

POLICY – ESSENTIAL SERVICES MAINTENANCE

FS-05



CONTENTS

1. PURPOSE:	2
2. REFERENCES:	2
3. PREAMBLE:	2
4. DEFINITIONS:	3
5. POLICY:	4
5.1 Essential Services Maintenance Legislation	4
5.2. Essential Services Maintenance – Responsibilities	4
5.3 Essential Services Maintenance Regimes	8
5.4 Essential Services Maintenance – General	9
5.5 The ACT Fire Brigade Act 1957	9
6. AMENDMENT HISTORY:	11

First Edition: January 2003

ESSENTIAL SERVICES MAINTENANCE

1.0 PURPOSE

To detail the ACT Fire Brigade's (ACTFB) policy on:

- Fire safety related essential services maintenance legislation in the ACT
- Responsibilities and requirements of building owners, employers, building occupants and essential services maintenance contractors/providers with regards to essential services maintenance
- Essential services maintenance regimes
- Inspectorate roles powers of the ACT Fire Brigade with regards to essential services maintenance

2.0 REFERENCES

- Building Code of Australia 1996 (BCA)*
- AS1851 Suit of maintenance standards and AS2293.2 (Emergency and exit lighting maintenance standard)
- ACT Fire Brigade Act 1957

*A reference to the BCA is a reference to the BCA including the most recent amendments to it.

3.0 PREAMBLE

Essential services maintenance is the process of ensuring, via:

- periodic inspection (visual assessment) testing (operation) of essential services in accordance with an approved methodology such as an Australian Standard or as prescribed by a regulatory authority, building certifier or fire safety/service engineer
- undertaking necessary remedial works to essential services in a timely manner; and
- maintaining accurate maintenance inspection, remedial works documentation and verification certification (written confirmation of a fire safety system's serviceability)

by suitably qualified and competent persons, that a building's fire related essential services comprising of both active and passive fire safety systems, operate when required and as they were designed to do at the time they were commissioned following installation, and to ensure they perform their required/expected function over the life of the building.

The reasons for essential services maintenance are:

- These services are prone to general wear and tear, eg emergency/exit lighting batteries and tubes, fire hose reel damaged by occupants
- Faults often occur after the commissioning of systems, eg emergency power supply
- General housekeeping is often sub standard and not conducive to fire safety, eg paths of travel to an exit being blocked by extraneous materials

- The prevalence of recurring problems with the reliability of a fire safety system and the interface between systems, eg. sprinkler system and smoke control system
- To safeguard against unauthorised work or work not completed and systems not returned to an operational condition

4.0 DEFINITIONS

- Active fire safety systems: Systems which actively detect a fire and/or extinguish a fire, call fire brigades, alert building occupants & control the movement of smoke. These include automatic fire sprinkler systems, fire alarm detection systems, including manual fire alarms, fire hydrants, fire hose reels and portable fire extinguishers, emergency warning systems (eg occupant warning system, EWIS, EWS) & mechanical smoke control systems (eg. smoke exhaust, stair pressurisation, zone smoke control)
- Essential services: Those active and passive fire safety systems installed or constructed in a building to ensure adequate levels of fire safety is provided to the occupants over the life of a building. These systems are detailed in Section C, D & E of the Building Code of Australia 1996 (BCA) and their performance are a function of time or time variant. For the purposes of this policy and unless stated otherwise, a reference to essential services is a reference to fire safety related essential services only.
- Maintenance: The process of inspecting, testing, auditing, (surveying) repairing and rectifying of required essential services and the recording and reporting of these activities to ensure they operate as designed and perform their required/expected function over the life of the building.
- Passive fire safety systems: Design or structural components of a building which confine or limit the spread of fire or smoke to the compartment of origin. These include fire rated floors, walls, ceilings and roofs columns, beams, air ducts and dampers, doors assemblies (door and framing), windows and shutters, surface linings, physical separation between buildings, fire stopping treatments of openings or penetrations in structural components of as building requiring an FRL¹
- Required: Required by ACT legislation, the BCA, an Australian Standard or as a result of a direction by the ACTFB

¹ FRL: Fire Resistance Level – means the ability of a structural component of a building to resist the effects of fire, smoke and hot gases on its structural adequacy (ability to maintain its load bearing capability when exposed to fire), integrity (ability to resist the passage of flames and hot gases) and Insulation (ability to maintain a temperature on the surface not exposed to flame)

5.0 POLICY

5.1 ESSENTIAL SERVICES MAINTENANCE LEGISLATION

5.1.1 References to essential services maintenance legislation in the ACT can be located in the following:

- Fire Brigade Act 1957
- Fire Brigade Regulations
- ACT Building Act 1972
- ACT Building Manual
- Building Code of Australia 1996 (BCA)
- ACT Liquor Act 1975
- OHS Act 1974
- Public Sector Management Act 1994
- Commonwealth Fire Board 1997, Fire Safety Circular No. 3 – *'Fire safety management: maintenance standards for fire safety'*
- Aged Care Act 1997

5.2 ESSENTIAL SERVICES MAINTENANCE – RESPONSIBILITIES

5.2.1 Building Owners (& Agents), Body Corporate, Employers, Building Occupants, Tenants

5.2.1.1 Unless stated or agreed otherwise in either a lease agreement/contract, memorandum of understanding or any such similar written agreement, the maintenance of required essential services in a building or structure is the responsibility of the building owner (or his/her agent ie. property management group) or body corporate (where applicable).

5.2.1.2 An employer, leasee or tenant is responsible for the maintenance of required essential services in a building or structure, or part of a building or structure, if this is so stipulated or agreed on in either a lease agreement/contract memorandum of understanding or any such similar written agreement with the building owner (or his/her agent ie. property management group) or body corporate (where applicable).

5.2.1.3 In accordance with the OHS Act 1974, an employer has an obligation to ensure his/her employee's health and safety in the workplace are adequately safeguarded. The monitoring of essential services maintenance in the workplace, including educating, training and encouraging employees to do the same, is considered by the ACTFB to be one of the employer's OHS obligations.

5.2.1.4 To ensure required essential services will be maintained adequately (see 5.3 of this policy), those persons responsible for their maintenance should undertake a full investigation into the accreditation (where available), credibility, experience, reliability and qualifications of all person and/or fire protection companies tendering or applying for an essential services maintenance contract or offering their services for the same. The subsequent criteria for the contracting, hiring or employing of an essential services maintenance company should be based on the results of the investigation and on a merit basis only.

5.2.1.5 To ensure essential services are being maintained adequately (see 5.3 of this policy), those persons responsible for the maintenance of required essential services in a building or structure (or part) should understand and commit to the required maintenance regime/methodology imposed for the building such as an AS1851 maintenance standard, or as prescribed by a regulatory authority, the ACT Fire Brigade, a building certifier or a fire safety engineer.

5.2.1.6 It is incumbent on those persons responsible for the maintenance of required essential services in a building or structure (or part) to ensure all essential services maintenance records/logs and maintenance inspection/remedial works documentation include details required from AS2293.2 and the AS1851 suit of standards and are accurate, regularly updated, filed for easy access and be readily available for review by the ACTFB.

Note: The ACTFB will allow electronic scheduling, recording and reporting of essential services maintenance, however the availability of these must still be there from the onsite building manager or owner or local representative if owned by overseas/interstate interests.

5.2.1.7 Building occupants should report any malfunction or defect of an essential service in a building immediately to the person responsible for essential services maintenance, immediately upon identifying such a malfunction or defect or as soon as possible afterwards.

5.2.1.8 Those persons responsible for the maintenance of required essential services in a building or structure (or part) should act on all reasonable and justifiable recommendations made by essential services maintenance contractors /providers in a timely manner so as to ensure the essential services function as designed at the time of installation and not to potentially place the building occupants in danger from fire (See 5.2.2.3 & 5.2.2.4).

5.2.1.9 It is highly recommended that those persons responsible for the maintenance of required essential services in a building or structure (or part) engage the services of an independent fire safety expert, fire safety engineer or essential

services maintenance specialist to undertake periodic audits, at intervals not exceeding three years, to critically evaluate and report on:

- The operational readiness of the essential services
- The quality of essential services maintenance being undertaken
- The availability, effectiveness and collation of essential services maintenance verification documentation
- The reporting lines between those persons responsible for the maintenance of required essential services and the essential services maintenance contractors/provider
- The willingness of those persons responsible for the maintenance of required essential services to act on recommendations made to them in relation to essential services maintenance

5.2.1.10 Those persons responsible for the maintenance of required essential services in a building or structure (or part) should prepare, and have readily available to the ACTFB when requested, a signed annual verification certificate that lists all the essential services confirming that:

- The essential services have been maintained to AS2293.2 or the AS1851 maintenance standards, or as prescribed by a regulatory authority, the ACT Fire Brigade, a building certifier or an ACTFB endorsed fire safety engineering report:
- Each essential fire safety measure specified in the certificate has been assessed by a properly qualified person and was found, when it was assessed, to be capable of performing:
 - i) to a standard no less than that specified in the certificate; or
 - ii) in the case of an essential fire safety system to a standard no less than that to which the measure was originally designed and installed
- No change of use, alterations or additions have been made to the building that will adversely affect the life safety of the building occupants or the essential services.

5.2.1.11 As far as reasonable, building owners and occupants are to make themselves available and co-operate with fire safety officers within the ACTFB who have powers of inspection, (see clause 5.5.2 of this policy) during audit inspections of essential services maintenance.

5.2.2 Essential services maintenance contractors/providers

5.2.2.1 As required within the AS1851 suit of maintenance standards and the AS2293.2 maintenance standard, it is incumbent on essential services maintenance contractors/providers to ensure all essential services maintenance records/logs and maintenance inspection/remedial works documentation include details required from the AS maintenance standards or an ACTFB endorsed maintenance document and are accurate, regularly updated, filed for easy access and be readily available for review by the

ACTFB. They are to also complete all inspection reports and necessary documentation clearly and submit them to their client.

Periodic maintenance certification should include the following:

- A reference to the correct design and maintenance standard/specification for each essential service
- Written confirmation stating the essential service has been maintained to the correct maintenance standard or as prescribed by a regulatory authority, the ACT Fire Brigade, a building certifier or an ACTFB approved fire safety engineering report
- Typed details of the essential services maintenance contractor/provider including name, address, contact details, business name, ABN number, affiliation with any fire protection accreditation scheme (where available) & signature

5.2.2.2 Essential services maintenance contractors/providers should maintain the essential services contained within their contract with their client to the prescriptive requirements of the relevant maintenance standard and the provisions of this policy (see section 5.3).

5.2.2.3 Where it has been identified and determined by essential services maintenance contractors/providers that essential services rectification works is required*, documentary justification should be provided to those persons responsible for the essential services maintenance as soon as possible. The documentation should include the component, function or facility that has been identified as having a defect requiring repair and the appropriate clause in the relevant standard or design, specification for each defect that effects the compliance of the system.

*Required: Means required in accordance with the standard or design, specification or maintenance document at the time of installation.

5.2.2.4 Essential services maintenance contractors/providers should only recommend maintenance rectification works when the works they are specifying are not required* but merely recommended.

5.2.2.5 Essential services maintenance contractors/providers should only maintain those essential services that they have the relevant qualifications, working knowledge, experience and competencies in.

5.2.2.6 In the pursuit of reliability, quality assurance and service delivery, essential services maintenance contractors/providers should undertake accredited training and workplace assessment, or seek recognition of their skills and

experience to an ITAB approved training package (eg Certificate II Asset Management) with a Recognised Training Organisation (RTO).

5.2.2.7 In the pursuit of reliability, quality assurance and client service delivery, essential services maintenance contractors/providers should be accredited or registered with an industry approved accreditation or registration scheme (where available), eg. the Fire Protection Association of Australasia FPAA001 'Code of Practice for the installation and Maintenance of Fire Protection Equipment'. Evidence of such accreditation/registration should be readily available to the ACTFB on request.

5.2.2.8 Essential services maintenance contractors/providers should undertake continuous professional development (ie. ongoing training for themselves and employees) relating to their vocation, scope of expertise and daily functions. This would include periodic and regular auditing of their employee's vocational performances and competencies.

5.2.2.9 As far as is reasonable, essential services maintenance contractors/providers are to make themselves available and co-operate with fire safety officers within the ACTFB who have powers of inspection (see clause 5.5.2 of this policy) during audit inspections of essential services maintenance.

5.3 ESSENTIAL SERVICES MAINTENANCE REGIMES

5.3.1 Unless otherwise stipulated by a regulatory authority, the ACT Fire Brigade, a building certifier or an ACT Fire Brigade endorsed fire safety engineering report, essential services maintenance is to be undertaken in accordance with the AS1851 suit of maintenance standards and AS2293.2 (emergency and exit lighting only).

Note: For essential services and fire safety systems not covered in any Australian Maintenance Standard, the proposed maintenance regime and the necessary qualifications of persons maintaining these services or systems should be furnished to the ACTFB for endorsement. For new building works this regime and qualifications should also be endorsed by the Building Certifier, consultant fire safety or services engineer (where applicable) and building owner.

5.3.2 Maintenance procedures for mechanical ventilation/smoke control systems, fire alarm systems (ie. smoke/heat detection, sprinklers etc), passive fire resistance systems (ie. fire/smoke doors, smoke/fire dampers) and a building's security system (ie. locked exit doors) are to include interface testing between the systems no less than once a year to ensure the automatic activation and operation of each system will occur as designed and commissioned. It is

recommended that those persons responsible for the maintenance of required essential services coordinate this interface testing.

5.4 ESSENTIAL SERVICES MAINTENANCE - GENERAL

5.4.1 All fire and smoke doors are to be tagged with a metal yellow maintenance plate (such as those used for portable fire extinguishers and fire hose reels) in a similar fashion to that required from AS1905.1 (Clause 6.1.3) installation of metal compliance plates .

5.4.2 A 3 yearly inspection should be undertaken by a passive fire protection specialist to ensure the required fire protection, stopping or resistance of features required to have an FRL in a building or structure is being maintained. This would include inspecting the:

- Fire protection to and the fire stopping of penetrations in structural members, partitions, glazing, access or viewing panels, dampers proscenium curtains, lightweight construction that are exposed or readily visible from the relevant floor or level; and
- Materials, surface finishes or linings required to have certain fire hazard indices

Additionally, the inspection is to ensure new building features or inclusions required to have certain fire protection or resistive characteristics, or existing building features lined with newly introduced materials, possess those characteristics and do not constitute a fire hazard to the occupants of the building due to their rapid combustibility, flammability or smoke/toxic gas emissions.

5.5 THE ACT FIRE BRIGADE ACT 1957

5.5.1 The Fire Brigade Act 1957 stipulates that active fire safety systems are to be maintained to the satisfaction of the ACT Fire Commissioner and makes it an offence for a building owner to fail to repair or replace an active fire safety systems that has been damaged or is defective.

5.5.2 The Fire Brigade Act 1957 allows ACTFB Fire Safety Officers with powers of inspection bestowed on them by the ACT Fire Commissioner to enter buildings to ensure maintenance of active fire safety systems is being undertaken and to inspect the serviceability of such systems. Fire Safety Officers with this authority may undertake post occupancy inspections and fire safety audits of essential services in Class 1b-9 buildings at any time, either on request or when they deem it necessary.

5.5.3 Deficiencies associated with essential services maintenance as identified by Fire Safety Officers will be brought to the attention of those persons responsible for the maintenance of required essential services who will make immediate arrangements to comply with the directions given by the Fire Safety Officers. Failure to do so may result in court actions being taken by the ACTFB as prescribed in the Fire Brigade Act 1957.

6.0 AMENDMENT HISTORY

i) First edition: January 2003