

LABSS INFORMATION PAPER INFOP40 – March 2024 Version 1**Overview of Guidance Clauses 2.9.2 – Escape within dwellings and****2.9.10 - Escape routes****Information for verifiers****PURPOSE**

The purpose of this information paper is to highlight the intent of guidance clauses 2.9.2 and 2.9.10 within the Domestic Technical Handbook. This specifically relates to the level of fire safety provision within flatted dwellings and the role these provisions play in protecting the adjoining escape stair.

To explain the principles within these guidance clauses, this information paper will specifically consider buildings with flats with no storey over 18m and with no basement storey.

While reference in this paper is made to flats, the principles may also apply to maisonettes. When considering maisonettes, reference should be made to the specific requirements within Table 2.4 to clause 2.9.2 and the guidance within clause 2.9.6.

FIRST PRINCIPLE – ESCAPE WITHIN FLATS

The primary aim of the fire safety provisions outlined within guidance clause 2.9.2 are to protect persons within the room and the flat of fire origin. These provisions include:

- Early warning
- Suppression
- Escape windows
- Enhanced early warning or protected enclosure

With regards to these requirements:

- Early warning is outlined in Mandatory Standard 2.11.
- Suppression is outlined in Mandatory Standard 2.15.
- Escape windows are outlined in clause 2.9.4 and should be provided in every apartment on an upper storey at a height of not more than 4.5m and in every inner room on a storey at a height of not more than 4.5m.
- Enhanced early warning is outlined in clause 2.9.7 and may be chosen in preference to a protected enclosure, in a building 'where the topmost storey height is more than 4.5 m above the adjoining ground'.
- A protected enclosure is outlined in clause 2.9.5 and may be chosen in preference to enhanced early warning and requires that 'every apartment on a storey at a height of more than 4.5m above the adjacent ground should provide direct access to a protected enclosure which leads to an exit door'. Early warning as outlined in Mandatory Standard 2.11 remains a requirement.

Taking the above guidance into consideration, Table 1 below outlines the intent of the first principle in guidance clause 2.9.2, within flats with a storey above 4.5m but below 7.5m.

This first principle should not be applied in isolation.

Table 1 - 1 First Principle - topmost storey more than 4.5m but not more than 7.5m	
Flat position	Guidance Clause 2.9.2 - requirements (first principle only)
Ground floor	Suppression Early warning Escape window (inner room)
First floor	Suppression Escape windows Early warning
Second floor	Suppression Enhanced early warning or protected enclosure
Third floor	Suppression Enhanced early warning or protected enclosure

SECOND PRINCIPLE – ESCAPE ROUTES

Guidance clause 2.9.10 provides guidance for escape routes leading from flats and notes:

‘In certain circumstances (see table 2.4), there is no need to provide protected lobbies (see clause 2.9.13) between the dwellings and the escape stair. However there is a risk that the fire protection measures may not be maintained by the occupants of the building and as a result, the number of dwellings should be limited to 4 dwellings per storey and no storey is at a height of more than 7.5 m above the adjacent ground level. The intention is to limit the size and height of a domestic building where some reliance is placed on fire precautions within a dwelling that also protects the common escape route.’ (see 2.9.2).

The BSD have confirmed that the provision of suppression would fulfil the second principle, of protection to the escape stair, and therefore there would be no requirement to provide a protected enclosure.

Applying the second principle amends Table 1 and adds further context to the intent of guidance in clause 2.9.5 for protected enclosures and clause 2.9.7 for enhanced early warning, resulting in Table 2 below which outlines the full intent of clauses 2.9.2 and 2.9.10.

Table 2 - First and Second Principles (combined) - topmost storey more than 4.5m but not more than 7.5m		
Flat position	Guidance clause 2.9.2 – requirements (first principle)	Guidance clause 2.9.10 – requirements (second principle)
Ground floor	Suppression Enhanced early warning or protected enclosure Escape window (inner room)	One escape route
First floor	Suppression Escape windows Enhanced early warning or protected enclosure	One escape route
Second floor	Suppression Enhanced early warning or protected enclosure	One escape route
Third floor	Suppression Enhanced early warning or protected enclosure	One escape route

FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Now consider these principles where you have a storey above 7.5m but not more than 18m. This is summarised in Table 3 below.

Note, given that protected lobbies should be provided in this scenario, there is no second principle to consider in the context of clause 2.9.2. This would also apply to flats with a storey below 7.5 where there are more than 4 dwellings per storey.

Table 3 - Topmost storey more than 7.5m but not more than 18m		
Flat position	Guidance clause 2.9.2 – requirements (first principle)	Guidance clause 2.9.10 – requirements (second principle)
Ground floor	Suppression Early warning Escape window (inner room)	One escape route and ventilated protected lobby and not more than 10 m travel distance inside lobby, Or two escape routes and not more than 30 m travel distance in protected corridor
First floor	Suppression Escape windows Early warning	One escape route and ventilated protected lobby and not more than 10 m travel distance inside lobby, Or two escape routes and not more than 30 m travel distance in protected corridor
Second floor	Suppression Enhanced early warning or protected enclosure	One escape route and ventilated protected lobby and not more than 10 m travel distance inside lobby, Or two escape routes and not more than 30 m travel distance in protected corridor
Third floor	Suppression Enhanced early warning or protected enclosure	One escape route and ventilated protected lobby and not more than 10 m travel distance inside lobby, Or two escape routes and not more than 30 m travel distance in protected corridor

Above 7.5m		
Fourth floor	Suppression Enhanced early warning or protected enclosure	One escape route and ventilated protected lobby and not more than 10 m travel distance inside lobby, Or two escape routes and not more than 30 m travel distance in protected corridor
Fifth floor	Suppression Enhanced early warning or protected enclosure	One escape route and ventilated protected lobby and not more than 10 m travel distance inside lobby, Or two escape routes and not more than 30 m travel distance in protected corridor
Sixth floor	Suppression Enhanced early warning or protected enclosure	One escape route and ventilated protected lobby and not more than 10 m travel distance inside lobby, Or two escape routes and not more than 30 m travel distance in protected corridor
Seventh floor	Suppression Enhanced early warning or protected enclosure	One escape route and ventilated protected lobby and not more than 10 m travel distance inside lobby, Or two escape routes and not more than 30 m travel distance in protected corridor

Note – It is not intended that this information paper covers all the requirements within guidance clauses 2.9.2 and 2.9.10, it specifically highlights specific scenarios to explain the first and second principles on which the guidance clauses are based.