

Lifts and Essential Firefighting Equipment

Application

The requirement to undertake monthly routine checks of lifts for use by firefighters, evacuation lifts and essential fire-fighting equipment, only applies to buildings which meet the definition of a 'Tall Building' category (at least 11 metres and/or five storeys) – see Fact Sheet – Tall Building Definition.

Purpose

The purpose of checking and logging faults of lifts for use by firefighters, evacuation lifts and essential fire-fighting equipment by RPs is to provide essential information to SJFRS to help deal with an emergency incident and help ensure the safety of residents and firefighters.

Definitions

“Essential fire-fighting equipment” means key fire-fighting equipment located within the common parts of the building to include:

- Fire detection and fire alarm systems including any detectors linked to ancillary equipment such as smoke control systems
- Smoke Control Systems
- Sprinkler Systems
- Automatic door release mechanisms linked to fire alarm systems
- Inlets/outlets for dry-rising mains
- Inlets/outlets for wet-rising mains

“Routine check” means a check that any lift or piece of equipment is in efficient working order and in good repair, carried out in accordance with the relevant industry standard or any recommendations made by the manufacturers of equipment within an operators' manual.

General considerations

Lifts

There will be many types and generations of lifts in different buildings, so the key requirement is to ensure all lifts that can be used by firefighters are maintained appropriately.

The SJFRS recommends the use of best practice when inspecting fire operating lifts and all essential fire-fighting equipment.

This equipment will have regular inspection, servicing and maintenance requirements specified by their manufacturer and relevant industry/British Standards (or equivalent).

The more complex elements of these specified testing and maintenance regimes are recommended to be carried out by specialist contractors, whereas other elements will require simple checks by the owner.

The RP will need to ensure that any (competent) person(s) appointed to assist is able to undertake the required safety checks following either guidance for routine checks provided by the relevant industry standard or any recommendations made by the manufacturers of equipment within an operators' manual.

Failing to identify and repair faults quickly, or allowing such equipment to fall into disrepair, will generate otherwise avoidable risks. It was these types of risks that led the Grenfell Tower Inquiry to make recommendations to ensure that routine simple checks and repairs are not ignored by RPs.

The Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 (FSER) goes further than the Grenfell Tower Inquiry's recommendations for checks as they include checks and reporting on lifts for use by firefighters, evacuation lifts and essential fire-fighting equipment. This focus is to ensure as far as reasonably practicable, that

facilities and installations required in an emergency incident are serviceable for use and will operate correctly in the event of fire.

RP's should refer to British Standard 9999 in order to identify the latest required safety checks and maintenance recommendations for the equipment mentioned above. However, below is a general guide to a suggested testing routine.

- Fire Detection System – weekly, monthly, periodic testing;
- Smoke Control Systems – weekly, three monthly, yearly;
- Sprinkler Systems – weekly, six monthly, yearly;
- Dry/Wet Riser Systems – yearly;
- Extinguishers – yearly.

Fault reporting

It is asked from the RP to rectify any fault within a 24-hour period and to log all outcomes in the Premises Information File stored in the Secure Information Box.

Any lifts or fire-fighting fixed installations not available for use and/or unresolved fire safety issues should be logged in the 'Off the run list' provided in the Premises Information File.