

SAFE WORKING PROCEDURE

Fire Safety

CORPORATE HEALTH & SAFETY | VERSION 10.03 | DECEMBER 2019

STATEMENT:

In order to comply with legislation and fulfil statutory responsibility, the Council must make sure that:

- Appropriate advice, competence and resources are provided, to carry out the preventive and protective measures required by the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (RRFSO);
- All properties have a suitable and sufficient fire risk assessment;
- Appropriate information, instruction and training is provided to all employees and non-employees on Southampton City Council premises.
- Each property has an appointed Responsible Person – Property Management

SCOPE:

This Safe Working Procedure (SWP) applies to:

- All managers including head teachers;
- All employees of Southampton City Council;
- All contractors working for or on behalf of the Council.

Version Control

This Safe Working Procedure is issued and managed by Corporate Health and Safety Service.

Version Number	Date	Amendments
Version 1.00	Nov 2001	
Version 9.00	May 2007	
Version 10.00	Dec 2010	
Version 10.01	July 2012	Minor Amendments
Version 10.02	Dec 2015	Formatting and links
Version 10.03	Dec 2019	General review
Review Conducted		Next Review Date
		Jun 2012
	July 2012	July 2013
	Dec 2015	Dec 2017
	Dec 2019	Dec 2021

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1. Procedures

Identification of the Responsible Person

- 1.1. Responsibility for complying with the RRFSO rests with the employer i.e. Southampton City Council. The employer is held by strict liability under the Order and will always be held to be the “Responsible Person” where the workplace is to any extent under his or her control.
- 1.2. The Responsible Person referred to in the RRFSO (The Employer) is a person with strict liability for fire safety. He or she is not the same person as the Responsible Person – Property Management.

The Fire Risk Assessment

- 1.3. A suitable and sufficient recorded fire risk assessment is required for all workplaces as per the requirements of the RRFSO. Guidance is provided on the level of risk assessment required in [Table One](#) below.
- 1.4. The Senior Managers/Headteachers must assess their type of building to determine which level of assessment will be required. If necessary, this may mean procuring a contractor that meets the competency standards set out below in [Table One](#).
- 1.5. Southampton City Council has formatted two different types of Fire Risk Assessment for the competent person to use ‘In House’; or where contracted to 3rd party contractors, they may use their own format.
 - 1.5.1. **Building Fire Risk Assessment (FRA)** – required for every premise and
 - 1.5.2. **[Occupancy Fire Risk Assessment](#)** – this is available for Senior Managers/Headteachers who need to collate information from multi users of the building they are responsible for.
- 1.6. A fire risk assessment needs to be completed by a ‘competent’ person in consultation with the relevant guides set out in [section 1.8](#). The competent fire risk assessor should:
 - 1.6.1. Understand the relevant fire safety legislation;
 - 1.6.2. Have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the Government; guidance document relevant to the premises in question (see [section 1.8](#));
 - 1.6.3. Have appropriate education, training, knowledge and experience in the principles of fire safety;
 - 1.6.4. Have an understanding of fire development and the behaviour of people in fire;
 - 1.6.5. Understand the fire hazards, fire risks and relevant factors associated with occupants at special risk within the buildings of the type in question;
 - 1.6.6. Understand the causes of fire and means for their prevention;
 - 1.6.7. Understand the design principles of fire protection measures;
 - 1.6.8. Have appropriate training and/or experience in carrying out fire risk assessments.

Table One – Example Guide for Fire Risk Assessments and Competency Standards.

Note: Where there are multiple blocks of the same build design, consideration can be given to using the same principles which can be interpreted into bespoke fire risk assessments for all other blocks providing they are carried out by a competent person and professional advice is sought where unusual circumstances are found.

Examples of Building Type	Other factors	Type of Assessment	Competency standards examples	Review Period
Small single story office; low level occupancy no significant fire risk factors; simple lay out. Not sleeping accommodation.	Does not have significant fire hazard or store flammable substances or exposed ignition sources or occupants who need assistance to evacuate	Local 'In House' Building Fire Risk Assessment	Must have attended the one day in- house Fire Risk Assessment Course	Annually by a competent fire risk assessor.
Larger multiple floor offices, small simple layout schools, small depots, walk up blocks, Small care Homes	May store some flammable substances or have medium risk operational activities Occupants who need assistance to evacuate	Local 'In House' Building Fire Risk Assessment or by an external professional assessment	NEBOSH Fire Certificate accompanied by a NEBOSH diploma (or equivalents).	Annually by a competent fire risk assessor who has attended a one day fire risk assessment course. If there is significant change, or 5 yearly, a full 'baseline' review should be carried out by a competent person as defined in the competency standard example.
Large, more complex buildings. Civic Buildings, Schools, Secondary Schools Large complex depots, Medium to High rise towers, large care homes	Storage of flammable substances in significant quantities, high risk activities, high volume of people. Sleeping Accommodation. Occupants who need assistance to evacuate	High level Fire Risk Assessment by a fire engineer may be from a professional organisation specialising in Fire Risk Assessment	Must be members of the Institution of Fire Engineers. Recommended Chartered Member of the Institute of Occupational Safety and Health	Annually by a competent fire risk assessor who has attended a one day fire risk assessment course. If there is significant change, or 5 yearly, a full 'baseline' review should be carried out by a competent person as defined in the competency standard example.
Multiple occupancy Buildings	Where the building contains different employers or departments	An Occupancy Fire Risk Assessment to compliment the building fire risk assessment	Must have attended the one day in house Fire Risk Assessment Course	Annually by a competent fire risk assessor.

- 1.7. Prior to completing a Fire Risk Assessment, you may find that using or developing a drawing of the floor plan of your site will assist you in this task. The floor plan can be populated with relevant information such as location of fire extinguishers, call points, smoke detectors, fire exits etc.
- 1.8. A one day Fire Risk Assessment Course is available through Learning and Development. There are a series of Fire Risk Assessment government guides available to download from the 'Fire Microsite', to help fire risk assessors carry out a fire risk assessment in less complex working environments. These are:
 - 1.8.1. [Offices and Shops](#)
 - 1.8.2. [Factories and Warehouse storage premises](#)
 - 1.8.3. [Sleeping Accommodation](#)
 - 1.8.4. [Residential Care Premises](#)
 - 1.8.5. [Educational Premises](#)
 - 1.8.6. [Small and Medium Places of Assembly](#)
 - 1.8.7. [Large Places of Assembly](#)
 - 1.8.8. [Theatres, cinemas and similar premises](#)
 - 1.8.9. [Open air events and venues](#)
 - 1.8.10. [Healthcare Premises](#)
 - 1.8.11. [Transport Premises and facilities](#)
 - 1.8.12. [Means of Escape for Disabled People \(Supplementary Guide\)](#)
 - 1.8.13. [Animal Premises and Stables](#)
 - 1.8.14. [HSG 168 Fire Safety in Construction](#)
- 1.9. The Fire Risk Assessment is a 'live' document that must be formally reviewed annually. Where a high level, high quality risk assessment has been completed by a professional organisation, the review at that level should be carried out every five years or sooner at the same professional level. If there is any reason to suspect that the Building Fire Risk Assessment is invalid or there has been a significant change in the premises that has affected the fire precautions, the fire risk assessment will need to be reviewed, and if necessary revised. Reasons for review could include:
 - 1.9.1. Changes to work processes or the way that they are organised, including the introduction of new equipment;
 - 1.9.2. Alterations to the building, including the internal layout and building works
 - 1.9.3. Substantial changes to furniture and fixings;
 - 1.9.4. The introduction, change of use or increase in the storage of hazardous substances;
 - 1.9.5. The failure of fire precautions, eg. fire detection systems and alarm systems, life safety sprinklers or ventilation systems;
 - 1.9.6. Significant changes to displays or quantities of stock;
 - 1.9.7. A significant increase in the number of people present; and
 - 1.9.8. The presence of people with some form of disability;

Fire Safety Management Plan

- 1.10. The Fire Authorities are the main agency responsible for enforcing all fire-safety legislation in non-domestic premises. If they visit the premises the Inspector may request to see evidence of the Fire Safety Management Plan.
- 1.11. Documents that may be requested include:
 - 1.11.1. Fire Risk Assessment and action plan

- 1.11.2. Fire Precautions Log Book
- 1.11.3. Records of staff training and drills
- 1.11.4. Records of testing and maintenance of fire-fighting equipment
- 1.11.5. Records of notification of faults and records of repair to fire-related equipment or passive fire protection
- 1.11.6. Records of testing and maintenance of all fire safety systems including fire alarms, emergency lighting, sprinkler systems and smoke ventilation systems
- 1.11.7. Records of fire inspections
- 1.11.8. Fire Safety Policy and Procedures
- 1.11.9. Confirmation of the 'Responsible Person' for the building
- 1.11.10. The inspector may also wish to inspect all or part of the premises and to talk to members of staff.
- 1.11.11. Further guidance on the implementation of these documents can be found on the [Fire Safety Micro Site](#)

Information and Training

- 1.12. Anyone connected with the working environment must be aware of the fire procedures for the site/workplace, which could include a vehicle. The amount of information is dependent on the size and hazards present.
- 1.13. For visitors to a 'low' risk environment, a 'Fire Action Notice' (see [Fire Safety Micro Site](#) for an example) displayed in common areas and site plan may be sufficient. Additional controls could include:
 - 1.13.1. Ensuring all visitors are accompanied by a member of staff at all times;
 - 1.13.2. Providing information to visitors about the site;
 - 1.13.3. Advising visitors when they sign into the building of the emergency procedures;
 - 1.13.4. Illustrating the procedures on a visitor's badge.
- 1.14. For employees and temporary workers, the fire emergency procedures must be provided on the first day of starting work within a new environment, this is included within the 'staff induction' checklist that must be given to new staff.
- 1.15. The fire arrangements have to be made specific to the site, to include:
 - 1.15.1. A physical walk around to show the escape routes;
 - 1.15.2. The location of the assembly point;
 - 1.15.3. Any additional hazards to be aware of;
 - 1.15.4. Any arrangements that are in place or required i.e. Location of extinguishers/call points, what is sounds or looks like (flashing beacon);
 - 1.15.5. How to call the emergency services;
 - 1.15.6. Introduction of the Fire Marshal(s) for the area.
- 1.16. For employees with access onto the Southampton City Council intranet, there is 'Fire Safety E-Learning' available that should be completed every two years. To access this system, a 'Login' and 'Password' is required. To obtain access to this visit the [Learning & Development](#) site on the intranet. For staff that do not have access to online training, local training provision must be made relevant to their job role.
- 1.17. For schools, there is a Fire Safety training available via iHasco if this is used by the school, otherwise from other training providers sourced locally. Fire Safety training in schools should be provided annually and when a new member of staff joins.

- 1.18. All course attendance and training must be recorded locally.
- 1.19. Training courses are available through Learning and Development and include:
 - 1.19.1. Fire Risk Assessment
 - 1.19.2. Fire Marshal Training
- 1.20. Further information on the course content and available dates can be found on the [Learning & Development](#) intranet page.
- 1.21. Where provided, evacuation chair training for nominated staff must be carried out and refreshed regularly. Training is available through the evacuation chair suppliers, or alternatively contact the Health and Safety Service via email: health.and.safety@southampton.gov.uk

Honorarium Payment

- 1.22. Fire Marshals may currently receive an honorarium payment. It is the line manager's responsibility to instruct and liaise with HR Pay in writing (an email is acceptable), providing all details, if an allowance is to be paid. Similarly the line manager must ensure the allowance ceases when it is no longer appropriate. To contact HR Pay please use hr.pay@southampton.gov.uk or hr.payschools@southampton.gov.uk

Maintenance of Fire Equipment

- 1.23. Planned inspection, maintenance and testing procedures should be established and used to ensure that all fire protection systems can operate effectively when required. Arrangements should be made for all fire safety equipment, installations and systems to be inspected and tested on a regular basis by a competent person, This service may be provided by Capital Assets. See [SWP Property Management and Compliance](#) for further guidance regarding:
 - 1.23.1. Fire detection systems
 - 1.23.2. Automatic suppression systems
 - 1.23.3. Door control mechanisms
 - 1.23.4. Smoke control systems
 - 1.23.5. Evacuation and fire-fighting lifts
 - 1.23.6. Emergency lighting
 - 1.23.7. Standby power systems
 - 1.23.8. Escalators/lifts
- 1.24. Further information on the routine inspection and maintenance of fire safety installations can be found in the guides referred to in [section 1.8](#) or on the [Fire Safety Micro Site](#). [The Responsible Person – Property Management](#) must ensure that all inspections, maintenance and testing procedures are recorded and carried out by a competent person. Where the Responsible Person – Property Management decides not to follow the guidance, they must justify their decision through risk assessment and in writing.

Evacuation Procedures

- 1.25. Every site must have an emergency evacuation procedure established and a fire drill carried out at least annually (termly in schools). This should be recorded and any

shortcomings identified through the fire drill should be remedied.

- 1.26. Procedures must be in place to fully evacuate everyone from the building. It is permitted to temporarily use refuges but not to be reliant on the fire brigade to assist in the evacuation, this must be undertaken by onsite staff or PEEP buddies.
- 1.27. Any employee who has difficulty in evacuating premises unaided must bring this to the attention of their line manager and have a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) agreed with control measures in place.
- 1.28. A [PEEP form](#) is available in the Forms library and must be completed in consultation with the line manager and the individual. The procedures agreed must be practiced and recorded and all interested parties provided with a copy.

Control of Contractors

- 1.29. The Senior Managers/Headteachers must ensure that contractor's operations and the fire risks associated with such operations are adequately assessed and controlled. If 'hot works' are being carried out, these activities need to be authorised. See [SWP Control of Contractors and Service Providers](#), [SWP Permit to Works](#) and [Hot Works Permit](#).
- 1.30. Any building works need to consider the hazard of fire and smoke, and incorporate appropriate precautions.

Electrical Safety

- 1.31. Electrical faults are a common cause of fires. Arrangements must be in place for the testing and inspection of both the fixed electrical installations and all portable appliances. See [SWP Electrical Safety in the Workplace](#).

2. Other Safe Working Procedures Relevant to This Document

- 2.1. [DSEAR](#)
- 2.2. [Risk Assessment](#)
- 2.3. [Young Persons at Work](#)
- 2.4. [Work Equipment](#)
- 2.5. [Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare](#)

Note: Other safe working procedures may apply and the assessor should consult the SWPs. An A-Z is available on the Council's [Health and Safety Intranet](#).

3. Main Legislation and Guidance Relevant to This Document

- 3.1. [Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974](#)
- 3.2. [The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999](#)
- 3.3. [Construction, Design and Management Regulations 2015](#)
- 3.4. [The Regulatory Reform \(Fire Safety\) Order 2005](#)

4. Further Information

- 4.1. Corporate Health and Safety Service – email health.and.safety@southampton.gov.uk
Telephone 023 8091 7770 (option 2)
- 4.2. Health and Safety Executive
www.hse.gov.uk
 - 4.1.1. [HSG 168 Fire Safety in Construction](#)