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Organisation

Technical Standard for the Change of use of Service Family Accommodation (SFA) into Single Living Accommodation (SLA) or Contact Housing

Technical Standard – Fire 01:2021 (Reviewed)



ESTATE MANAGEMENT

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Document Information	
DIO Sponsor: Bryan Dunn	Date of Issue: 06 June 2022
Contact if different from above Sponsor:	
<p>Marc Plester Senior Fire Safety Manager, Technical Services Defence Infrastructure Organisation, Kingston Road, Sutton Coldfield B75 7RL.</p> <p>DIO-TSFiresafety@mod.gov.uk</p>	
MOD telephone: Mobile: 07790 960334	
Who should read this:	
DIO, TLB and other Personnel involved in management of housing on the Defence Estate, Defence safety personnel involved in risk assessment of this type of accommodation, CFR/DFR Fire risk assessors, Heads of Establishments and site/Regional Health and Safety Advisors.	
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<p>This policy has been Equality and Diversity Impact Assessed in accordance with the Defence Equality Analysis Guidance 2018 up to:</p> <p>Stage 2 Initial assessment only - no impact found; full EA not required.</p>	
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18.01.2021	Final	Marc Plester	<i>This document supersedes DIO PI 2016/02</i>
16.03.2021	V1.1	Marc Plester	Addition of new para 2.3, 3.3
06.06.2022	V1.2	Marc Plester	Clarification of JSP 464 'guests' provision

Foreword

This Technical Standard here after known as ‘the Standard’ is published by Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) in its role as infrastructural technical authority for Mandatory application across all areas of the MOD. This standard is mandated for all contracts including USVF, overseas and PFI arrangements and those where DIO is not the delivery agent.

Document Synopsis

The aim of this Technical Standard is to provide guidance and direction how to ensure fire safety requirements are consistently achieved where Defence agencies or personnel hold responsibility, or are involved in the required works, when changing SFA for use as SLA or Contact Housing.

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1. Roles and Implementation

- 1.1. DIO are the document owner and Technical Authority for this standard. Approval for any deviation or derogation from this standard are to be approved by the DIO Senior Fire Safety Manager prior to the commencement of any work or change of use.
- 1.2. The Fire and rescue service provider upon receipt of a request, are responsible for providing fire safety advice on the requirement for any SFA that is being considered for change of use to SLA or Contact Housing. The provision of a suitable and sufficient Fire Risk Assessments for the completed facility should be arranged.

2. Application of the Technical Standard

- 2.1 This Technical Standard applies to all conversion works where it is proposed to change SFA to use as SLA or Contact Housing on the MOD estate. Dwellings with a simple layout of 2 floors only (Ground and First) and, where the stairs at ground floor level discharge into a hallway that leads directly to the final exit door, must incorporate the standard requirements detailed below.
- 2.2 Buildings in excess of 2-storey or where the staircase does not discharge into a hallway that leads directly to the final exit door must be approved by DIO Accommodation and DIO SFSM before any changes take place as additional fire safety measures may need to be incorporated.
- 2.3 Single person occupancy of SFA is not required to comply with this standard as is deemed a single head of household. And as such an FRA is not required. However, the relevant TLB has the responsibility to ensure that single occupancy is adhered to, or this document shall be complied with in full.
- 2.4 If additional works are proposed within the building these works may need to comply with the Building Regulations. For further assistance and guidance to ascertain if these works do require compliance please contact the Principal Building Surveyor, Building & Environmental Health Standards [DIO Ops North-PTSBLD@mod.gov.uk](mailto:DIO_Ops_North-PTSBLD@mod.gov.uk)
- 2.5 These standards are necessary due to the additional risks encountered where there is no single head of household in a multiple occupancy building.
- 2.6 If it is directed that any SFA or Contact House is to be used as overspill for messing facilities the status of the premise has changed, and it is no longer classified as a Domestic Premise and therefore the Fire Standards contained in this DIO Technical Standard shall be applied.
- 2.7 Where the proposed change of use cannot meet the Standard Requirements below, prior consultation must be carried out with the DIO Senior Fire Safety Manager and approved via the Fire Safety Determination process before implementation. DIO-TSFiresafety@mod.gov.uk
- 2.8 It is imperative that units clearly stipulate and document the intended purpose and occupancy type of properties.

3. Standard Requirements

- 3.1 When SFA is appropriated as SLA or Contact Housing, rooms that were not bedrooms as SFA will not be permitted to be changed to additional Bedrooms.
- 3.2 To avoid being subject to HMO legislative infrastructure adjustments any SFA to SLA change of use shall have a maximum occupancy of 2 persons.
- 3.3 Where DIO appropriate an SFA for single occupancy only, para 2.3 applies.
- 3.4 Former bedrooms that are no longer to be used for sleeping may be used for other purposes excluding any form of cooking if they are fitted with automatic fire detection in accordance with para 3.4 and doors are fitted with keep closed signage in accordance with BS 5499.

- 3.5 The building shall be provided with a minimum Grade F1 LD2 interlinked fire detection system in accordance with British Standard 5839 Part 6. This shall include detection in all rooms used for sleeping and within rooms on the same floor used for other purposes except bathrooms and toilets¹. These detectors will need to be periodically replaced in accordance with manufacturer's instructions due to the integral main battery and a local detector replacement policy should be agreed with the Maintenance Management Organisation MMO in accordance with the manufacturers timelines.
- 3.6 Where it is intended to accommodate personnel with any disability, a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) should be considered by the HOE.
- 3.7 A suitable fire extinguisher for the assessed risks shall be provided close to the final exit from the hallway, but not in a position that blocks or reduces the width of the means of escape route. The type shall be determined and recorded by a competent fire risk assessor and the extinguisher shall be placed on the units register and maintained as required.
- 3.8 Any cooking facilities provided within the kitchen of an SFA shall be removed prior to occupation as SLA. Exceptionally the HoE may, following a suitable and sufficient risk assessment deem it appropriate for the cooker to be left in service. Where this is the case, the following additional requirements shall be put in place prior to occupation:
- 3.8.1 The kitchen shall be provided with a fire rated door set to FD30S standard where it leads onto the means of escape and circulation spaces and also fitted with a fire rated self-closing device and a "fire door keep shut sign" on each face of the door.
 - 3.8.2 An appropriate heat detector shall be installed within the kitchen as part of the interlinked fire detection system.
 - 3.8.3 The cooker and hob shall be wired into a timer that allows the cooker to run for a maximum of 6 minutes before needing to be reset (in line with SLA standards)
 - 3.8.4 A suitable fire blanket shall be fixed within the kitchen area, where easily accessible should a fire occur on the cooker or hob.
 - 3.8.5 A cooker hood shall be provided over the cooker that extracts direct to open air. The installation shall not include dampers or other elements that may cause a build-up of grease and/or fats that may increase the fire loading.
 - 3.8.6 A HOE policy notice shall be displayed within the property which states that the extraction system must be used when cooking takes place and a sign permanently affixed adjacent to the cooker stating that the extract system must be operational whenever the cooker/hob is in use.
 - 3.8.7 A cleaning and inspection schedule shall be put in place to ensure that the system including ductwork is maintained in a clean and serviceable condition.
- 3.9 See sec 4 for contact house cooker requirements
- 3.10 All final exits shall be fitted with thumb turn locks, openable without the use of a key internally.
- 3.11 A suitable and sufficient risk assessment shall be undertaken and recorded assessing the need for Emergency Lighting for the building escape routes. In buildings of up to two storeys conventional lighting may be adequate. However, the emergency lighting risk assessment should consider.
- 3.11.1 The size of the building and length of escape routes.
 - 3.11.2 The complexity of the internal layout.
 - 3.11.3 The availability of natural or other lighting along escape routes
 - 3.11.4 The potential occupiers' abilities, vulnerabilities or those posing specific risks.
 - 3.11.5 Further information on Emergency Lighting requirements is contained in Table C5 of the LACORS document.

¹ The areas of coverage will be in accordance with 3.4 and includes: landings, hallways, unused bedrooms, kitchen, living rooms, and loft's, if necessary, if they contain solar panel components or any other plant equipment.

- 3.12 All Electrical items supplied by MOD require routine Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) in accordance with local policy. All personal electrical items must be checked for serviceability and safety in accordance with JSP 375, Chapter 23, which requires a local policy² regarding testing and inspection by the authority to be in place. All electrical items, whether personal or Authority supplied shall be visually checked prior to and after each use by the user. Authority supplied equipment shall be checked after each occupation.
- 3.13 All furnishings shall meet current fire standards in accordance with Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988 and be appropriately labelled.
- 3.14 Carbon Monoxide detectors shall be installed in any rooms containing gas or solid fuel appliances.
- 3.15 Access to any basements or loft spaces shall be secured and locked with access restricted to authorised maintenance staff only.
- 3.16 Barbecues or other fuel burning appliances are not permitted on any balcony or flat roof areas.
- 3.17 No naked flames, i.e., candles, incense burners are to be used in the building.
- 3.18 Fire Action Posters shall be displayed at each entrance, exit into and out of the building.

4 Contact Housing

- 4.1 Contact houses are scaled welfare facilities primarily to enable non-primary parents and unaccompanied Service personnel to spend time with their families at their duty station. They can also be used to provide emergency welfare accommodation for families. When a Contact House is used for its intended purpose, it is deemed a Domestic Premise and as such a Fire Risk Assessment is not required. It is highly recommended that regular Community Fire Safety Visits are conducted to ensure Fire Safety measures are being met as occupants will be unfamiliar with the premises. Clear instructions on actions in the event of a fire must be provided by the unit as part of the works on a wall mounted fire action notice in the building.
- 4.2 It is acceptable to leave cooking facilities in Contact Housing, but suitable cleaning regimes and safety checks must be undertaken a person designated by a HoE to prevent any build-up of flammable fats and cooking waste after each use.
- 4.3 If Contact Housing is provided by means of flat accommodation that share common areas, the common areas are required to be covered by a Fire Risk Assessment.

5 System Maintenance

- 5.1 Maintenance and cleaning programmes shall be put in place to ensure all systems provided remain fit for use in accordance with relevant British Standards and manufacturer's instructions.
- 5.2 All active fire safety systems are to be added to MMOs Facilities Management (FM) plan.

6 Fire Risk Assessment

- 6.1 Once all works have been completed and **prior** to occupation of buildings that have changed use from SFA to SLA, a Fire Risk Assessment must be completed by the defence fire service provider for its SLA use and the requirements in this standard must be referenced to ensure compliance. The Fire Safety Inspection may be revisited by the fire risk assessor at any time during the buildings use as SLA to ensure on behalf of the HoE that the mandated safety requirements are being met. The HoE may also request a fire safety visit when deemed appropriate.

² a local policy and procedure should be developed and promulgated to all Defence personnel which defines where the use of personal electrical equipment and appliances is allowed. It shall also define the control measures (i.e., test and inspection) to be adhered to. Local policy and procedures should define what is and what is not covered in the scope of personal electrical equipment and any restrictions on their use.

7 JSP 464 and short-term visitor concessions.

- 7.1 Under JSP 464, (MoD's policy on visits to SLA) it is acceptable for an occupant to have personal guests stay under their care for up to 7 days at a time. Any guests staying overnight are to be sleeping in the same bedroom as the authorised occupant for fire safety (fire detection and escape) reasons.

8 Records and reviews

- 8.1 All records and Reviews to be completed in accordance with TLB and local units fire safety management system or equivalent.
- 8.2 The ongoing use of SFA as SLA or Contact House shall be subject to an annual review by the HoE, to ensure that:
- 8.2.1 The requirements of this standard continue to be met.
 - 8.2.2 The risk assessments and other documented information supporting its continued use remain valid.
 - 8.2.3 The HOE reaffirms their acceptance of the increased risks associated with retaining any cooking facilities in SFA to SLA.
- 8.3 A fire diary is to be held in the building and the weekly and annual inspection/tests of the alarm system are to be recorded in it by the occupier/MMO.

9 References

British Standard 5839 Part 6, "Fire detection and fire alarm systems for buildings" latest edition.

British Standard 5499 Part 10 "Guidance for the selection and use of safety signs and notices", latest edition.

British Standard 5266 Part 1 "Code of practice for the emergency lighting of premises", latest edition.

LACORS- "Guidance on fire safety provisions for certain types of existing housing" produced by the Local Authorities Coordinators of Regulatory Services (**LACORS**), latest edition.

Furniture and Furnishings (Fire Safety) Regulations, latest edition.

JSP 375 "Management of Health and safety in Defence": Volume 1 Chapter 23 latest edition.

The smoke and carbon monoxide alarm (England) regulations 2015

The Regulatory Reform (fire safety) Order 2005 (FSO)

JSP 464, Vol 2, Sec II, para 6.200

10 Glossary of terms

BS 5839 Part 6	British Standard – Code of practice for the design, installation, commissioning and maintenance of fire detection and fire alarm systems in domestic premises.
BS 5499	Fire Signage
BS 5266	Emergency lighting
CFR	Capita Fire & Rescue
Contact House	Site run welfare facility for Service Families to use without the requirement for monetary contribution.
DFR	Defence Fire & Rescue
DIO	Defence Infrastructure Organisation
Fire Action Poster	A displayed document outlining the actions to be taken by occupants in the event of a fire.
FD30S	An engineered door designed and tested to withstand the passage of heat and smoke for a designated period of 30 minutes
Fire/Smoke Damper	A mechanical or intumescent device within a duct or ventilation opening that operates automatically and is designed to resist the spread of fire and/or smoke.
Fire Door set	A door or shutter which together with its frame and furniture as installed in a building, is intended (when closed) to resist the spread of fire and gaseous products of combustion and meets specified performance criteria.
Final Exit	The end of an escape route from a building that gives direct access to a street, walkway, or open space of ultimate safety, and is sited to ensure that people rapidly disperse away from the building so that they are no longer in danger from fire and smoke.
Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (safety) regulations 1988	The UK standard for fire resistance of domestic upholstered furniture & furnishings
HoE	Head of Establishment
LACORS	Local authority council guidance on fire safety provisions for certain types of existing housing. Current version
LD2	A category of coverage of fire alarm system as designated by BS 5839.
MOD	Ministry Of Defence
Means of Escape	Structural means that provide one or more safe routes for people to go, during a fire, from any point in the building to a place of safety.
PAT	Portable Appliance Test.
RP	Responsible person as defined by the FSO
Self-Closing Device	A device that closes a door when open at any angle, against a door frame.
SFA	Service Family Accommodation
SLA	Single Living Accommodation

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