



The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

The New Fire Safety Legislation

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (RRFSO) came into force on 1st October 2006. This legislation affects all non-domestic premises.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) Minister responsible for fire safety Jim Fitzpatrick said: "The Government's over-riding aim is to save more people from death and injury by reducing risk and preventing fires. "Over the coming months, we will continue to work with stake holders to ensure that all those affected by the new rules have the support that they need."

Overview of the Legislation

The old safety laws detail employers and others with responsibilities for safety in the event of fire. Previously there were various pieces of Legislation that contain fire safety provisions, which caused confusion in complying with the law.

As part of the Governments' commitment to reduce death, injury and damage caused by fire, the ODPM has now implemented changes in fire safety law. Previous fire safety law is now repealed or revoked and is replaced with the RRFSO, which came into force on 1st October 2006.

The RRFSO is a fire risk assessment based approach where the responsible person(s) for the premises must decide how to address the risks identified, while meeting certain requirements.

By adopting a fire risk assessment, the responsible person(s) will identify how to prevent fire from occurring in the first place by removing or reducing hazards and risks (ignition sources) and check that there are adequate protections if a fire were still to occur. Therefore the main emphasis of the changes will be to move towards fire prevention.

The fire risk assessment must also take into consideration the effect a fire may have on anyone in or around your premises plus neighbouring property. The building fire risk assessment will also need to be kept under regular review.

The RRFSO will apply to virtually all non-domestic properties, including voluntary organisations and will be subject to monitoring and where appropriate enforcement by the Local Authority Fire Service (LAFS).

Overall the RRFSO is intended to be less burdensome and clearer.

Summary of RRFSO

- All existing fire legislation is repealed or revoked, which includes the Fire Precautions Act 1971, the amended 1997 Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations plus 100 other pieces of fire related legislation.
- Fire certificates are abolished and no longer issued.
- Responsible Person(s) are now responsible for fire safety. They must conduct a fire risk assessment regardless of the size of the risk.
- The identified Responsible Person(s) would take full corporate liability.
- Extended scope of consideration now to include property safety, fire fighter safety and the environment around the site. The Responsible Person has a duty to protect all risks.
- Unlike the amended 1997 Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations, the RRFSO places emphasis on business continuity and containing and preventing the spread of small fires.
- Protection is explicitly extended to all occupants, which would include employees, visitors, contractors and passers-by who would all have to be considered in the fire risk assessment.

Continued overleaf

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What are the implications for business?

Building fire safety is now solely risk assessment led; therefore all businesses regardless of size will have to conduct a comprehensive fire risk assessment to identify;

- Elimination or reduction of risks (ignition sources), Suitable means of detecting & raising the alarm in the event of fire,
- Adequate emergency escape routes & exits,
- The appropriate type & sufficient quantities of fire extinguishers,
- Correct type & sufficient quantities of fire signs & notices,
- Provisions for the correct maintenance of installed fire equipment,
- Suitable provisions for the protection of LAFS personnel,
- Ensure that occupants receive the appropriate instruction / training in, e.g. actions to be taken in the event of fire and fire evacuation drills,

Who is the Responsible Person(s)?

- Employer with control of a workplace, Failing that or in addition;
- Person with overall management of a building,
- Occupier of premises, Owner of premises (i.e. empty buildings),
- Landlords (multi occupied buildings).

Fire Risk Assessment

Ensure that you meet your legal obligations imposed by the new Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

The responsible person must make a suitable and sufficient assessment of the fire risk so as to identify the general fire precautions necessary to protect all building occupants and reduce the instances of fire occurring.

How can HSB help?

HSB can conduct a fire risk assessment on your behalf and on completion provide you with a comprehensive fire safety management plan / risk assessment.

HSB will be able to assist you in fulfilling your obligations with these important Regulations.

To find out more about the services that HSB provide and the ways we help industry improve safety, reduce operating costs and improve efficiency, contact your local HSB office.

Alternatively contact the Marketing Manager on:

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