

Fire Doors - Your legal obligations

Ⓜ Your legal obligations

Fire doors are fundamental to the safety and protection of a building and its occupants. They are the first line of defence in a fire and must be correctly specified, installed and maintained by law, in order to provide optimum security and comply with strict legislation.

In 2013-14, UK Fire and Rescue Services attended over 39,600 fires in domestic properties, resulting in around 300 fatalities and thousands of serious injuries. According to research carried out by the BWF CERTIFIRE Scheme, many of these incidents could have been prevented if the right type of fire doors had been installed and fitted correctly.

A fire door can save the lives of building occupants in the event of an emergency, yet they are often poorly maintained or used ineffectively. It is therefore essential for installers and building owners to ensure that their fire door knowledge is kept up to date. Failure to meet regulations can result in legal action, a prison sentence and/or a heavy financial penalty.

Ⓜ What are your legal obligations when installing a fire door?

Building Regulations Approved Document B sets out the law regarding fire safety in buildings. Volume 1 covers residential properties and Volume 2 encompasses all other buildings.

There are three key ways to ensure that fire doors comply with Approved Document B legislation:

1. Build a door set from CERTIFIRE approved components

CERTIFIRE is an independent third party certification scheme that assures performance, quality, reliability and traceability of fire protection products. It is an internationally respected mark of fire safety and one of the most authoritative schemes in the industry.

Installers can build door sets from CERTIFIRE approved products to exact supplier installation instructions.

In this instance, the client assumes responsibility and takes on all the risk that the door set fully complies.

2. Install a door set with fire test evidence from component suppliers' global assessments

Installers can procure and fit door sets that have fire test evidence or cascaded evidence from component suppliers' global assessments. In this instance, the client takes the manufacturer's word that the doors are constructed exactly as per the specification and that there is no deviation in any component.

3. Install a third party certified door set with fire test evidence and an assessment

Door sets with independent third party certification come with fire test evidence and assurance that the products are covered by test data supplied by an approved independent body, such as Exova or Trada. The certification also covers the manufacture and fire compliance of the components being used.

In this instance, the client takes the least risk as the fire door has been underwritten by the third party certification body.

Ⓜ The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

places the legal responsibility for fire compliance on a 'responsible person', namely the landlord or contractor involved in making improvements to a building. Again, failure to comply with fire regulations can result in a two-year prison sentence or a substantial fine. Moreover, in the event of a fire, the responsible person could face corporate manslaughter charges if the building was deemed at fault.

Fact Sheet



Contact Details



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