

Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

Fire Act 2005 in Scotland

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 introduced significant change and as well as simplifying existing legislation it introduced the need for employers, building owners and occupiers to have a greater understanding of fire safety and nominate a responsible person to ensure compliance.

The Order made under the Regulatory Reform Act 2001 replaced many of the references to fire safety in other legislation such as the Fire Precautions Act, Licensing Act and Housing Acts with a single simple Order. It requires any person who exercises some level of control in premises to take reasonable steps to reduce the risk from fire and insure occupants can safely escape if a fire does occur.

In such premises achieving fire safety is often a matter of common sense but you will have to ensure that sufficient time is put aside to work through the necessary steps. In more complicated premises or those with a high life risk more expert help may be required.

The Order applies to virtually all premises and covers nearly every type of building, structure and open space (eg offices and shops, premises that provide care, community halls, common areas of houses in multiple occupation including common fire warning systems, pubs, clubs, restaurants, schools, tents & marquees, hotels, hostels, factories and warehouses). It excludes purely domestic premises occupied by a single family group.

The responsible person is required to:

- Carry out or nominate someone to carry out a fire risk assessment identifying the risks and hazards
- Consider who may be especially at risk

- Eliminate or reduce the risk from fire as far as is reasonably practical and provide general fire precautions to deal with any residual risk
- Take additional measures to ensure fire safety where flammable or explosive materials are used or stored
- Create a plan to deal with any emergency and in most cases document findings
- Review the findings as necessary

Under the Order the responsible person must carry out a fire safety risk assessment and implement and maintain a fire management plan. Fire Certificates are no longer issued although if you have one you can use it as a basis for fire safety planning if you are satisfied that it is sufficient.

Fire risk assessment

01 Identify fire hazards

- a) Sources of ignition
- b) Sources of fuel
- c) Sources of oxygen

02 Identify people at risk

- a) People in and around the premises
- b) People who are especially at risk

03 Evaluate, remove or reduce and protect

- a) Evaluate the risk of a fire starting
- b) Evaluate the risk to people from a fire
- c) Remove and reduce the fire hazards
- d) Remove and reduce the risks to people from a fire
- e) Protect people by providing fire precautions

04 Record, plan, inform, instruct and train

- a) Record any major findings and action you have taken
- b) Discuss and work with other responsible people
- c) Prepare an emergency plan
- d) Inform and instruct relevant people
- e) Provide training

05 Review

- a) Review the fire risk assessments at regular intervals
- b) Make changes where necessary

General fire precautions

- Consider whether a means of detecting or warning of fire is required even if a detection system is not practical or feasible a means of raising the alarm should be put in place
- Suitable fire extinguishers should be provided and located at strategic points throughout the workplace
- Establish safe routes for people to leave the premises
- Ensure that the travel distance to a place of safety is acceptable - depending on the number of exits routes and complexity of the building
- Ensure that these routes are kept clear at all times and include suitable lighting and signage
- An adequate number of people need to be trained so that they know what to do in the event of an emergency
- The names, locations and actions to take in the event of an emergency should be posted at strategic positions throughout the work place

References

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