



Department for Communities and Local Government

Heads of Local Authority Building Control Bodies

Approved Inspectors

31 July 2018

Dear Sir or Madam

FIRE DOOR TEST

The purpose of this Circular Letter is to draw attention to issues about fire door tests.

Scope of this Circular Letter

The guidance in this Circular Letter applies to buildings and building work in England, and also to excepted energy buildings in Wales.¹

Introduction

The Department has been undertaking a series of tests of the performance of fire doors against the performance standards set out in Table B1 of Appendix B of Approved Document B (Fire Safety). We have tested doors from 6 suppliers. Regrettably doors supplied by 5 of these firms have failed. The Department is taking a number of steps to address the situation.

Approved Document B

The guidance in Appendix B of Approved Document B (both Volumes) sets out the standards of fire resistance for fire doors in various positions. It also states that: *“The requirement (in either case) is for test exposure from each side of the door separately”* (note – the exception to this is lift doors).

However, it has come to the Department’s attention that some fire resisting door sets are being marketed on the basis of a single fire resistance test on one side of the door. Most door sets are not truly symmetrical and as such, testing on both sides is necessary to demonstrate compliance with the approved document. This is particularly the case for

¹ Excepted energy buildings are defined in the schedule to the Welsh Ministers (Transfer of Functions) (No.2) Order 2009 (S.I. 2009/3019)

complex door constructions such as those found in double glazed and composite door sets.

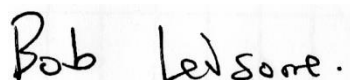
Building Control Bodies are reminded of the guidance in paragraph 1 of appendix B that states that test evidence used to substantiate the fire resistance rating of a door or shutter should be carefully checked. Given the public safety implications, building control bodies should check that test evidence is presented of exposure to fire for both sides of the door, in order to demonstrate compliance with the requirements of Approved Document B.

The Department will be writing to test laboratories along similar lines to consider this advice carefully when advising their clients on what tests are necessary in order to demonstrate compliance with building regulations' guidance.

Enquiries

Any enquiries on this Circular Letter should be addressed to enquiries.br@communities.gsi.gov.uk.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bob Ledsome." The signature is written in a cursive, slightly informal style.

Bob Ledsome

Deputy Director
Technical Policy Division
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