dwellings Occupied by MOD Personnel

Number: PI 05/10

Strategy & Policy Directorate Sponsor: Robin Cawthorne

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Who Should Read this: CEStOs, Top Level Budget Holders, Project Sponsors, MOD Project Managers and others within the IPT (for both Prime, PFI/PPP and traditionally procured contracts), Defence Estates Advisors and Property Managers/Site Estate Representatives with responsibility for MOD projects and Property Management Works Services (including the legacy work of EWCs/WSMs) RPC Regional Managers.

When it takes effect: Immediately

When it is due to expire:
When superseded

Health &
Safety

Equality And Diversity Impact Assessment

This policy has been Equality and Diversity Impact Assessed in accordance with the Department's Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment Tool against:

Part 1 Assessment Only (no diversity impact found).

Document aim: The aim of this Policy Instruction (PI) is to ensure that all dwellings owned or leased by the Department are fitted with suitable Automatic Fire Detection (AFD) systems, this includes overseas locations.

Definition

Dwelling – unit of residential accommodation occupied (whether or not as a sole or main residence) by a person as a single household or by people sharing or living together as a family.

1. APPLICATION

- This notice applies to all dwellings owned or leased by the Department other than Single Living Accommodation to which British standard 5839 Part 1 applies.
- Action addressees are to ensure that the requirements of this PI are passed without delay to those persons with responsibility for the provision of dwellings through lease or other means.

2. REQUIREMENT

New buildings and refurbishments

- All dwellings are to be provided with AFD systems that conform to the recommendations of British Standard 5839 Part 6: 2004. The minimum category and grade of system required is detailed within Table 1 of the standard. Where it is known that prospective occupants suffer from disabilities LD1 systems may be installed.

Existing Dwellings

- It is the responsibility of the housing management section to ensure that existing dwellings are inspected. Where the existing AFD system does not conform to Crown Fire Standard E1, a system conforming to BS5839 Part 6:2004 shall be installed. The system requirements are detailed within Table 1 of the standard, with the exception that Grade D systems are the minimum acceptable. Where it is known that the occupants suffer from any disabilities LD1 systems may be installed. Where funding is available, consideration should be given to upgrading existing systems to those required for new or materially altered dwellings in Table 1 of BS 5839 Pt 6:2004.

Leased Buildings

- All dwellings that are to be considered for lease must have an AFD system installed conforming to BS5839 Part 6: 2004 prior to occupation of the premises by MOD personnel.
- All dwellings shall be provided with the appropriate AFD system as detailed above (this includes existing dwellings).

Maintenance

- Details of the maintenance requirements are included in the British Standard are to be implemented and followed by the housing authority.

3. BACKGROUND

- Several queries and concerns have been raised about the provision of AFD systems in dwellings.
- The requirements imposed by this PI are the minimum standards that will ensure that all personnel and their families accommodated by the Department are provided with the appropriate level of fire safety within the dwelling they occupy.

Additional Requirements

- BS5839 Part 6:2004 recommends the use of heat detectors in kitchens and in the principal habitable room of the dwelling. In dwellings covered by this PI, where it is necessary to provide detection within the principal habitable room, the use of heat detectors is not acceptable and smoke detectors shall be utilised.
- Carbon Monoxide fire detectors shall not be utilised to replace a smoke/heat detector. They can be provided to supplement the required detectors. This type of detector should not be installed where carbon monoxide might occur under normal circumstances, in quantities sufficient to create the potential for unwanted alarms; such areas include badly ventilated kitchens or where vehicle or other exhaust fumes occur.
- The British Standard requires a sound level of 85dB in bedroom doorways with the door open. This should be increased where the doors attenuate sound by more than 20dB. In all cases where this PI is applicable, if the occupants are known to be hard of hearing the sound level is to be increased or additional sounders are to be provided to give the required sound levels.
- BS5839 Part 6:2004 gives options for normal and back-up power supplies for each grade of system; the minimum grade accepted by this PI is Grade D. In all new and refurbished dwellings and where possible in existing dwellings the normal power supply should take the form of mains supply from a separate electrically protected, regularly used local lighting circuit, as described in clause 15.5,a,ii of the Standard.
- Where batteries are used as the back up power supply for systems, those batteries must be replaced in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- Any further advice or information required on the content of this PI should be sought from the contact point detailed above.