



# Home Office

## Fire Safety Reform Programme Bulletin

Welcome to the Home Office's fire safety reform programme bulletin which is for anyone who want to keep updated on changes to fire safety legislation and guidance.

Issued: **6 November 2023**

Do share this with anyone you think will find this information useful.

We would welcome your feedback and views so please do get in touch with us via the following email address if you want to sign up to these bulletins or tell us what you want to hear about: [firesafetyreform@homeoffice.gov.uk](mailto:firesafetyreform@homeoffice.gov.uk)

### New legal requirements from 1 October 2023

From **1 October 2023**, if you are a Responsible Person under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (FSO) you are legally required to record your fire risk assessment and fire safety arrangements in full, your contact information (including a UK based address) and the identity of any individual you engaged to do the fire risk assessment.

You also need to identify if there are any other RPs and/or Accountable Persons (the latter only in a higher risk residential building as defined within the Building Safety Act 2022) with responsibilities in the premises, identify yourself to them and explain the extent of your remit. And you as the RP must also share relevant fire safety information with any incoming RPs and, in any building that contains two or more sets of domestic premises, share relevant fire safety information with residents.

The changes introduced on 1 October also added a new provision into the FSO to strengthen the legal standing of guidance issued under Article 50 and brought every offence under the FSO into line so that they can all now attract the highest level of fine. You can read about the full requirements in the following guidance: [Check your fire safety responsibilities under Section 156 of the Building Safety Act 2022 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#).

## Implementing our Fire Safety Reforms

The changes introduced on 1 October represent Phase 3 of our Fire Safety Reform Programme and build on the changes already introduced through Phase 1 (The Fire Safety Act 2021) and the Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022.

As the reforms take hold, we are keen to hear from as many people as possible about their experiences with the changes. To this end, we have established our Fire Safety Reform Implementation Review Group with representation from across the Duty Holder, fire safety professional and enforcement sectors. We also ran a survey for Responsible Persons to help us better understand their experiences and have received over 360 responses.

The National Fire Chiefs Council have also surveyed fire and rescue services to understand their experiences. We are looking at both and considering their findings to understand if any action needs to be taken.

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## Fire Risk Assessor Competence

The commencement of Section 156 of the Building Safety Act represents a significant milestone for the Home Office's fire safety reform programme and we are pleased to see this third phase of the reforms coming into force.

Alongside these changes, we remain committed to commencing sub-section 4 of Section 156, which places a legal duty on the Responsible Person that they must not appoint a person to assist them with making or reviewing a fire risk assessment unless that person is competent. The fire risk assessment is a fundamental part of the FSO and effective fire safety, so it is also essential that we ensure those carrying out the assessments have an appropriate level of competence. We decided at the outset not to commence this provision until a robust system is in place to verify competence against a clear, common definition and a comprehensive set of standards, and to allow for the development of a robust plan to support implementation. We are now working on developing this implementation plan and will be reaching out to the wider sector in the coming months and next year to support this.

Last bulletin, we also updated you on the launches of the Fire Risk Assessor (FRA) survey for which we are now analysing the responses. We ultimately received over 1250 responses from a range of FRAs and want to thank everyone who responded. The results will inform our policy approach to improving competence in Fire Risk Assessor sector and help us support Responsible Persons to comply with the Fire Safety Order (FSO).

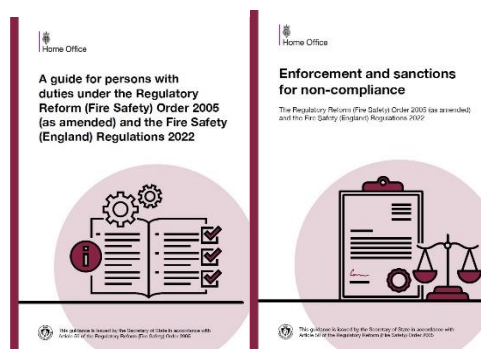
## New and Revised Fire Safety Guidance

On 29 September, we published a range of new and updated guidance to support responsible persons in understanding their duties under the Fire Safety Order.

The new *guide for persons with duties under Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2003 (as amended) & the Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022* provides responsible persons with a simple introduction to understanding their responsibilities under fire safety legislation. This guide is complimented by a new guide to *enforcement and sanctions for non-compliance*, which explains to responsible persons the potential consequences of failing to comply with their responsibilities under fire safety legislation.

A revised draft of the guide to fire safety in purpose-built blocks of flats was circulated to stakeholders on a six-week engagement exercise that closed on 26 September. The revised draft will help ensure that this widely used guide reflects current legislative and non-legislative developments in fire safety. We received nearly 900 comments from a range of stakeholders, including regulators, enforcers, responsible persons, and professionals working in the fire safety sector. These comments will now be reviewed by an independent body of fire safety experts, and the guidance will be amended to reflect stakeholder feedback.

Over the next 18 months we aim to publish updates to all of our other premises specific guides, with drafting already underway on revised guidance in relation to healthcare premises and sleeping accommodation.



Links to the published guides mentioned above can be found below:

- [People with duties under fire safety laws - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/people-with-duties-under-fire-safety-laws)
- [Fire Safety Order: enforcement and sanctions for non-compliance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/fire-safety-order-enforcement-and-sanctions-for-non-compliance)
- [Check your fire safety responsibilities under Section 156 of the Building Safety Act 2022 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/check-your-fire-safety-responsibilities-under-section-156-of-the-building-safety-act-2022)

- [Check your fire safety responsibilities under the Fire Safety \(England\) Regulations 2022 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/check-your-fire-safety-responsibilities-under-the-fire-safety-act-2002)
- [Fire Safety \(England\) Regulations 2022: fire doors - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/fire-safety-act-2002-fire-doors)
- [Fire safety risk assessment: 5-step checklist - GOV.uk \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/fire-safety-risk-assessment-5-step-checklist)
- [Making your small block of flats safe from fire - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/making-your-small-block-of-flats-safe-from-fire)
- [Making your small paying guest accommodation safe from fire - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/making-your-small-paying-guest-accommodation-safe-from-fire)
- [Making your small non-domestic premises safe from fire - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/making-your-small-non-domestic-premises-safe-from-fire)