



# QUEENSLAND FIRE and RESCUE SERVICE

## Duties of Owner/Occupier Guideline

If you are the owner, or a business or person, that is occupying, or managing a building in Queensland you have legal obligations to ensure the safety of any person in that building in the event of a fire or other emergency. Outlined below, in simple terms, are some of the requirements of the *Fire and Rescue Service Act 1990 (FRSA)* and the *Building Fire Safety Regulations 2008 (BFSR)*. This is an awareness guide only and full details of the legislation can be accessed online at the Queensland Legislative website, [www.legislation.qld.gov.au](http://www.legislation.qld.gov.au) or on the Queensland Fire and Rescue site [www.fire.qld.gov.au](http://www.fire.qld.gov.au) under *Building Fire Safety*. For further information you can contact the Legislation Implementation Project team on (07) 3635 1930 or email to [fireris@emergency.qld.gov.au](mailto:fireris@emergency.qld.gov.au).

The main objective of the legislation is to ensure that people can evacuate safely and quickly from a building in the event of fire or emergency and to ensure that required fire safety installations for the building are maintained so that they can operate in the way that they were originally intended.

The onus is on you to provide;

- Clear evacuation routes;
- Fire evacuation planning and instruction;
- Maintenance of fire safety installations.

### **EVACUATION**

#### **CLEAR EVACUATION ROUTES**

An evacuation route is a path of travel that an evacuee may use to get to a place of safety outside the building in the case of fire or other emergency. You must ensure that the evacuation routes in the building which you occupy are always available, not obstructed and well signed.

Do not allow anything to be placed or to remain in the evacuation routes. This means keeping passageways and stairways clear of anything which could impede anyone trying to exit the building and includes anything which could be knocked over that could cause a blockage. It also includes obstacles placed, within two metres, outside the final exit door of the building. A final exit door is one that is:

- required under a development application approval;
- designated with an exit sign;
- shown on the evacuation diagrams for the building.

The obligation for you to keep evacuation routes clear extends to the adjoining buildings. You must not allow anything to block your neighbours exit, for example: placing industrial bins or parking a vehicle within two metres of their final exit door.

Anyone who places something in a path of travel that may hinder evacuees in the event of fire would be held responsible for obstructing an evacuation route and be liable to prosecution.

It is illegal to lock a door on an evacuation route if you know, or should know if there is anyone in the building, unless the building is a child care centre or a place of lawful custody. This applies to doors in the path of travel from a common area of the building through a final exit door to a place of safety outside the building.

However a door is not considered to be locked if it can be opened from the internal side using a device that can be operated by one downward or pushing action using one hand. This includes electronic doors with a button or switch, as long as they can be opened manually if the power fails. A door that can be opened in accordance with the Building Code of Australia (BCA) requirement, relevant to the age of the building, is acceptable.

For occupancies such as dementia units, where there may be a practice of locking doors for the safety of the patients, the locking mechanism used will have to comply with the BCA.

## **FIRE AND EVACUATION PLANS**

### **Fire and Evacuation Plans**

You are required to have a detailed, written plan of what to do if a fire or other emergency occurs in the building. It must be available for inspection by anyone during normal business hours. The legislation identifies what information is the minimum information required in a fire and evacuation plan. You must include, but are not limited to:

- details of the persons responsible for developing, changing and reviewing the plan;
- the evacuation procedures and coordinators;
- the procedures for giving fire and evacuation instructions to the people working in the building
- the method of operation of fire fighting equipment and manually operated alarms;
- the name, contact details and qualification status of the Fire Safety Adviser for the building, if one is required.

The managing entity (the entity responsible for the general access, or common areas of a building, e.g. the body corporate or Centre manager) is classified as the primary occupier and is responsible for ensuring that the whole of building evacuation plan takes into account the evacuation plans of individual tenants (called secondary occupiers). The secondary occupiers must then ensure that their plans are consistent with the whole of building plan.

Evacuation plans must be updated within one month of any alteration to the existing conditions, for example if the building is refurbished or the person who is the evacuation coordinator stops works in the building. Both the primary and secondary occupiers are to notify each other of any changes made to their evacuation plan.

If the building you occupy is required to have fire safety management procedures as a condition of occupation due to an alternative solution for a performance requirement, then those fire safety management procedures must be included in the fire and evacuation plan.

You must review the evacuation plan at regular intervals of not more than one year. A written record must be kept of that review. If you occupy a building that requires a Fire Safety Adviser, they must be given a copy of that record. In low occupancy buildings (such as corner shops or other small businesses), if the occupier is the only person responsible for carrying out the evacuation coordination procedures, then it is sufficient for that person to review the evacuation plan every 12 months.

### **Evacuation Coordination Procedures**

In a time of fire or hazardous material emergency, ongoing communication between occupants is critical, especially where evacuation options other than full evacuation are appropriate. In some buildings such as hospitals, aged care facilities and multi-storey buildings partial evacuation may be appropriate; for example the evacuation of several floors to protect occupants while a localized fire is being extinguished by emergency services personnel. This includes buildings with separate fire compartments where it is possible to remain in place pending full evacuation to an external place of safety.

**Evacuation procedures** must include instructions for alerting, and communicating with persons in the building and the fire service. You must include procedures for

- checking whether all persons have been evacuated, (for example: a roll call of known occupants);
- advising the evacuation coordinator of the number of persons evacuated;
- the number and identity of any persons not accounted for;
- meeting attending fire officers.

You must have additional arrangements for evacuation procedures if occupants of the building have special needs (such as children, blind people, wheel chair bound people or those affected by liquor). When considering or reviewing evacuation procedures, you should take into account the type of people who would be likely to use the building or any characteristics of the building which may cause difficulties or risks during evacuation.

### **Evacuation Signs**

To assist people trying to exit the building in an emergency you are required to display evacuation signs that show the procedures for evacuation from that part of the building. These signs should be placed conspicuously along every evacuation route and include an evacuation diagram. The evacuation diagram must be properly oriented to the location in the building and show, in a way that could be understood by people who may be reading them, the following fire safety reference points:

- where someone is in relation to the building;
- the route to the nearest exit;
- each exit from the building;
- any intercommunication devices in the common areas of the building;
- the location of manually operated fire alarms;
- the location of fire firefighting equipment;

- each assembly area for the building;
- the route from the exits to the assembly area.

### Signs in accommodation units

In places which people may visit and sleep but may not be familiar with the building, such as hotels or holiday apartments, a sign must be conspicuously displayed inside the room and securely attached to a wall or the internal side of each unit door clearly stating the procedures for evacuating the building in the event of a fire or emergency. They must also show each route from the unit to a place of safety outside of the building and the fire fighting equipment and manually operated fire alarms in and near the unit.

### Fire Safety Advisers

If the building you occupy is defined as **high occupancy** you are required to appoint and train a Fire Safety Adviser (FSA). The role of the FSA will be to provide/arrange evacuation training to staff and to be involved in the fire and evacuation plan development, review and practice process.

The FSA must be appointed within one month of taking occupancy in the building. They must have a current Building Fire Safety Qualification from a registered training organisation and will require reaccreditation every three years. A person can be a FSA for more than one building, for example a university may have one or two FSA's to cover all of the buildings on the campus.

A **high occupancy** building is defined as one where;

- it is a class 2 or 3 building (as defined in the BCA) that is more than 25 m in height;
- it is a class 2, 3, 5, 6, 7b, 8, 9a or 9b building and classified as a workplace under the *Workplace Health and Safety Regulation 1997* and 30 or more employees are normally employed within the meaning of the *Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995*;
- it is a licensed premises, nominated by the Fire Commissioner as being at risk of overcrowding.

### Evacuation Instructions

To ensure that people within the building are aware of what to do in the event of fire it is required that each person working in the building is given adequate instructions. You are required to give the following instructions to the nominated people, including those tasked with conducting an evacuation, within the specified time frames.

- **General evacuation instruction** means instruction on the location of fire safety references points such as escape routes, fire alarms, fire fighting equipment and assembly areas, and explaining the procedures for evacuating a building.

You must give general evacuation instructions to all persons in the building no later than two days after beginning work in the building and then at intervals of not more than one year.

- **First response instruction** means instruction on the method of operation of manually operated fire alarms and fire fighting equipment such as extinguishers.

You must give first response instructions to all persons no later than one month after they begin work in the building and then at intervals of not more than two years. These can be in the form of a physical demonstration or an instructional video, CD or internet presentation etc.

- **Evacuation coordination instructions** must be given to the evacuation coordinators and the persons responsible for carrying out the evacuation procedures (responsible persons) every year.

Further evacuation instructions must be given to all workers if any changes within the building mean that the fire and evacuation plan or procedures are changed. This applies if the operation or installation point of fire safety equipment is changed. These further instructions must be given as soon as practicable but no later than one month after the change in the building.

For high occupancy buildings the instructions must be given by the FSA, a registered training organisation or, the FSA can arrange for the training to be provided. For all other buildings there are no qualification requirements for instructors.

In buildings used for temporary events occupiers are obliged to ensure that an evacuation coordinator is appointed and the people responsible for carrying out the evacuation procedures are identified and instructed before the event is conducted. Further, all workers must receive general evacuation and first response instruction before they start work. A temporary event is one that lasts no longer than three months.

### **Record of Instruction**

You have to be able to demonstrate that you have provided the required instructions to everyone in the building. A record must be kept of each person who receives evacuation instructions and must include;

- the name of each person who was given the instructions;
- the name of the person who gave the instructions;
- the date the instructions were given;
- a brief description of the instructions given.

### **Evacuation Practice**

Evacuation drills or practice must be conducted every 12 months by enough people and in such a way that the evacuation plan is adequately tested. You must do this using an appropriate number of people and in an appropriate way (*BFSR Section 44* provides examples of acceptable evacuation practice). To demonstrate that this requirement has been met you must keep a record of each evacuation practice containing:

- the date of the evacuation;
- the times when the evacuation started and ended;
- any action to be taken as a result of the evacuation, including, for example, carrying out a review of the building's fire and evacuation plan or giving additional fire and evacuation instructions.

## Occupancy Limits for Buildings

In an emergency the ability to safely evacuate the building can be dependant on the number of people in the building. Occupancy limit obligations apply to all buildings and take into account the following factors:

- the number of exits;
- the available clear floor area;
- the flammability of fittings installed;
- the fire safety installations in the building;
- what the building is used for.

You are to ensure that the number of persons in the building at any one time does not present an unreasonable risk through overcrowding.

In certain licensed premises the Commissioner may decide that there is an unacceptable risk of overcrowding. In this case the Commissioner may issue a notice stating the maximum number of people allowed in the building and this must be included in the evacuation plan. Check *FRSA Part 9A* for further information on occupancy limits.

## **MAINTENANCE OF FIRE SAFETY INSTALLATIONS**

Fire safety installations are required to be maintained to a standard of safety and reliability at all times, or a substantial threat to occupants and property may exist. It is your responsibility to ensure that maintenance of the prescribed fire safety installations in the building you occupy is carried out by an appropriately qualified person. That is, one who holds a license that is of a class specified in the *Queensland Building Services Authority Regulation 2003*.

Maintenance of each prescribed fire safety installation must be carried out in compliance with the relevant current Australian Standards (AS). If the maintenance contractor believes that the current standard would adversely affect the installation, then a relevant former Australian Standard may be applied. If there is no relevant former Australian Standard, then the maintenance should be carried out in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.

Attached is an inspection schedule matrix to assist you to identify the standard and the basic maintenance requirements for each particular installation. AS1851 2005 is the standard which covers the majority of installations that will be in the building you occupy. If there are any of the items, listed in the matrix, installed in your building you must ensure:

- that they are maintained to the standard identified;
- they are serviced at the required intervals;
- appropriate recording of maintenance is completed.

Repairs required to prescribed fire safety installations must be carried out within one month unless there is a reasonable excuse, such as availability of appropriately qualified persons, the remoteness of the site or scarcity of parts. However more serious faults classified as **critical defects** require immediate attention.

A **critical defect** is one that is likely to render a prescribed fire safety installation inoperable and likely to pose a threat to the safety of occupants in the building in the

event of fire. Maintenance contractors are required to notify the occupier of any critical defect in the prescribed fire safety installation within 24 hours of detection. Once notified of a critical defect in any prescribed fire safety installation in the building you must ensure that it is repaired as soon as possible and put in place interim measures to ensure the safety of occupants of the building, for example: security guards patrolling the building.

### **Record of maintenance**

You must keep a record of maintenance for all work carried out on the prescribed fire safety installations in the building. The record of maintenance must show:

- the date the work was done;
- the name and number of the licensed contractor who carried out the work;
- what work was done and what was the relevant standard;
- whether a critical defect notice has been issued to you.
- a signed statement from the contractor stating that the information in the record of maintenance is correct.

You must provide a copy of the record of maintenance to the commissioner annually.

### **Keeping of records**

All of the records which you are required to keep; for example, the instructions to staff, maintenance records and evacuation plans must be kept on the premises in a manner which will preserve them in the event of fire. A metal filing cabinet is considered adequate for this purpose. In addition, another copy must be kept in a secure place at another location and can be an electronic copy.

These records must be kept for at least two years after they were made. If there is a change in occupancy the former occupier must give the records to the current occupier within one month.

## **BUDGET ACCOMMODATION BUILDINGS**

### **Fire Safety Management Plan**

If you are the owner of a budget accommodation building, you are required to prepare a Fire Safety Management Plan (FSMP). A budget accommodation building is one used for accommodation for six or more persons who share bathroom or sanitary facilities. The plan must state:

- the allowable number of occupants, calculated by the room sizes (as defined by the *Queensland Development Code* MP2.1);
- the evacuation plan for the building including provisions for disabled occupants;
- proposed training programs for occupants and staff;
- a list of the fire safety installations in the building;
- the proposed maintenance schedule for the fire safety installations;
- the record of maintenance for the fire safety installations;
- a floor plan of the building.

A copy of the FSMP must be kept in the building and you must allow anyone access to view it whenever the building is open for business. The FSMP must be updated within a month of any change of circumstances affecting the plan.

The *Queensland Development Code MP 2.1* defines the fire safety requirements for budget accommodation buildings dependant on the size and the construction type of the building. Specific requirements cover:

- Early warning system;
- Emergency lighting;
- Occupant density;
- Travel distances;
- Emergency escape;
- Protection of exit paths;
- Exit signage;
- Portable fire extinguishers;
- Fire hose reels;
- Fire fighting water supply;
- Smoke hazard management.





# Australian Standard 1851 – 2005 including amendment 2

## “Maintenance of Fire Protection Systems and Equipment”

Inspection, test, preventative maintenance and survey requirements

### FIRE SAFETY INSTALLATIONS & FEATURES

INSPECTION PROCEDURE OF FIRE SAFETY INSTALLATIONS (F.S.I)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. INSPECT FOR OBVIOUS VISUAL FAULTS ONLY.</li> <li>2. INSPECT FOR FAULTS &amp; WITNESS TEST OF F.S.I BY A COMPETENT PERSON.</li> <li>3. INSPECT FOR FAULTS WHERE POSSIBLE AND ACCEPT LOGBOOK DETAILS OF F.S.I.</li> <li>4. CHECK BUILDING FILE FOR DETAILS OF ANY EXTRA REQUIREMENTS.</li> </ol>
REQUIRED RECORD KEEPING OF FIRE SAFETY INSTALLATIONS (F.S.I)	<p>L = REQUIRED LOG BOOK            C = CERTIFICATE OF MAINTENANCE REQUIRED            R = RECORD OF MAINTENANCE REQUIRED            T = METAL TAG ON F.S.I. OF SERVICE DETAILS / SERVICE LABEL            N/A = NOT APPLICABLE – NO RECORD OF KEEPING REQUIRED            (Y) = WEEKLY TEST MAY BE OMITTED REFER AS 1851-2005</p>

SPECIAL FIRE SERVICE = *	INSPECTION PROCEDURES FOR FSI	REQUIRED RECORD KEEPING FOR FSI	MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE							ANNUAL SURVEY OF INSTALLATION	MAINTENANCE STANDARD OR BUILDING REFERENCE
			Wk	MTH	3MTH	6MTH	12MTH	3YR	5YR		

#### STRUCTURAL FEATURES

ACCESS PANEL THROUGH FIRE RATED CONSTRUCTION	1	R-T				Y	Y					1851-SECTION 17
PENETRATION THROUGH FIRE RATED CONSTRUCTION	1	R				Y	Y			6MTH Y		1851-SECTION 17
FIRE DAMPERS	3	L-T				Y	Y		Y			1851-SECTION 17
FIRE SHUTTERS	3	R-T			Y	Y	Y		Y			1851-SECTION 17 & 18
FIRE DOORS (E.G. LARGE SLIDING INDUSTRIAL DOORS)	3	L-T			Y	Y	Y					1851-SECTION 17
FIRE WINDOWS	1	R-T				Y	Y		Y			1851-SECTION 17 & 18
FIRE CURTAINS	2	L				Y	Y		Y			1851-SECTION 18
STRUCTURAL FIRE PROTECTION	1	L				Y	Y			6MTH Y		1851-SECTION 17
SYSTEMS REQUIRED TO HAVE A FIRE RESISTANCE LEVEL	1	L				Y	Y					1851-SECTION 17
* FIRE CONTROL CENTRES	1	C					Y					BCA SPEC E1.8

#### FIRE PROTECTION SYSTEMS

* SPRINKLERS (INCLUDING: WALL-WETTING SPRINKLERS BOOSTER CONNECTION/S BOOSTER PUMP/S WATER STORAGE TANKS)	2	L-C	(Y)	Y		Y	Y	Y	12YR 24YR	Y		1851-SECTION 2
<b>* SPECIAL AUTOMATIC FIRE SUPPRESSION SYSTEMS</b>												
* DELUGE	3	L-C		Y		Y	Y	Y	12YR 24YR	Y		1851-SECTION 2
* GASEOUS EXTINGUISHING SYSTEMS INCLUDING CO2	3	L-C		Y		Y	Y		Y	Y		1851-SECTION 11
* DRY CHEMICAL	3	L-C		Y		Y	Y		12YR	Y		1851-SECTION 12
* WET CHEMICAL	3	L-C		Y		Y	Y		12Y	Y		1851-SECTION 12
* FOAM	3	L-C		Y		Y	Y		12YR 24YR	Y		1851-SECTION 2
* FIRE DETECTION & ALARM SYSTEMS	2	L-C		Y		Y	Y		Y	Y		1851-SECTION 6
* STAIRWELL PRESSURISATION	2	L-C			Y	Y	Y		Y			1851-SECTION 18
* AIR HANDLING SYSTEMS	3	L-C		Y	Y	Y	Y		Y			1851-SECTION 18
* SMOKE & HEAT VENTING SYSTEMS	3	L-C				Y	Y		Y			1851-SECTION 18
* SMOKE EXHAUST SYSTEMS	3	L-C				Y	Y		Y			1851-SECTION 18

## FIRE SAFETY INSTALLATIONS & FEATURES CONT.

INSPECTION PROCEDURE OF FIRE SAFETY INSTALLATIONS (F.S.I)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. INSPECT FOR OBVIOUS VISUAL FAULTS ONLY.</li> <li>2. INSPECT FOR FAULTS &amp; WITNESS TEST OF F.S.I BY A COMPETENT PERSON.</li> <li>3. INSPECT FOR FAULTS WHERE POSSIBLE AND ACCEPT LOGBOOK DETAILS OF F.S.I.</li> <li>4. CHECK BUILDING FILE FOR DETAILS OF ANY EXTRA REQUIREMENTS.</li> </ol>										
REQUIRED RECORD KEEPING OF FIRE SAFETY INSTALLATIONS (F.S.I)	<p>L = REQUIRED LOG BOOK                      C = CERTIFICATE OF MAINTENANCE REQUIRED                      R = RECORD OF MAINTENANCE REQUIRED                      T = METAL TAG ON F.S.I. OF SERVICE DETAILS / SERVICE LABEL                      N/A = NOT APPLICABLE – NO RECORD OF KEEPING REQUIRED                      (Y) = WEEKLY TEST MAY BE OMITTED REFER AS 1851-2005</p>										
SPECIAL FIRE SERVICE = *	INSPECTION PROCEDURES FOR FSI	REQUIRED RECORD KEEPING FOR FSI	MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE							ANNUAL SURVEY OF INSTALLATION	MAINTENANCE STANDARD OR BUILDING REFERENCE
			Wk	MTH	3MTH	6MTH	12MTH	3Yr	5Yr		

### FIRE FIGHTING EQUIPMENT

* FIRE MAINS	1	N/A				Y	Y	Y			Y	1851-SECTION 2 & 4
* FIRE HYDRANTS (INCLUDING INTERNAL & EXTERNAL HYDRANTS BOOSTERS CONNECTION/S WATER STORAGE TANKS)	2	C-L-T				Y	Y				Y	1851-SECTION 4
* FIRE PUMPSETS	2	C-L-T	(Y)	Y		Y	Y			Y	Y	1851-SECTION 3
FIRE HOSE REELS	2	R-T				Y	Y				Y	1851-SECTION 14
FIRE EXTINGUISHERS (PORTABLE)	2	R-T				Y	Y			Y	Y	1851-SECTION 15

### OCCUPANT SAFETY FEATURES

* EMERGENCY WARNING & INTERCOMMUNICATION SYSTEMS	2	C-L		Y		Y	Y			Y	Y	1851-SECTION 9 & 10
DOOR HARDWARE (NON FIRE-RATED DOORS)	1	N/A			Y	Y	Y					1851-SECTION 17
EMERGENCY LIGHTING	2	R				Y	Y					AS 2293.2
EXIT SIGNS	2	R				Y	Y					AS 2293.2
*EMERGENCY LIFTS (CORRECT OPERATION OF LIFTS & CONTROLS)	2	C							Y			AS 1735.2 & 10
EMERGENCY POWER SUPPLY	3	R		Y								BCA
FIRE DOORS & DOOR SETS (HINGES, LEVERS ETC)	3	L-T			Y	Y	Y					1851-SECTION17
FIRE DOORS SERVING AS ENTRY DOORS TO SOLE OCCUPANCY UNITS	3	L-T					Y					1851-SECTION 17
SMOKE DOORS	2	R-T			Y	Y	Y					1851-SECTION 17

### OTHER FEATURES

* VEHICLE ACCESS FOR LARGE ISOLATED BUILDINGS	1	C										BCA C2-4
* HAZARDOUS BUILDINGS PROVISIONS IMPOSED UNDER BUILDING ACT 1975 SECTION 79 & BCA E 1.10	4	C										BUILDING FILE

## Australian Standard 2293.2

Emergency Escape Lighting and Exit Signs for Building – Inspection and Maintenance

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			Wk	MTH	3MTH	6MTH	12MTH	3Yr	5Yr			
CENTRAL BATTERY SYSTEMS	2	L OR T				Y	Y					2293.2 SECTION 2
SINGLE POINT SYSTEMS	2	L OR T				Y	Y					2293.2 SECTION 3