

SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE

BUILDING REGULATION NOTE Note No 2/98

Building Standards (Scotland) Regulations 1990 (as amended):

Fire Safety Engineering

1. This note is intended to provide guidance and advice on fire safety engineering. It takes account of changes within this field over the last two years and replaces Note No1/96.

2. Fire safety engineering is a relatively new discipline, but one in which the speed of development is very fast. It involves the analysis of fire safety from first principles, considering :

- initiation and development of fire within the enclosure of origin;
- spread of smoke and toxic gases within and beyond the enclosure of origin;
- spread of fire beyond the enclosure of origin;
- detection of fire and activation of fire protection systems;
- fire service intervention; and
- evacuation.

A fully developed fire safety engineering solution can offer the designer the opportunity to achieve the required level of safety while integrating the fire safety measures fully into the design process.

3. A British Standard Code of Practice for "Fire Safety Engineering in Buildings" came into effect on 15 July 1997 as Draft for Development 240. As a Draft for Development it is offered on a provisional basis, so that information and experience of its practical application may be obtained. A review of the Draft for Development will be carried out not later than two years after its publication.

4. Since its issue the Draft for Development has been widely used in other parts of the United Kingdom, and it is commended in the proposed revision of Approved Document B for England and Wales.

5. The Draft for Development develops a comprehensive framework for the field of fire safety engineering. It provides a disciplined approach to considering all the aspects necessary to a fire safety engineering strategy. What is of importance is that each design based on fire safety engineering principles is assessed individually on the information provided. Validation and verification of the information, coupled with sound engineering judgement of the issues involved, are fundamental to the success of any design.

is the responsibility of individual building control authorities to decide if they will relax the Technical Standards to permit developments based on fire safety engineering principles. Authorities must ensure to assure themselves that any such proposal considers all the fire safety engineering issues contained within the Draft for Development, and that the underlying assumptions behind any engineering calculations are valid.

As this is a relatively new field the Construction and Building Control Group (CBCG) would be pleased to hear of developments where an authority is intending to relax the Technical Standards on the basis of the Draft for Development. The CBCG is also very happy to offer informal support to authorities considering such projects, as far as resources permit.

The Scottish Office Home Department in a "Dear Firemaster letter" (9/97) has encouraged firemasters to embrace the principles of fire safety engineering contained in the Draft for Development, whilst noting that they are published by the British Standards Institute on the basis that there remain many gaps in the associated knowledge base. It is hoped that the consideration of fire engineering proposals will be undertaken with full co-operation between building control and fire authorities.

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