



**SCOTTISH**  
**FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**  
Working together for a safer Scotland

## **ABERDEEN CITY LOCAL SENIOR OFFICER AREA**

### **SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE THEMATIC REPORT NEW SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT LEGISLATION FOR FIRE DETECTION IN DOMESTIC PROPERTIES**

**Report Ref SFR/22/048**

#### **1 RECOMMENDATION**

The Aberdeen Public Protection Committee is recommended to:

- 1.1 Consider and note the information provided in this report in relation to the new detection standard legislation that comes into effect from 01 February 2022.

#### **2 INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 New Scottish Government legislation stipulates that by 01 February 2022 all Scottish homes will need to have interlinked alarms.
- 2.2 Interlinked means if one goes off, they all go off, so an occupier will always hear an alarm wherever they are within the property.
- 2.3 The new law has come about because of the Grenfell fire in London in 2017 and applies to all Scottish homes.
- 2.4 It is the property owner's responsibility for meeting the new standard.

#### **3 NEW DETECTION STANDARD**

- 3.1 To meet the new standard every Scottish home must have one smoke alarm in the living room, or the room used most. One smoke alarm in every hallway or landing and one heat alarm in the kitchen.
- 3.2 All smoke and heat alarms should be mounted on the ceiling and be interlinked.
- 3.2 If the occupier has a carbon-fuelled appliance – like a boiler, fire, heater or flue – in any room, they must also have a carbon monoxide detector in that room, but this does not need to be linked to the fire alarms.
- 3.3 The two types of alarms applicable to the new standard are sealed battery alarms or mains-wired alarms. Both alarm types are interlinked by radio frequency and do not need WiFi.

- 3.4 Battery alarms must be sealed tamper-proof units and have long-life lithium batteries, which can be up to 10 years. Occupiers do not need an electrician to fit this type of alarm.
- 3.5 Mains-wired alarms are cheaper, but they must be fitted by a qualified electrician and replaced every 10 year.
- 3.6 If a carbon monoxide alarm is required and is battery operated, it must have a sealed battery for the duration of its lifespan.
- 3.7 If specialist alarms are needed – such as for deaf people or Telecare systems – these must be fitted in addition to any smoke, heat and carbon monoxide alarms. Interlinked smoke and heat alarms are required to be installed in addition to any Telecare smoke/heat alarms. The Telecare alarms should not be removed.

#### **4 DETECTION COSTS, FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND COMPLIANCE**

- 4.1 Any costs for meeting the new standard will be the responsibility of the homeowner and landlord and will depend on what you currently have in place and the alarms you choose to install.
- 4.2 The estimated cost for an average three-bedroom house which requires three smoke alarms, one heat alarm and one carbon monoxide detector will be around £220. This is based on battery alarms fitted by the occupier.
- 4.3 Scottish Government made over £15m of loan funding available for social landlords, who are working to ensure the new alarms are in place, where needed.
- 4.4 The new standards of fire and smoke alarms extend to those which currently apply in the Private Rented Sector to housing of all tenures, whereby the landlord should already be compliant.
- 4.5 The new standard will be the minimum standard; therefore, local authorities will be able to use their statutory powers to require owners to carry out work on substandard housing. However, as is the case for other elements of the Tolerable Standard, any intervention must be proportionate, rational and reasonable and where owners are unable to meet the standard, it is not a criminal offence.
- 4.6 Compliance will also form part of any Home Report when a homeowner comes to sell their property.
- 4.7 Care & Repair have some funding available to help home owners with the costs of the new alarms. To be eligible for support from Care & Repair Scotland, you must live in and own your home that has a Council Tax banding of A-C. You must also either be of state pension age and in receipt of guaranteed Pension Credit or have a disability and be in a support group for Employment and Support Allowance.

## **5 SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE SUPPORT**

- 5.1 The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) was provided with £1m of funding from Scottish Government for the period 2018-20.
- 5.2 Non-domestic premises such as Houses of Multiple Occupation, Guest Houses, Short-Term Holiday Lets etc. are relevant premises under the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 and the standard of detection outlined in the British Standards is currently enforced under the aforementioned legislation through the SFRS Fire Safety Audit Framework and Policy.
- 5.3 Domestic dwellings such as those privately owned or leased by social or private landlords/housing associations do not fall within the scope of the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005, and therefore the detection standard within these properties is not enforceable under our legislation. The compliance of the detection standard in domestic properties has been highlighted in Section 4.5 and 4.6 above.
- 5.4 The SFRS will install detection to the new standard as part of a Home Fire Safety Visit when an owner-occupier is high risk.
- 5.5 If the occupier/household does not meet the criteria to have detection fitted to the new standard, SFRS staff will provide safety advice, information and details of the revised legislation during the visit. Interim detection can also be supplied if the property has no detectors present.
- 5.6 The SFRS has fitted 270 smoke alarms, 104 heat alarms and 43 carbon monoxide alarms to the new standard from 01 April 2021 to 31 December 2021.