

FIS Safety Alert

Suitability of gypsum-based systems in the construction of smoke shafts

Concerns have been raised with FIS that gypsum-based systems are being specified to construct smoke shafts for mechanically ventilated systems in some high-rise buildings. Members are advised that gypsum-based systems are typically tested for fire resistance, sound insulation, air permeability and robustness. These tests do not replicate the pressure differential conditions or measure leakage at ambient or elevated temperatures which may be required for this application.

Members are advised to be watchful for this detail in their tender requests and project specifications and seek clarification, especially where any specific requirement to meet performance in accordance with BS EN1366-8, the shaft is classified to BS EN 13501-4 or elevated negative air pressures are referenced. On design matters members should seek clarification from the Principal Designer and/or Engineering Services Designers and consult with Manufacturers with respect to any live or legacy specifications. They are also reminded to be watchful for any clauses in contract that may leave them with responsibility for the design, compliance or cost of demonstrating compliance of such details.

If you have additional questions, please contact the FIS Technical team on 0121 707 0077 or email jamesparlour@thefis.org or joecilia@thefis.org