

Summary of Building Fire Safety Regulation 2008

Fire and Evacuation Plans

An evacuation coordination procedure needs to be produced and kept on site and available at all times by the managing entity.

The Regulation defines the managing entity of a multi-occupancy building as: ***the entity that is the occupier of, or in control of, the general access areas of the building.***

Further, secondary occupiers must have a fire and evacuation plan for their tenancy which integrates with the managing entities fire and emergency plan.

Signs and Diagrams

An evacuation sign and an evacuation diagram in an understandable form showing fire safety reference points needs to be produced for each floor in a building and must be appropriately located on each evacuation route of the building having regard to the number and location of exits in the building. Each evacuation sign and the evacuation diagram must be displayed in a conspicuous position and be securely attached to a wall or internal side of a door.

These documents need to be kept in a specific form as mandated in the Regulation and be reviewed at intervals of not more than **1 year**.

Recommendation

Your current Emergency Response Procedure manuals as well as the evacuation signs and diagrams that you may have on display in your building or tenancy most probably will require changes to meet the requirements of the new Regulation.

Fire Safety Advisor

A significant issue from calls we have had, is the need for occupants of high occupancy buildings to appoint a Fire Safety Advisor (FSA) for every high occupancy building and tenancy where 30 or more employees work.

To avoid confusion and ensure your worksite conforms to the prescribed requirements it should be assumed that all classes of buildings other than your private dwelling fall under the category of a high occupancy building if there are more than 30 persons engaged on the site.

The Regulation states [Subdivision 2.34 (1)]: ***The occupier of a high occupancy building must appoint a person who holds a current fire safety qualification as a Fire Safety Advisor for the building.*** There is no reference in the Regulation that the Fire Safety Advisor must be a staff member or an employee.

The Regulation also states [Subdivision 2.34 (2)]: ***If the occupier is the occupier of 2 or more buildings, the occupier may appoint the same person as the Fire Safety Advisor for 2 or more of the buildings.***

Recommendation

A Property Manager can appoint First 5 Minutes Pty Ltd as its Fire Safety Advisor and any tenant in a high occupancy building with more than 30 employees can also appoint First 5 Minutes Pty Ltd as its Fire Safety Advisor. This process will form part of our review for you.

Fire and Evacuation Instruction

1) General Evacuation Instruction

Fire and evacuation instruction must be given to occupants of buildings at regular intervals as mandated in the Regulation.

The occupier of a building must give general evacuation instruction for the building to each person working in the building at intervals of not more than **1 year**.

The occupier must give general evacuation instruction to new staff as soon as practicable after they commence work but not later than **2 days** after the person starts work in the building.

If changes are made to fire reference points or procedures for evacuating the building the occupier must give general evacuation instruction to each person working in the building as soon as practicable but no later than **1 month** after the change.

2) First Response Evacuation Instruction

The occupier of a building must give first response evacuation instructions for the building to each person working in the building at intervals of no more than **2 years** (*Definition of first response evacuation instruction: 'Training about the method of operation of manually operated fire alarms and fire fighting equipment in the building'*).

The occupier must give first response evacuation instruction to new employees as soon as practicable but no later than **1 month** after the person starts working in the building.

If there is material change to the method of operation of manually operated fire alarm or fire fighting equipment the occupier must give instruction to each person working in the building as soon as practicable but not later than **1 month** after the change.

In high occupancy buildings the occupier must ensure the instructions are given by a Registered Training Organisation or the Fire Safety Advisor for the building gives the instruction or makes arrangements for the instruction to be given.

3) Evacuation Coordination Instruction

An Evacuation Coordinator (Chief Warden) needs to be appointed in a high occupancy building and that person requires training at intervals of no more than **1 year**.

If there is a material change to the evacuation coordination procedure, training has to take place within **1 month**.

If there is a change to the Evacuation Coordinator, training for the new Coordinator has to take place within **1 month**.

4) Evacuation Practice

The occupier of a building must ensure that an evacuation of a building is carried out by an appropriate number of persons, in an appropriate way and at intervals of no more than **1 year**.

Recommendation

First 5 Minutes can provide all the training that is mandated in the Regulation.

The training provisions as mandated in the Regulation do not replace the need to have a trained Emergency Control Organisation or Warden group in buildings and workplaces as prescribed in AS 3745. The Queensland Regulation now mandates that managing entities and secondary occupiers must ensure training of all occupants takes place at the specified intervals with accurate records of the training kept.

The training requirements for the building Emergency Evacuation Coordinator and the building Emergency Control Organisation are covered under our existing service agreements.

All training outside the current Emergency Control Organisation contract (Chief Warden and Warden group) can be conducted by First 5 Minutes Pty Ltd at the specified intervals, either face to face in a classroom environment in your building or tenancy, or via a self paced online training facility that will be available to you. This online training capability will be priced economically and will automatically keep full records of the training as mandated by the new Regulation.

Record Keeping

The Regulation requires a greater commitment by managing entities and secondary occupiers to keep information updated.

Recommendation

First 5 Minutes has strong and secure electronic systems in place to assist you to meet the record keeping challenges for ECO's.