Guidance for the Evaluation of Method Statements for Fire Alarm Work

What is a Fire Alarm work?

Fire Alarm work is any activity which may compromise the integrity of a fire alarm system. This will include any isolation of devices either electronically or physically which includes 'capping off' detectors, and any works associated with connection / disconnection of Fire Alarm systems or part of Fire Alarm systems.

Hazards in Fire Alarm Work

The University's fire strategy deals with the risks associated with fire in buildings through both passive and active fire precautions. One key part of these precautions is the fire detection and fire warning systems that are installed in each building which protect the life of building occupants and the integrity of the buildings in the event of a fire occurring.

Work on these systems, if not managed correctly can result in malfunction of these systems resulting in a failure to detect a fire that has propagated, failure to warn building users of an activation or can result in false activations which can cause widespread disruption.

Precautions for Fire Alarm Work

As a **minimum** the following precaution should be applied to all hot work;

1. All Fire Alarm work must be subject to the University's Permit to Work System; no other local arrangements or contractors systems should be accepted. The permit must not be issued until a suitable and sufficient risk assessment and safe system of work has been supplied by the company or individuals undertaking the work. This should be reviewed by the Estates Department.

2. The whole activity should be supervised by an individual who has the responsibility to ensure that all of the necessary precautions are implemented and must have received training in relevant work precautions.

3. All work on fire alarm systems should be notified to the security control room prior to the work taking place so that appropriate responses can be delivered to the event.

4. Where fire alarm systems are taken "off watch" manual systems of detecting and alerting building occupants in the event of a fire must be planned and instigated. Before these arrangements are implemented they must be agreed by the University's Health and Safety Manager.

5. Before carrying out any fire alarm work a tag should be fixed to the control panel "Fire Alarm Off Watch". Whilst the work is in progress - the requirements printed on the tag must be strictly complied with. The Competent Person carrying out the works shall ensure that the system is fully operational each evening prior to leaving site.

6. On completion of the works the 'Fire Alarm Off Watch' Tag must be removed. It is imperative that the competent person advise building supervisors / local security that the work on the fire alarm system is complete.

7. Suitable fire extinguishers should be available during fire alarm work where automatic fire suppression systems have been disabled. Care should be taken when selecting appropriate extinguishers, that their deployment does not create damage to the building infrastructure or increase the risk of harm to those personnel undertaking the work.

8. All smoke and heat detectors that are likely to be affected by local works should be protected with proprietary covers to prevent accidental fire alarm activation. Before

covering detectors the Building Supervisor in Campus Services office <u>must be notified</u> and covers for fire detectors **<u>must be removed at the end of each day</u>**.

9. All fire alarm work must be logged in the building fire log book which is available from the Building Supervisor in Campus Services

10. This document should be read in conjunction with Health and Safety Document Fire Safety in University Buildings which is available from the Health and Safety Team in Human Resources.

Further Guidance

11. Further guidance on the safety in fire alarm work can be gained from the University's Safety and Risk Management Team and fire alarm work permit authorisers in the Estates Department.

FIRE ALARM OFF WATCH

Arrange for system to be returned to normal working IMMEDIATELY work ceases.

Keep a look-out in case the system detects a real fire when off watch.

EMERGENCY CONTACT

Security – 0121 331 6969

If any sounders are selected off, someone must stay at the panel to put them back on if an alarm is indicated.

Fire Alarm Engineers Name

Fire Alarm Engineers Contact Number