

ACT Fire & Rescue

Fire Safety Guideline – Maintenance of fire protection systems and equipment



FSG-05

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FSG-05: Maintenance of fire protection systems and equipment

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. This guideline has been developed by ACT Fire & Rescue (ACTF&R) to:
- advise building owners/occupiers of their legal obligations to maintain building fire protection systems and equipment following amendments to the *Emergencies Act 2004* (the Act) that came into effect in June 2019, and
 - confirm the requirements and expectations that ACTF&R has of building owners/occupiers in relation to these amendments.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1. This guideline applies to installed fire protection systems and equipment in all class 2 – 9 buildings as categorised by the National Construction Code (NCC) throughout the ACT.

3. AMENDMENTS TO THE EMERGENCIES ACT 2004

- 3.1. Up until 21st June 2019 Section 95(2)(b) of the Act stated that the occupier of a building committed an offence if they failed to maintain a fire appliance to a “reasonable standard”. To clarify what that “reasonable standard” is, the Act has been amended as follows:
- Section 95(2)(b) now reads:

“The occupier of a premises commits an offence if-

(a) a fire appliance is provided or installed at the premises under a direction under section 92; and

(b) the occupier does not maintain the fire appliance in accordance with a proper maintenance standard.”

- New Section 95(7) has been inserted that reads:

(7) In this section, proper maintenance standard means any one of the following:

(a) AS 1851 (Routine service of fire protection systems and equipment) as in force from time to time;

(b) AS/NZS 2293.2 (Emergency evacuation lighting for buildings Inspection and maintenance) as in force from time to time;

(c) a standard approved for the fire appliance as part of a building approval issued for the premises under the Building Act 2004, section 28;

(d) a standard of maintenance prescribed by regulation.

4. REFERENCED STANDARDS

- 4.1. **AS 1851 and AS 2293.2 have been adopted.**
- 4.2. Any reference to AS 1851 or AS 2293.2 is to be taken as referring to the latest edition of those Standards including any amendments.

5. RELEVANT FIRE PROTECTION SYSTEMS & EQUIPMENT

5.1. "Fire Appliance" as mentioned in Section 95(2)(b) of the Act is deemed to include all systems and equipment covered by AS 1851 and AS 2293.2.

5.2. The definition of "fire appliance" as per the Act includes;

- a) Any vehicle, equipment, implement or thing used for the prevention, extinguishing or containment of fire or smoke; and
- b) Any fire alarm; and
- c) Any apparatus for alerting the occupants of a building to a fire or facilitating the evacuation of the building; and
- d) Equipment used for the control or evacuation of smoke from a building.

5.3. Adoption of AS 1851 and AS 2293.2 has provided clarification of the fire protection systems and equipment required to be maintained to those Standards, including;

- Automatic fire sprinkler systems
- Fire pumpsets
- Fire hydrant systems
- Hydrant valves
- Water storage tanks for fire protection systems
- Fire detection and alarm systems
- Special hazard systems
- Delivery lay flat fire hose
- Fire hose reels
- Portable and wheeled fire extinguishers
- Fire blankets
- Passive fire and smoke systems
- Fire and smoke control features of mechanical services
- Emergency planning in facilities
- Emergency escape lighting and exit signs

6. BASELINE DATA

6.1. Results of routine service activities required under AS 1851 may require verification against baseline data. AS 1851 recognizes that baseline data is not consistently available for all buildings however ACTF&R expects building owners and maintenance providers to make concerted efforts to compile this data where required.

7. COMPETENCE OF MAINTENANCE PERSONNEL

7.1. It is important that maintenance of building fire protection systems and equipment is carried out by competent persons. ACTF&R recognises that holding relevant nationally recognized units of competency from the Australian Qualification Framework (AQF) is an appropriate way to demonstrate competence regarding the maintenance of fire protection systems and equipment. Appropriate national accreditation schemes may also demonstrate the required level of competency.

7.2. **It is the responsibility of building owners and their delegated representatives to ensure that individuals undertaking maintenance of their buildings fire protection systems and equipment are competent.**

8. MAINTENANCE RECORDS AND YEARLY CONDITION REPORTS

- 8.1. Records of maintenance (electronic or hard copy) must be kept by the building owner or their delegated representative as per the Standards, with the exception of those described in 8.2 below. These records including logbooks, summary records and yearly condition reports are to be available for inspection by ACTF&R within 48 hours following request. That these documents are made available for inspection by ACTF&R is mandatory under Section 101(f) of the Act.
- 8.2. Hard copy logbooks kept on site so as to comply with section 1.16.6 of AS 1851 are not required to include details described in section 1.16.3 (d), those being;
(d) Each activity performed, including recorded results if required, and 'pass' or 'fail' as appropriate.
These details however, must be made available to ACTF&R on request as per 8.1 above.

9. ACTF&R INSPECTIONS

- 9.1. Under Section 104 of the Act ACTF&R are entitled to at any time, enter premises to find out whether the premises comply with any relevant fire & safety requirements, maintenance or testing requirements in the building code or any standard applying to the premises under Territory law.
- 9.2. Under Section 101(g) of the Act the occupier, or anyone at the premises is required to provide reasonable assistance to an inspector on request.
- 9.3. Wherever possible ACTF&R Inspectors will contact building owners/occupiers prior to any planned inspections.

10. DEFECT REPORTING AND RECTIFICATION

- 10.1. In accordance with the procedure outlined in AS 1851 the following applies to all fire protection systems and equipment installed in a building.
 - The building owner or their nominated representative must be notified of critical defects before the maintenance service provider leaves site, or where this cannot be achieved, as soon as possible. Written confirmation of critical defects shall be provided within 24 hours.
 - Non-critical defects, non-conformances and out of tolerance activities will be communicated in writing to the building owner by the maintenance service provider within one week.

It is the building owner's responsibility to rectify any identified defects. Critical defects should be rectified with the minimum of delay. Non-critical defects and non-conformances should be rectified or resolved as soon as practicable.

- 10.2. In recognition of the possible impact of these amendments ACTF&R is committed to working collaboratively with building owners and maintenance service providers to negotiate realistic pathways towards rectification of defects and non-conformances. Any such negotiated pathways will be subject to improvement notices issued under Section 87 of the Act. Please contact ACTFRFireSafety@act.gov.au to pursue this process.

11. FURTHER INFORMATION

- 11.1. If you require further information regarding the requirements to maintain fire protection systems and equipment in your building ACTF&R recommends consulting an appropriately qualified person specializing in building fire safety systems.
- 11.2. Any questions regarding this guideline should be emailed to ACTFRFireSafety@act.gov.au for clarification.

Related documents

Related forms and document	
Reference	title
ACT Emergencies Act 2004	Section 95
ACT Building Act 2004	Section 28
Building Code of Australia	Volume 1
AS 1851 - 2012	Routine service of fire protection systems and equipment
AS 2293.2 - 1995	Emergency escape lighting and exit signs for buildings, Inspection and maintenance
FPAA Good Practice Guide 05	Baseline Data for Routine Service of Fire Protection Systems.

Glossary of terms

Acronym / term	meaning
ACTF&R	ACT Fire & Rescue
NCC	National Construction Code
AS	Australian Standard
NZS	New Zealand Standard
FPAA	Fire Protection Association Australia