SUBJECT:

AUTOMATIC FIRE DETECTION AND ALARM SYSTEMS (AFA)

SUMMARY:
This document provides guidance to support the ECFRS AFA policy. The Policy document may be viewed via the document management system, DM #165024 refers. The guidance within the primary information below is arranged in three sections: Control mobilising procedures; Action by operational crews; Management of unwanted fire signals. Exemption from Level 3 Mobilising is covered in the support information.

FURTHER INFORMATION:
- Fire Service Manual Volume 1 'Communications and Mobilising'. (STN)
- Manuals of Firemanship Book 9, Part 2 'Fire Alarm Systems' (STN)
- Manuals of Firemanship Book 10, Part 5 'AFA Signalling System Arrangements'. (STN)
- Community Command/Service Delivery SHQ/Technical Index.
- Reducing false alarms – A thematic Inspection of unwanted fire signals from Automatic Fire Detection systems by HM Fire Service Inspectorate. (DCLG - www.gov.uk)
- Fire Service Circular 6/1994
- BS5839 (part 1) 2002 – Code of Practice for Fire Detection and Alarm Systems for buildings
- BS 5979:2007 Remote Centres Receiving Signals from Fire and Security Systems
- A guide to reducing the number of false alarms from automatic fire detection systems – BFPSA and CFOA – (DCLG - www.gov.uk)
- Making a difference – A thematic Inspection of Community Safety by the HM Fire Service Inspectorate. (DCLG - www.gov.uk)
- CFOA Policy for the Reduction of False Alarms & Unwanted Fire Signals
- FIA Guidance for RP on False Alarm Management of Detection and Alarm Systems

KEY INFORMATION:..........................................................Page 4
“Doing more than we have ever done to make Essex safer”
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KEY INFORMATION

AUTOMATIC FIRE DETECTION AND ALARM SYSTEMS (AFA)

- Fire calls originating from AFA systems at Level 3 premises will be call challenged by Control staff.

- An immediate response comprising a full PDA will be mobilised to fire calls originating from AFA systems at Level 1 and 2 premises.

- Attending crews should not reset fire alarm systems.

- Crews or appliances do not need to remain in attendance awaiting the arrival of a fire alarm engineer.

- Where a call is a ‘False Alarm due to Apparatus’ (code 17) the Incident Commander should ensure that the leaflet ‘False Alarms – It’s Your Responsibility!’ is left at the premises for the attention of the Responsible Person (RP).

- If the key holder does not arrive at the premises within 30 minutes the Incident Commander may authorise a forced entry if the likelihood of fire makes this an appropriate course of action. Entry is subject to dynamic risk assessment (DRA).

- Two or more false alarms from an AFA system, in 4 weeks will require follow up action.

- Repeated episodes of false alarms from an AFA system, within a 26 week period may require enforcement action.

- Command WFS Admin teams should analyse the monthly data provided on ACTUATE to ascertain what premises have breached the false alarm frequency criteria.

- Breaches of the false alarm policy identified by the Command Admin team will be referred to a FSO for assessment. The subsequent action taken may be issue of A005 standard letter or a follow-up work sheet for audit or other appropriate action.

- Level 3 premises may request that mobilising restrictions are lifted where an automatic or assessed risk has been successfully demonstrated.
INTRODUCTION

Essex County Fire and Rescue Service is committed to reducing the number of unwanted fire signals (UwFS) it receives and to making best use of its available resources. UwFS impact upon the availability and distribution of appliances, equipment and personnel; they cause unnecessary blue light vehicle movements and avoidable expense. Reducing the number of activations will reduce the consequential impact on service delivery, business, commerce and the safety of the community. The reduction in UwFS will also release personnel from unnecessary operational activity and provide more time for them to engage in preventative initiatives.

CONTROL MOBILISING PROCEDURE

The Service has taken a risk based approach to its response to calls from premises fitted with automatic fire alarm and detection systems, in order to limit the negative impact that UwFS have on the efficiency of the Service. Premises are categorised at three levels according to premises type/use and the associated level of risk.

Mobilising to Automatic Fire Alarm Systems

Level one premises have high life risk associated with their use and have a full and immediate mobilising response as default. Level two premises will comprise known higher risk premises and premises that qualify for automatic or assessed exemption from mobilising restrictions. Level three premises have a lower inherent risk and will be subject to a call challenge to confirm a fire before a mobilisation of resources is made. Where a call challenge has established that there is no fire at the premises, no mobilisation will be initiated and Control staff will record a ‘Stop’ as code 27.

Mobilising Premises Type/Use

Level 1
Sleeping Risks – Private residential including common areas, hotels, guest houses, B&Bs, hostels, residential training, holiday accommodation, places of custody, nursing homes, sheltered housing, hospitals, healthcare with general anaesthesia facilities or dependent patients, residential care (elderly, infirm, young, special needs, rehabilitation and addictions).

Not associated administration buildings.

Schools – Primary Education (including pre-school on primary school premises), Secondary Education (academy, independent, private, faith or state) including after school clubs on primary/secondary school premises.
NOT establishments where the primary use is ‘Further Education’ such as colleges, universities (even where school groups may visit). Not adult education, out-door education, music schools or crèches not forming part of premises that constitute part of the primary /secondary education system.

Level 2
Higher Risk Premises - Top Tier COMAH Sites, Grade 1 or Grade 2* listed heritage premises, confirmed High Risk premises and premises with confirmed Double Knock facilities. HRP and DK premises must have been assessed against the appropriate referral process within this guidance.

Level 3
All other premises - Premises that are not specified in level 1 & 2. This includes Factories, Warehouses, Small & medium places of assembly, Offices, Shops, Theatres, Cinema, Transport premises etc. Part of the call challenging process should be to specifically ask questions to establish/confirm whether there is a possibility that these premises qualify as level 1 or 2. This may be difficult as Alarm Receiving Centres (ARCs) often hold poor quality information.

Mobilising Response

- Level 1 Premises – Immediate response to AFA calls and full PDA for risk will be maintained
- Level 2 Premises – Immediate response to AFA calls and full PDA for risk will be maintained
- Level 3 Premises – No immediate response is to be made to these premises unless a fire is confirmed via call challenge. A confirmation call will initiate a full PDA.

Call Confirmation

Verbal confirmation of fire received via 999, dedicated direct lines or running call will receive an immediate mobilisation of fire service resources. These calls could originate from the premises occupier, the contracted ARC or a member of the public. Calls received from AFA systems activated by double knock (DK) detection, sprinkler operation, or CCTV will also receive a full and immediate emergency response.

Calls Received Directly From Occupiers

The caller will be asked to confirm if there is a fire. Where a fire is confirmed an emergency response will be made appropriate to the premises type. Where a fire is not confirmed the occupier of the premises will be asked to investigate what has caused the fire alarm to activate. Where a fire is discovered as a result of the investigation a 999 call should be placed to the fire service. A fire service attendance will not be made unless signs of fire are confirmed or the occupier has a reasonable suspicion that a fire has occurred. Where Control intends to mobilise an
attendance the caller will be advised of the response and number of appliances. The caller will be asked for a telephone number for the premises involved in order to ensure a point of contact is established for further information.

**Calls Received from Alarm Receiving Centres (ARC’s)**

The ARC operator will be asked if a fire is confirmed. Where confirmation is received a mobilising response will be made appropriate to the premises type/use. Where the ARC cannot confirm the fire they will be asked to contact the premises occupier to ascertain the cause of the alarm. In circumstances where the premises occupier is unsure of the cause they will be advised by the ARC to carry out a check of the premises.

Where the ARC cannot make contact with the premises i.e. outside normal working hours, they should be advised to contact the premises key holder to attend the premises and to confirm if fire has occurred via a 999 call. It must be emphasised that it is the premises RP who must ensure a safe system of work is undertaken by all persons investigating an alarm actuation. The RP is also responsible for the quality/accuracy of information relating to the premises, held by their contracted ARC and must have suitable measures in place to keep that premises information up to date (see Duty of RP in support information).

Fire service Control will give the ARC operator details of the intended response, i.e. number of appliances dispatched or non-attendance, according to the information they have received. Where a fire has been confirmed via the ARC, occupier or key-holder the full PDA will be mobilised.

**Calls Received From Passers - By**

Where a call is received from a passer-by who has heard the fire alarm sounding in a premises, fire service Control will gather information from the caller to determine the appropriate response required, e.g. the caller may be able to see smoke etc.

Where the information suggests a fire has occurred the full pre-determined attendance for a ‘confirmed fire’ may be dispatched in accordance with the premises type/use. Any additional information gathered should be passed to the responding crew(s). If the passer-by placing the call is unsure of the premises type/use Level1 mobilising should be initiated. Control should also contact a key holder and request their attendance at the premises.

**Subsequent Calls Declaring a False Alarm**

Fire service Control should confirm the credentials of the person making the call and establish their role and authority within the company/organisation. Control may stand-down mobilised appliances if it is satisfied that the caller is on site and has suitable credentials/authority to declare a false alarm and the information they provide supports this course of action.
Where a subsequent call is received from a premises or ARC stating that the call is a false alarm and fire service Control are unable to confirm the authenticity of the caller or the information given, Control may mobilise one pump to attend at normal road speed to investigate or make other variance to the PDA as appropriate. If the PDA is already on route when the call is received, control may turn appliances back, allowing one to continue at normal road speed. This decision is at the discretion of the control supervisor and is dependent on the quality of information received.

If there is any doubt as to the authenticity of the caller or the information received, Fire Control will mobilise the full PDA, or if already mobilised, ensure that the PDA continues to proceed to the incident. This is to protect against a stand down instruction being received in inappropriate circumstances. Where the caller confirms there to be a fire, Fire Control has discretion to enhance the attendance as appears to be appropriate given the additional information received.

**Attendance at Unoccupied Premises**

Where an attendance is made to an AFA at unoccupied premises, the caller (ARC) is to be advised to contact the key holder. If the key holder is not present at the premises within 30 minutes of the initial fire service attendance the Incident Commander may authorise a forced entry to the premises to enable crews to carry out a search of the premises to determine the cause of the alarm. Alternatively fire crews may return to station following an external examination of the premises without taking further action.

The appropriate course of action will be determined by the Incident Commander following a dynamic risk assessment of the situation that presents itself. The Incident Commander must be satisfied that s/he has taken all reasonable measures to establish that a fire does not exist. On all occasions a contemporaneous note should be made by the officer in charge to record why a forced entry was made.

**Attendance Over the Border (OTB)**

Where a call for an OTB ‘confirmed fire’ or Level 1 / Level 2 type premises is received from a neighbouring FRS, ECFRS Control will dispatch the appropriate PDA according to premises type/use.

Where an OTB call is received from a Level 1 or Level 2 premises ECFRS will dispatch the appropriate PDA according to premises type/use. Control will advise neighbouring FRSs of this action accordingly.

Where an OTB call is received from a Level 3 premises ECFRS will not attend unless the fire is confirmed. Control will advise neighbouring FRSs of this action accordingly.

**Sprinkler Systems Activating AFA**

Where a caller or ARC confirms that a sprinkler system has activated, whether by pre-action detectors or activation prior to the trigger of a fire alarm system, an
immediate response and attendance will be made. The Watch/Crew manager of the initial attendance must complete the IRS for the incident providing as much relevant commentary about the sprinkler activation as possible in section 10.4. This information will be used by the fire service to monitor activation trends and advise premises managers.

**CCTV (visual confirmation of fire)**

Where a fire call has originated from CCTV via visual observation or frequency detection of a fire, an immediate response and attendance will be made in accordance with the type/use of the premises.
ACTION BY OPERATIONAL CREWS

Attendance at Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA) Calls

Where an AFA system actuates and a fire call is routed to the fire service either directly from the premises or via an alarm receiving centre (ARC) the mobilisation will be immediate for level 1 or 2 premises. Level 3 premises will be call challenged and mobilisation will follow confirmation of the fire. In both cases it is expected that prior to the arrival of the first attendance of the fire service, the premises management will have implemented the emergency plan (this could be full evacuation, progressive horizontal evacuation or stay put policy, etc.). The plan should include a procedure where nominated person/s observe the status/information of the fire alarm panel and on the basis of this information undertake an investigation to confirm whether the actuation is due to fire or false alarm as this information will be required by fire service Control staff as part of the emergency call information.

Resetting Fire Alarms

In accordance with Fire Service Circular 6/1994 **Crews must not reset and/or isolate activated fire alarm systems** but should seek to identify the cause of the alarm signal, where the premises representative has not already done so. **Action by the crew is subject to DRA and will be limited to silencing the alarm only** if it is identified that there is an operational imperative to do so. For premises that have only been partially evacuated upon arrival of crews or where all persons have not been accounted for the IC must confirm/know that the system will continue to function normally if a subsequent actuation of any other detector or manual call point occurs. Alarm resets should be undertaken by the premises competent person as this will create more awareness of the problems associated with false alarms.

Where the fire alarm and detection continues to actuate with no signs of fire the IC will, where possible, identify the cause to the premises representative at the scene and ensure that they are informed of their responsibility to contact an engineer to resolve the problem and that the fire service will not reset the system. The premises representative is to be further advised to seek guidance from their engineer prior to resetting the system to ensure appropriate action in relation to their system is taken.

**There is no requirement for personnel or appliances to remain in attendance awaiting the arrival of a fire alarm engineer.**

Procedure for Officer-In-Charge of First Attendance

The course of action taken upon initial attendance will depend on whether the premises are occupied at the time of call. In occupied premises the local manager, responsible person or other available representative of the premises should be identified and liaison established followed by appropriate operational action. In unoccupied premises the attendance of a key holder should be requested at the
earliest opportunity and appropriate operational action taken as dictated by local circumstances. (Appendix A refers). It should be noted that premises such as Sheltered Housing may have occupants but not necessarily a premises representative who is able to reset the fire alarm system. The primary responsibility for crews attending any premises where it is reported or believed that an alarm system has generated an unwanted fire signal is to ensure that the activation is not actuated as a result of a fire situation.

Where it has been established that the call is a ‘False Alarm due to Apparatus’ (code 17) the IC should ensure that the leaflet ‘False Alarms – It’s Your Responsibility!!’ is issued to the premises representative, responsible person or manager on every occasion. In unoccupied premises the leaflet may be posted into the premises. Stocks of leaflets are available through WFS.

In circumstances where a premises is left with the fire alarm still sounding, full details should be passed to WFS and handed over to the on-coming watch(where applicable). Revisit of such premises should not be arranged unless there is a new emergency or there is a public safety reason to do so.

The IC of the initial attendance must complete the IRS for the incident providing as much relevant commentary about the false alarm as possible in section 10.4. This information will be used by the fire service to manage repeated UwFS and or advise the premises management and system maintenance engineers.

Stop Message Codes (15, 16 & 17)

**Code 15 False alarm malicious**
This stop code should be used for calls that have been made with the intention of alerting the FRS to attend a non-existent incident, including deliberate and suspected malicious intentions.

**Code 16 False alarm good intent**
This stop code should be used where a call is made in good faith, in the belief that the FRS would attend the incident as an emergency. This is different from an inadvertent or accidental activation which has resulted in a call to the fire service. A code 16 stop should not be sent if for example cigarette smoke or burnt toast activating a smoke detector/AFA. These calls should be recorded as code 17.

**Code 17 False alarm due to apparatus**
This stop code should be used if the call was initiated by a fire detection/alarm systems and/or fire protection equipment operating. Including accidental initiation of alarm apparatus by persons or where the local procedure dictates that when an alarm operates a person will routinely call the FRS as part of a standing arrangement, i.e. with no ‘judgement’ involved for example from a security centre, ARC or a nominated person within an organisation).

Accidental/inadventent activation either by manual or automatic means should have the stop recorded as code 17 as it is not the intent that is of statistical interest under this code, it is the means of call initiation (i.e. fire alarm apparatus).
When a code 17 stop is sent it should be followed by the sub-type lettering identifying the property type and the appropriate letter denoting the reason for the actuation (Table 3). The exception to this would be where an AFA was actuated by a malicious act (call point) then a code 15 False Alarm malicious stop would be sent.

The IC of the initial attendance must complete the IRS for the incident providing as much relevant commentary about the AFA false alarm activation as possible in section 10.4. This information will be used by the fire service to monitor activation trends, manage formal action taken and advise premises managers.

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<th>CAUSE</th>
<th>STOP MESSAGE</th>
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<td>The build-up of dust or dirt within a detector, or the entry of insects.</td>
<td>Stop message:-False alarm due to apparatus code 17 A.</td>
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<td>Mechanical or electrical system faults including those resulting from the effects of vibration, impact or corrosion.</td>
<td>Stop message:-False alarm due to apparatus code 17 B.</td>
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<td>Ambient conditions such as heat, smoke or flame from cooking, external sources or work processes, fumes from engine exhausts, or high air velocities due to strong winds outside the building.</td>
<td>Stop message:-False alarm due to apparatus code 17 C.</td>
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<td>Inappropriate types of detectors or unsuitable siting of detector heads.</td>
<td>Stop message:-False alarm due to apparatus code 17 C.</td>
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<td>Work being carried out in protected area without knowledge of, or in neglect of, the necessary precautions.</td>
<td>Stop message:-False alarm due to apparatus code 17 D.</td>
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<td>Communication faults arising from servicing or testing work undertaken without prior notification to the fire service or central alarm station, or arising from activities of the public telecommunications operator.</td>
<td>Stop message:-False alarm due to apparatus code 17 D.</td>
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MANAGEMENT OF UNWANTED FIRE SIGNALS

Advice at Planning Stage

All WFS officers will ensure that relevant technical guidance is provided to the appropriate individuals responsible for all new building projects and alterations to existing buildings. Advice on how to manage automatic fire alarms will be specifically added to the information utilised by LA Building Control and will be incorporated within any responses made in respect to the Building Regulations consultation process.

Use of False Alarm Call Data

False alarm data is collated by Performance Monitoring Section SHQ from the IRS (code 17 - false alarm due to apparatus) and supplied to the Area Commands as a live feed via the BIRT Dashboard incorporated in the ACTUATE application. The data should be used to identify premises which have breached the false alarm frequency criteria.

Command WFS Admin teams should analyse the data monthly and pass details of offending premises to WFS Station Managers for further action. Reference should be made to the premises PRC to confirm whether previous breaches have occurred and what action was taken.

The call challenging procedures applied by Control staff will ensure that the number of AFA false alarms is limited. Notwithstanding this it is still possible for AFA false alarms to occur in all Levels of premises. The action taken in respect of repeated false alarms in all premises will be the same (see frequency criteria).

AFA calls from level 3 premises that have not been confirmed as a fire via a call from a person at the premises will have a code 27 stop recorded by Control. Such calls will not be classified as ‘false alarm due to apparatus’ code 17 and will not be subject to the formal follow-up action detailed below. However it should be noted that multiple code 27 stops recorded against a premises could be indicative of an underlying managerial or training deficiency at the premises.

Premises identified as breaching the frequency criteria will be subject to the procedure for managing false alarm calls.

False Alarm Frequency Criteria - Action Triggers

Her Majesty’s Inspectorate (Fire Services) and the Fire Protection industry state that a fire detection and alarm system should be classified as an 'unsatisfactory installation' if it generates two or more unwanted fire signals in any period of four weeks, or three or more unwanted fire signals in any period of twenty-six weeks. ECFRS are applying a modified version of this guidance:
Any premises with a fire detection and alarm system should be classified as a 'problem premises' and will be the subject of formal action if:

- It generates two or more unwanted fire signals in any period of four weeks. This constitutes a single ‘breach’ of the criteria and the premises will be issued with an ‘Opportunity to Act’ letter (Table 1)

- Subsequent breaches that occur within 26 weeks of the first breach will be treated as an escalation of the initial breach and the premises will be issued with an ‘Intention to Audit’ letter (Table 1)

- Subsequent breaches (2 in 4 weeks) that occur more than 26 weeks from the last breach will be treated as a new breach and the issue of formal letters or other appropriate action should commence from this time (Table 2)

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Upon identifying on BIRT/Actuate that a breach has occurred Admin will initiate:
- For first breach - Issue of standard A005 ‘Opportunity to Act’
- For subsequent breaches – Create job in MIS (15 AFA follow-up) for FSO follow-up action

There is little to be gained from repeating the issue of A005 Opportunity to act’ where false alarm episodes have reoccurred several times but are at sufficient intervals (spaced more than 26 weeks apart) to avoid the routine follow-up action that would normally be reserved for premises reoffending within 26 week period. As a guide no more than two A005 should be issued consecutively unless there has been some form of follow-up action taken in the interim. Instead an appropriate follow-up action plan would be required to remedy the chronic false alarm problem.
The premises file should be consulted on every occasion prior to the issue of formal letters. Where it is deemed that a formal letter is not appropriate a note for case detailing the reasons why, should be placed on the premises file. Professional judgement should be used by WFS officers in the first instance. Where it can be seen that the premises manager is taking reasonable steps to remedy the false alarm problem a local action plan may be agreed and implemented within the 26 week period supported by recorded note for case. When deciding or agreeing on an appropriate course of action with the premises manager the WFS officer should ensure realistic timeframes are applied, achievable targets are set and an assessment of the likelihood of a success is undertaken.

Creating Local Action Plans

Action plans will be formulated to address individual premises identified as being a ‘problem premises’ on the basis described above. The local action plan for a premises will be developed by WFS in conjunction with Station Managers and agreed with all relevant stakeholders, including premises owners and occupiers and/or their nominated representatives (ideally this should include the system design and installation engineers). Where appropriate, the plan will be informed by the outcome of the premises risk score as determined by the Service "risk based inspection programme" (RBIP) in addition to the false alarm data drawn from the IRS.

Major Sites

Major sites may present difficulties beyond the scope of a local action plan and may require additional resources to identify and resolve fire alarm problems. Many premises identified as having an unsatisfactory fire alarm installation form part of a larger site or complex. These locations are referred to as 'major sites'; these include hospitals, universities and large manufacturing plants.

Fire service managers having 'Major Sites' within their geographical area should utilise management information and call data (Actuate, IRS etc.) to determine the exact nature and scale of the false alarm problem and liaise with WFS teams to develop an appropriate plan.

Premises Management

The legal responsibility for fire safety matters relating to a premises lies with the Responsible Person (RP). This person is defined by the Regulatory Reform Order 2005 as follows:

- In a workplace the employer is deemed to be the RP if the workplace is to any extent under their control.

- In premises that are not workplaces the person who has control of the premises for that use is the RP.
• In premises where the person in control does not have control of the premises in connection with the carrying on of a trade, business or other undertaking (for profit or not) by that person, then the owner is deemed to be the RP.

Attending crews are likely to make initial contact with a ‘competent person’ nominated by the RP. Advice, information and instruction to remedy the problem should be directed to the RP either directly or via the competent person on every occasion a breach of the false alarm criteria occurs. Formal correspondence should always be directed to the RP (see Duty of RP in support information).

**BIRT Dashboard (ACTUATE)**

The application has the following features to support an analytical approach to managing AFA/False alarm due to apparatus (FADA):

• My Reports Tab
  o Links to IRS records
  o Narrative logs
  o Safer Communities Overview Report (SCOR) (performance against targets rolling 12 months)
  o SCOR - Filter by Area and/or by station in graphical format, facility includes a running 12 month list of offending premises
  o FADA in geographical/map format for station ground, facility includes a running 12 month list of offending premises
  o AFA calls
  o FADA calls

The application incorporates an ‘Action’ link at the head of the ‘AFA’ data page. This links to the appropriate WFS intranet page where the following can be obtained:

• Standard letter – A005 (Opportunity to act)
• Standard letter – A004 (Intention to Audit)
• The AFA Policy Outline document
• AFA Policy Support document

Where a fire safety audit is to be initiated as a result of excessive false alarms the problem should be discussed with the RP and their legal duties explained. Reference to the test and maintenance requirements of B.S. 5839: Part 1: 2002 may be made or an equivalent standard as appropriate. It is not the Fire Service's responsibility to redesign the alarm and detection system. The onus will remain with the RP to provide a system that is fit for purpose and therefore excessive time should not be spent at premises trying to solve system problems on behalf of the premises.
SUPPORT INFORMATION

Policy Scope

The policy supports the Essex County Fire & Rescue Service (ECFRS) strategic aims and the outcomes of the Integrated Risk Management Planning process (IRMP). The response aspect of the policy considers levels of activity to Unwanted Fire Signals (UwFS) and the types of premises where these occur.

ECFRS is committed to using its resources to protect the community and its personnel in the most efficient and effective way possible. Responding to significant numbers of UwFSs seriously undermines this commitment.

ECFRS will make every effort to reduce the attendance to UwFS and the number of unnecessary UwFS calls it receives. Managers have a responsibility to support and promote this action when carrying out their operational and non-operational duties.

Every opportunity should be taken to enhance this work especially using Community Fire Safety (CFS) activity and Workplace Fire Safety (WFS) audits. The policy covers all commercial premises including those with or without a sleeping risk, schools and other designated high risk premises including Top Tier CoMAH sites.

For the purposes of this policy, any premises with a fire detection and alarm system should be classified as a “problem premises” if they are generating false alarm calls due to apparatus in excess of the stated criteria in this guidance.

Managers in Area Commands will have current and accurate ‘false alarm call data’ (FACD) available at their disposal to effectively monitor and manage the level of UwFS that occur within their area of responsibility. They will proactively support and advise on the standards of fire safety required in respect of premises and safety systems, and where necessary enforce the legal duties placed upon a premises responsible person, in order to achieve a safe environment.

The reduction of unwanted fire signals (UwFS) is both a Service and a National issue and has been the subject of an HMI Thematic Review “Reducing false alarms – A thematic inspection of unwanted fire signals from Automatic Fire Detection systems” (HM Fire Service Inspectorate www.gov.uk).

Impact of False Alarms

Fire calls that are subsequently confirmed as false alarms have a major impact on the Service and cause concern for the following reasons:

- Essential Service resources are diverted rendering them unavailable, with the possibility of delayed attendance to genuine calls.
- An avoidable risk to Fire Crews and members of the public is created when appliances are unnecessarily responding under emergency conditions.
• Multiple false alarms are disruptive to work routines, particularly community fire safety activity and personnel training programs.
• Employers who release retained staff for operational duties may become frustrated by the frequency of absences and this may further impact on their willingness to release there staff in the future.
• The financial impact of servicing avoidable false alarm calls is substantial and may create funding pressure on other areas of service delivery, particularly in respect of the staffing retained duty system and vehicle fleet costs.

UwFS generated by fire alarm systems will cause problems for occupiers of premises in terms of lost production or sales and general disruption to business continuity or service delivery. They also contribute to complacency amongst staff, thereby reducing the effectiveness of the local alarm system, i.e. staff may fail to respond appropriately to a real fire alarm actuation.

Defining an Unwanted Fire Signal (UwFS)

Automatic fire detection systems that are competently designed, installed, commissioned and maintained will ensure an early alert of fire, even in areas of premises where detection by persons may be unlikely or delayed, thereby reducing the direct and consequential loss to property, damage to the environment and business interruption. The majority of automatic fire detection systems that are designed, installed and maintained in a proper manner operate entirely satisfactorily. There are, however, a relatively small number which, for a number of reasons, do not perform correctly and generate a high number of UwFS.

The British Fire Protection System Association (BFPSA) defines an unwanted fire signal as, ‘Any fire alarm signal other than a genuine fire or test signal’.

BS 5839-1:2002 defines a false alarm as a fire signal resulting from a cause(s) other than a fire, and further sub-divides these false alarms into four categories:
• Unwanted alarms,
• Equipment false alarms,
• Malicious false alarms, and
• False alarms with good intent.

Section 3 of the above British Standard (Limitation of False Alarms) provides guidance to designers, installers, maintainers and users of Fire Alarm Systems in respect of limiting the number of false alarms from such systems. Any person(s) responsible for such systems are advised to make themselves familiar with the contents of this section and to comply with the recommendations as appropriate.

Duty of Responsible Persons (RP)

All persons responsible for buildings and/or premises should take steps to ensure the safety of persons who resort to them. The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 places a statutory duty upon any employer/RP to secure the safety of employees and others resorting to their workplace in so far as they affect their employees. This includes a specific requirement for the employer to maintain a safe
environment in the workplace in the event of a systems failure, such as a fire alarm system generating a false alarm. A significant determinant in the ability of the Service to reduce UwFS is the ability to ensure that the owner/occupier/RP of relevant premises assumes full responsibility for the maintenance and operation of their fire alarm system.

The Fire Safety Order 2005 (FSO) identifies a person who to any extent, by virtue of a contract, who has control over specified matters in a premises, as having legal duties under the FSO in so far as their obligation extends. The implication here for ARCs is that a failure to uphold a contractual obligation to pass accurate information may be construed as being a breach of Article 5(4) of the FSO. ECFRS will take appropriate action against ARCs that do not operate in a manner that is fit for purpose. Information held by ARC’s must be kept up-to-date and accurate with particular emphasis on the following:

- Type of Premises – sleeping risk, school, factory, office, shop etc.
- Full address including post code
- Hours of business
- Specific dangers
- Key holder details
- Key holder notified – yes / no
- Time of activation

The premises ‘responsible person’ (RP) as defined in the FSO must in accordance with their duty detailed in Article 17 ensure that their AFA system is subjected to routine testing and maintenance to ensure that it remains in good working order. AFA systems that generate persistent unwanted fire signals (False alarms) could be construed as not satisfying the ‘efficient state’ criteria required by the FSO. Failure in this respect may lead to formal action against the RP of a premises.

Each individual premises should have an emergency fire action plan. The fire plan should include arrangements for carrying out a check of the premises in the event of a fire alarm actuation that will establish the cause of the alarm before a call is made to the fire service. This is particularly important for Level 3 premises as they will be required to confirm the fire to fire service Control staff.

The RP must ensure that any procedures put in place to investigate fire alarm actuations is fully risk assessed as required under both health and safety and fire safety legislation, so that premises managers can be satisfied there staff are operating within a ‘safe system of work’. The number of personnel required to operate such a system will be determined primarily by the local risk assessment as all premises will vary in the level of risk they may present in a fire situation.

Investigating staff should be fully conversant with the procedure they are to follow. This includes information regarding the nature of the emergency, features of the building, details of the fire alarm and/or other systems installed in the building and the limit to which they should expose themselves to risk according to the written procedure. Staff should be fully aware of the toxicity of smoke; they should have an understanding of fire behaviour and spread; they should know the correct method of opening doors and they should be advised of local hazards that may escalate the fire
or risk to occupants. This information can easily be imparted by means of a suitable local training program.

If any member of staff in the course of investigation is reasonably of the opinion that a fire situation exists then they may legitimately ‘confirm’ a fire situation to the fire service via a 999 call and a response will follow accordingly. This does not, and should not mean staff have to place themselves at unacceptable levels of risk when investigating the actuation. In the event that the alarm has actuated and the cause has been positively identified as a false alarm, the occupier can reset the system and allow people to return to their normal activities without calling the fire service.

Where possible arrangements for taking automatic connections to ARC’s off-line during normal working hours are to be encouraged. This will provide the premises with the ability to more effectively manage events during periods when the premises are occupied, thus maximising the benefits of installing automatic fire detection systems. Such systems should be subjected to routine testing and maintenance to ensure they remain in good working order, and if they fail to achieve the standards of resilience described in BS 5839-Part1 2002 they should be immediately examined and repaired as necessary.
EXEMPTION FROM LEVEL 3 MOBILISING

Exemption Types

The premises record card (PRC) section of the management information system (MIS) should be used to collate an exempted premises database. Exemption will mean that the mobilisation status of the premises will be varied from level 3 to level 2. There are three exempted types:

- Default exemption (level 1 mobilisation)
  - Sleeping risks
  - Schools

- Automatic exemption (level 2 mobilisation)
  - Top tier CoMAH sites/premises
  - Grade1 and Grade2* heritage premises

- Assessed exemption (level 2 mobilisation)
  - High risk premises (HRPs) scoring 4 or more in Appendix C matrix
  - Double knock premises with a submission satisfying the required criteria

The database will comprise of automatic and assessed exemptions only and will be populated by Delivery WFS teams as part of the assessed exemptions processes detailed below.

All premises that have applied for an assessed exemption will be recorded for audit purposes. Both positive and negative outcomes should be entered on PRC/MIS by using the preformatted template provided on the system. An updated database (new entries granted/approved only) will be extracted from MIS and sent to Control weekly by WFS SHQ. This will include an ‘authority’ issued for the mobilisation level to be changed from level 3 to level 2 (i.e. AFA mobilising restrictions lifted).

Premises that fall within level 3 of the mobilising criteria will not receive an attendance to AFA activations unless a fire is confirmed. However where a premises has successfully passed through the high risk premises assessment process (HRP) or has an approved double knock (DK) fire alarm system installed then the mobilisation level will be changed from level 3 to level 2.

Enquiries from premises managers requesting a change to the mobilisation arrangements applicable to their premises should be advised that they should make the request in writing to their local fire safety office. This application will enable the formal process for mobilisation changes to commence.

High Risk Premises

Where requests are received to vary the current mobilisation restrictions placed on a premises, on the grounds of increased risk, i.e. due to the level of risk an immediate attendance is appropriate upon initial activation of the AFA, the request should be referred to the high risk premises (HRP) assessment detailed in Appendix C.
operational officers receive such requests they should be forwarded to the Delivery WFS team at the appropriate SDP for processing.

Evaluation of premises should be undertaken at local level by the Command FSO with the Command WFS DO/ADO issuing approval as appropriate. Exemption proposals will be discussed and scrutinised by both Area Delivery ADOs and ADO Policy prior to approval. Approved premises will be notified to Workplace Fire Safety Delivery Group (WFSDG) for information. These premises will have scored 4 or more against the ‘wider risk factors’ scoring matrix. In most cases there will be no further discussion on the outcome of the assessment and the WFSDG Chair will acknowledge the mobilisation change for the minutes and audit. However where the premises are complex the Group may give specific direction. Where there are sensitive issues associated with the mobilisation change the matter may be referred to Safer Communities Management Team (SCMT).

The assessment detailed in Appendix C will consider risk in the wider context. Specifically this will include any elevated risk to life that has not previously been identified and/or the likelihood, severity and consequences of a fire occurring in relation to the following:

- **Life risk:**
  - High life risk/occupant dependency that is not covered by the sleeping risk or schools criteria under level 1 mobilisation
- **Societal:**
  - Fire at these premises would have a disproportionate effect on the wider Essex community
- **Environment:**
  - The environmental impact of a fire at the site would be catastrophic in a wider context
- **Community facilities:**
  - Fire at these premises cause major disruption to local or national infrastructure, e.g. transport, health, utilities etc.
- **Heritage:**
  - Other heritage building of national importance not qualifying for G1 and G2* status and therefore not receiving level 2 mobilisation automatically
- **Other factors:**
  - Other circumstances that constitute high risk in the wider context and require specific consideration

Details of the agreed mobilisation changes will be entered on the PRC/MIS by Area Admin subsequent to the Group deliberation.

Where the issues relating to the assessment are complex the referring officer should consider circulating relevant information about the premises to the Group members in advance of meetings to inform decision making. This is particularly relevant where the Group officers are not familiar with the premises in question.
High Risk Premises Assessment Process

Premises managers requesting mobilisation change on the grounds of high risk should be issued with standard letter AFA 002. This standard letter requests more information to enable the FSO to complete the HRP assessment as detailed in Appendix C of this Guidance. The information received in respect of the premises will be assessed against the ‘Wider Risk’ criteria. This process will produce a score that will determine whether the request to change the AFA mobilising arrangements is to be accepted or rejected.

The WFS Station Manager will arrange for an Appendix C assessment of the premises. Premises that score 4 or more in the HRP process will be passed to the ADO WFS as approved.

Rejected premises will be issued with an AFA001 ‘unsuccessful’ standard letter. Admin will record this outcome on the premises record card (PRC) within the management information system (MIS) using the preformatted template provided on the system.

Approved premises will be endorsed or rejected by the ADO WFS. After endorsement they will be presented at WFSDG where the Group will have opportunity to discuss/challenge the decision. The mobilisation changes will be approved subject to any successful challenges from WFSDG. The premises manager will be notified of this by issue of standard letter AFA001 ‘successful’ letter. The FSO will request Area Admin to record this outcome on the PRC/MIS using the preformatted template provided on the system.
High Risk Premises Assessment Process Flow

Premises requests HRP exemption for mobilisation

Admin will issue Standard letter AFA002 (further information)

Premises provides information to support the 'wider risk' that forms the basis of the request. Admin create a worksheet and refer the submission to WFS Station Manager.

If further information regarding the premises is not received from the premises in response to the AFA002 the AFA001 will not be issued and Request is to be closed. Record/code/file on MIS.

Station Manager arranges an assessment of the request against the HRP 'wider risk' criteria of Appendix C and recommends Approval or Rejection.

Approved requests are notified to WFS ADO for endorsement or rejection.

Request will be discussed by both Area ADO’s and ADO Policy. The request may be challenged by the Group.

Where WFSDG do not challenge the decision the mobilisation change will be approved.

Admin will issue an appropriately amended Standard letter AFA001 (approved).

Mobilisation amendment is made. Status changed from level 3 to level 2. Record/code/file on MIS.

WFS SHQ Admin will forward mobilisation changes to Control weekly in MIS report format.

Mobilisation changes will be implemented within 10 days of issue of AFA001.

Rejected submissions are notified to Admin.

Admin will issue an appropriately amended Standard letter AFA001 (rejected).

Request is to be closed. Record/code/file on MIS.

A successful challenge from Area ADO or WFSDG will be notified to the premises as a rejection via an appropriately amended AFA001.

Where the premises or request is of a sensitive nature the WFSDG may override the scoring process. This is likely where it is deemed necessary to mobilise at level 2 due to sensitivities but the score does not support this.
Fire Alarm Systems with Double Knock Facilities

A double knock (DK) function on a fire alarm system is often used in situations where the premises management has identified that it would not be appropriate for the fire alarm system to go immediately into full alarm upon the activation of just one fire detector head.

DK facilities are often confused with so called ‘Coincidence’ facilities, although there are technical differences between the two settings, for the purpose of this guidance they should be considered as the same. There are several reasons why a premises have provided DK facilities, this guidance is concerned with the use of DK to reduce the occurrence of unwanted fire signals and associated false alarm calls to the fire service.

Where DK is effectively used for this purpose, the premises concerned may be eligible for exemption from the level 3 mobilising provisions of the ECFRS AFA policy. Approval of the DK facility will be subject to a submission detailing the system specification and confirming that it meets the following set criteria:

- The activation of a single detector head will sound an alarm locally; this may upon local risk assessment be, either audible throughout the premises or sound in a discrete location only audible to selected staff. Management will initiate their normal fire evacuation procedure. Crucially this (first stage) activation will not initiate a call to the fire service, either directly or via an alarm receiving centre (ARC).
- It is only when a second fire detector activates (second stage) that an automatic fire call is made to the fire service again either directly or via an ARC.

At any time a fire is confirmed to the fire service via 999 an immediate response will be initiated.

It should be noted that a DK facility can often only be achieved by advanced analogue addressable fire alarm systems that incorporate software specifically programmed to provide this function. Premises managers considering such a system are advised to select a system that utilises software that is ‘open protocol’ as this will allow flexibility in respect of on-going maintenance. Closed protocol systems are equally as effective but the end user may find them more restrictive in terms of component replacement and upgrade.

The fire alarm software will need to be configured to trigger a fire alarm call to the fire service when two fire detectors have activated. The detectors can be within a single zone or in zones/address locations that are remote from each other.

Fire alarm systems with DK facility utilise automatic fire detectors, therefore activation by means of a manual call point (MCP) will fall outside of the ECFRS definition of DK. Fire calls received via ARCs that have originated by operation of
MCPs will be processed in the normal way and may be challenged for ‘fire confirmation’ by fire service control staff.

**Submission process for Premises Providing DK Facilities**

WFS will process submissions from premises purporting to have a fire alarm system that incorporates DK facilities. Approved DK facilities will enable change from the level 3 to level 2 mobilisation on the grounds that the facility provides acceptable levels of reliability that makes false alarms unlikely. Premises managers interested in applying for exemption should be issued with standard letter DK001. This letter provides ‘information’ on the submission/approval process and the qualifying criteria that would enable mobilisation change to level 2. The premises manager will be required to submit a specification for the proposed DK facility to their local fire safety office in order that this can be evaluated against the set criteria detailed in this guidance.

The FSO will evaluate the specification submitted and determine whether it can be passed to the ADO WFS for approval. Submissions that do not meet the criteria will not be approved and the premises manager will be notified of this by issue of standard letter DK002b. The submission rejection should be recorded on the PRC/MIS using the preformatted template provided on the system.

Where the submission is approved the premises manager will be issued with standard letter DK002a confirming acceptance and requesting a declaration of installation and serviceability.

Submissions approved as DK compliant will not be entered on the PRC/MIS until the formal declaration is received from the premises manager in writing, stating that the proposed facilities are installed and operable. Receipt of this declaration will be acknowledged by issue of standard letter DK003. This letter will confirm implementation of the mobilisation change and also states that the fire service reserves the right to revert the mobilisation back to the original level 3 if the DK facility does not operate as specified.

Full details of the submission, local management changes to accommodate the DK arrangements, formal declaration and date of effect will then be recorded on the PRC/MIS.

Issue of the DK003 must be notified to WFS SHQ email using the WFS mailbox. Upon receipt the exemption will be added to the exemption database on the MIS. Approved exemptions placed on the database will be notified to control by WFS SHQ on a weekly basis.
Double Knock Submission Process Flow

Premises request for DK exemption from mobilisation restrictions

Admin issue Standard letter DK001

Premises return a submission including the DK specification and management processes to be implemented at activation of first detector and second detector

Admin create a worksheet and refer the submission to WFS Station Manager for consideration

Approved

Lead FSO arranges a check of the submission against the required DK criteria and recommends Approved or Rejected

Rejected submissions are notified to Admin

Admin issue Standard letter DK002b This letter confirms that the submission is rejected

Request is to be closed
Record/code/file on MIS

Declaration is received from the premises that the DK facility is installed, commissioned and in use

Approved submissions are verified by WFS ADOs and notified to WFSDG

Admin issue Standard letter DK003 This letter confirms mobilisation change

Mobilisation status is changed from level 3 to level 2
Record/code/file on MIS
WFS SHQ Admin will forward mobilisation changes to Control weekly in MIS report format

Mobilisation changes are implemented by Control

If a declaration is not received from the premises confirming that the DK facility is installed, commissioned and in use the DK 003 confirming exemption will not be issued and Request is to be closed.
Record/code/file on MIS

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Control Database Administration

The approved mobilisation changes for all exemption types will be collated from the MIS weekly by WFS SHQ. The changes will be issued with a formal SHQ authorisation and forwarded to Control (Database Administration).

Control will enter the relevant details against the premises record within the mobilising system display screen procedures (DSP). This will be confirmed to SHQ WFS Mailbox upon completion. Receipt of confirmation that ‘mobilisation change’ has commenced will be recorded on the PRC/MIS by WFS SHQ.
Appendix B

CALL HANDLING AND MOBILISING TO AFA CALLS

AFA Call received

Fire confirmed

Complete incident type field as FAA – Confirmed Fire

Mobilise full PDA

Control ask for Confirmation

Level 1
Sleeping Risk / Schools

Full PDA

Level 2
Heritage 1 & 2* Double Knock Top Tier CoMAH Site Designated High Risk Premises (see exempt list)

Full PDA

Level 3
Other premises

No attendance

Fire not confirmed

Complete incident type field as FAA – No Further Information

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Appendix C

HIGH RISK PREMISES – ASSESSMENT OF WIDER RISK

First – Select the wider risk category below that forms the basis of the request for mobilisation change. Where more than one wider risk group is applicable a separate assessment for each will be required. The higher of the scores will take precedence:

WIDER RISK CATEGORIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Life risk:</td>
<td>The premises present an exceptionally high life risk/occupant dependency that does not fall within the sleeping risk/schools exemption type.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Societal:</td>
<td>A fire at the premises would have a disproportionate effect on the wider national infrastructure or social fabric, for specific reasons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment:</td>
<td>The environmental impact of a fire at the site will be major in a wider context. The consequences from an onsite event which would result in contamination or pollution of land, water or air with harmful biological / chemical / radioactive matter or oil, flooding, disruption or destruction of plant or animal life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community facilities:</td>
<td>A fire at the premises would cause major disruption to local infrastructure, e.g. transport, health, utilities etc. Encompassing the social consequences of an event, including availability of social welfare provision; disruption of facilities for transport; damage to property; disruption of the supply of money, food, water, energy, or fuel; disruption of an electronic or other system of communication; homelessness, evacuation; and public disorder due to anger, fear, and / or lack of trust in the authorities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heritage:</td>
<td>The premises is a heritage building of national importance and has high historical or intellectual value, e.g. loss of irreplaceable artifacts, goods, buildings, structures, etc. The site has cultural and historic presence as part of the fabric of the national and local community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other factors:</td>
<td>There are other circumstances relating to the premises that in the event of a fire would create major negative damage to the reputation of the fire service. This may include damage to public relations and or public confidence.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Next - Determine the appropriate level of 'likelihood of an incident' in relation to the premises referred:

LIKELIHOOD OF INCIDENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Probable</td>
<td>• Intelligence indicates that a significant number of fires or other emergencies / problems have occurred in these types of premises that have required Fire and Rescue Service attendance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Statistics or knowledge indicates that malicious fire setting is a problem in this area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Specific aspects of construction, occupancy, use or contents give serious concern.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possible</td>
<td>• Intelligence indicates that a significant number of fires or other emergencies / problems have occurred in these types of premises that have required Fire and Rescue Service attendance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Specific aspects of construction, occupancy, use or contents give concern.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unlikely</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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• Intelligence indicates that there is little evidence of fires or other emergencies / problems within similar sites or occupancies elsewhere within the area.
• The premises is equipped with basic fixed installations that provide a satisfactory level of fire safety and suppression

**Very Unlikely**
• Intelligence indicates that there is no evidence of fires or other emergencies / problems within similar sites or occupancies elsewhere within the area.
• The premises is equipped with specific fixed installations that provide an enhanced level of fire safety and suppression

**Negligible**
• Intelligence indicates that there is no evidence of fires or other emergencies / problems within similar sites or occupancies elsewhere within the area.
• The premises is equipped with extensive fixed installations that provide an exceptional level of fire safety and suppression
• There are no aspects of construction, occupancy, use or contents that give rise for concern.

Next - Determine the appropriate level of ‘Severity’ of an incident in relation to the premises referred. There is a separate table for each wider risk group:

### SEVERITY OF INCIDENT - LIFE RISK

**Catastrophic:** A fire at these premises would result in very large numbers of people being impacted with significant number of fatalities, large number of people requiring hospitalisation with serious injuries with long term effects.

**Significant:** A fire at these premises would result in a significant number of people being impacted with one or more fatalities, multiple serious or extensive injuries and significant hospitalisation.

**Moderate:** A fire at these premises is unlikely to be fatal or cause serious injury but could result in people impacted requiring medical treatment and hospitalisation.

**Minor:** A fire at these premises is unlikely to be fatal or cause serious injury but could result in less serious minor injuries requiring first aid treatment.

**Insignificant:** Exposure to hazard resulting in injury is unlikely.

### SEVERITY OF INCIDENT - SOCIETAL

**Catastrophic:** Very large numbers of people severely affected in the areas impacted, with significant effect on the Local and wider Essex community.

**Significant:** Significant number of people affected in areas impacted Local and wider Essex community will be significantly affected by the fire.

**Moderate:** Smaller groups of people affected in areas impacted Local and wider Essex community will be moderately affected by the fire.

**Minor:** Small number of people affected. Local and wider Essex community will be affected by the fire to a limited extent.

**Insignificant:** Insignificant number of injuries or impact on health. Local Essex community will be affected by the fire to a limited extent.

### SEVERITY OF INCIDENT - ENVIRONMENT

**Catastrophic:** Environmental Agency Compliance Classification Scheme (CCS) Category 1. Major long term impact on the environment and/or serious permanent damage.

**Significant:** Environmental Agency Compliance Classification Scheme (CCS) Category 2. Significant impact on the environment with medium to long term effects.

**Moderate:** Environmental Agency Compliance Classification Scheme (CCS) Category 3. Limited impact on the environment with short term or long term effects.

**Minor:** Environmental Agency Compliance Classification Scheme (CCS) Category 4. Minor impact on environment with no lasting effects.

**Insignificant:** Insignificant impact on environment with short term or long term effects.
SEVERITY OF INCIDENT - COMMUNITY FACILITIES

**Catastrophic:** Extensive damage to properties and built environment in affected area requiring major demolition. General and widespread displacement of people for prolonged duration and extensive personal support required. Serious damage to local infrastructure would cause significant disruption to or loss of key services for prolonged period. Community would be unable to function without significant support.

**Significant:** Significant damage that requires support for local responders with external resources. People in danger and displaced for longer than one week. Local responders require external resources to deliver personal support. Significant impact on and possible breakdown of delivery of some local community services.

**Moderate:** Damage that is confined to a specific location, or a number of locations but requires additional resources, localised disruption of people for less than a week. Disruption to local infrastructure and community services.

**Minor:** Minor damage to properties, minor displacement of a small number of people for less than 24 hours and minor personal support required. Minor localised disruption to community services or local infrastructure for less than 24 hours.

**Insignificant:** Insignificant number of persons displaced and insignificant personal support required, insignificant disruption to community services including transport services and local infrastructure.

SEVERITY OF INCIDENT - HERITAGE

**Catastrophic:** Where there is a potential total loss / damage of an historical structure and/or content(s) or site of special scientific interest with national significance either locally, regionally, nationally or in some cases internationally.

**Significant:** Where there is a potential of a significant loss / damage of an historical structure and/or content(s) or site of special scientific interest with national significance either locally, regionally, nationally or in some cases internationally.

**Moderate:** Where there is a potential of limited loss / damage of an historical structure and/or content(s) or site of special scientific interest with national significance either locally, regionally, nationally or in some cases internationally.

**Minor:** Where there is a potential of some loss / damage of an historical structure and/or content(s) or site of special scientific interest with national significance either locally, regionally, nationally or in some cases internationally.

**Insignificant:** No potential impact on structure and content(s) or site of special scientific interest with national significance and therefore no impact on the community.

SEVERITY OF INCIDENT - OTHER FACTORS

**Catastrophic:** Serious impact on the reputation of the fire service on a national, regional and local level.

**Significant:** Significant impact on the reputation of the fire service on a national, regional and local level.

**Moderate:** Limited impact on the reputation of the fire service at regional level with tolerable impact at local level. No national impact.

**Minor:** Negligible impact on the reputation of the fire service at regional level. Impact limited to local level. No national impact.

**Insignificant:** Insignificant impact on the reputation of the fire service at all levels.

Next – Use your determinations for likelihood and severity to calculate a score using the matrix over the page:
**High Risk Premises Referral Assessment Matrix**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Likelihood</th>
<th>Insignificant</th>
<th>Minor</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Significant</th>
<th>Catastrophic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Probable</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possible</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unlikely</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Unlikely</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negligible</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Only premises that achieve a score of 4 or more will qualify as high risk premises.

**Next** – Enter your score in the appropriate box on the high risk premises information form.

Also enter the generic premises information in the top section of the form and rationale/assessment conclusions within the appropriate wider risk category section. Forward the completed form to WFS SHQ for inclusion on the WFSDG agenda.
#226555 v1A

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**HIGH RISK PREMISES INFORMATION FORM**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Command FSO Name:</th>
<th>Command Area:</th>
<th>Date of request:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Person/organisation requesting exemption:</td>
<td>Premises Identity/Use/Address:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivery and Policy</td>
<td>ADOs decision to refer:</td>
<td>Premises Record Card No:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes:</td>
<td>No:</td>
<td>UPRN:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date WFSDG Informed:</td>
<td>Date of declined letter:</td>
<td>Not currently in use</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Note:
Provide information in support of the ‘wider’ risk categories listed below. Where the issues relating to the premises assessment are complex consider circulating relevant support information to the WFSDG members.

### Life risk
Description of high life risk/occupant dependency that does not fall under this policy’s sleeping risk or schools criteria:

### Societal
Explanation of the specific reason why a fire at this premise would have disproportionate effect on the local and wider social fabric of Essex:

### Environment
Explanation of why a fire at these premises would have a major and wider environmental impact:

### Community facilities
Explanation of why a fire at these premises would cause major disruption to local or national infrastructure:

### Heritage
Explanation of why a fire at these premises would have a major impact on local or national Heritage. (Please state heritage listing if applicable):

### Other factors
Explanation of why a fire at these premises would have a major negative impact on the reputation fire service:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Command FSO score:</th>
<th>WFSDG Endorsement Y/N:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WF SHQ Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date presented to WFSDG (meeting date):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WFSDG revised Score/Veto (if applicable):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date assessment outcome recorded on MIS:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date Control informed of mobilisation change:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date SCMT notified (if applicable):</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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“Doing more than we have ever done to make Essex safer”