



ADVICE NOTE

FIRE SAFETY IN FLATS

A general guide to fire safety in blocks of flats



Note:

As the leading trade body for residential leasehold management, ARMA is also an important resource for leaseholders. Our Advice Notes cover a range of topics on the leasehold system to help leaseholders understand their rights and responsibilities and ultimately get the most out of living in their flat.

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SUMMARY

This Advice Note gives general guidance about fire safety in blocks of flats. Specific advice for individual blocks will differ, so you should read this in conjunction with the guidance that's in place for your own building. That could be a leaflet or a fire safety notice posted in the communal areas.

The information in this advice note is important — taking a little time to read it now may save your life!

PRINCIPLES OF FIRE SAFETY IN PURPOSE-BUILT BLOCKS OF FLATS

Design principals

Purpose built blocks of flats are usually subject to the following common design principles:

- There is a high degree of compartmentation between each flat, and between flats and the common parts of the block;
- Each flat is formed within its own fire resisting enclosure;
- There is a low probability of fire and smoke spread beyond the flat of a fire's origin; and
- There is a low fire risk in common areas due to precautionary management.

Providing these design principles are in place then the following fire safety principles may be appropriate, subject to the fire risk assessment of each block:

- a stay put policy may be suitable which could negate the need for simultaneous evacuation, unless it is advised by the fire service;
- residents in the flat that is originally affected by the should evacuate it and immediately call the fire service - other residents are safe to stay in their flats without the need for immediate evacuation;
- there is no requirement for fire alarms in common areas, or that are linked into or between flats;
- there is no requirement for fire extinguishers in common parts except for plant and service rooms; and
- emergency lighting in accordance with BS 5266 is required in common parts stairs and corridors, plant and service rooms.

Evacuation strategy

Providing compartmentation between flats is intact it will prevent fire-spread from one flat to another. This also enshrines the principle that a person's actions, while they may affect their own safety, should not endanger their neighbours.

To achieve this compartmentation is required to be of a higher standard for of fire and smoke containment than would be normally considered adequate to protect the escape routes. Accordingly, those in flats remote from the fire are safe to stay where they are and the means of escape is protected so that it will remain safe for eventual evacuation.

This is the essence of the 'stay put' principle. It has underpinned fire safety design standards since before the 1960s, when national standards were first drafted. It still is the basis upon which blocks of flats are designed today.

Where the fire and rescue service do not believe they can contain the fire within the flat of origin or there is a risk that the means of escape could be compromised they may decide to evacuate others in the building.

Stay put policies

A stay policy will allow residents to remain in their own flat in relative safety in the event of a fire in another flat. They do not usually require a full alarm to be sounded other than in the flat of the fire's origin.

A 'stay put' policy involves the following approach.

- When a fire occurs within a flat, the occupants alert others in the flat, make their way out of the building and summon the fire and rescue service;
- If a fire starts in the common parts, all persons in these areas makes their way out of the building and summons the fire and rescue service;
- All residents who are in their flat and are not affected by the fire are expected to 'stay put' until directed by the fire and rescue service.

It is not implied that those not directly involved who wish to leave the building should be prevented from doing so. Nor does this preclude those evacuating a flat that is on fire from alerting their neighbours so that they can also escape if they feel threatened.

Simultaneous evacuation

Where compartmentation cannot be confirmed or designed into the building to support a stay put policy, a simultaneous evacuation is adopted. In such a case, alarm and detection systems should be suitable to alert all residents of the building to allow them to evacuate in a timely manner.

Fire detection and alarm systems

In 'general needs' blocks designed to support a 'stay put' policy, it is unnecessary and undesirable for a communal fire alarm system to be provided. A communal fire detection and alarm system will inevitably lead to a proliferation of false alarms. This will impose a burden on fire and rescue services and lead to residents ignoring warnings of genuine fires.

Although fire may occur in the common parts of the building, the materials and construction used should prevent the fabric from being involved beyond the immediate vicinity. However it is essential that common parts remain free from combustible materials and ignition sources at all times.

There are some cases where communal spaces, such as residents' lounges or recreation rooms, exist and where additional measures, such as a communal fire alarm system, are required.

Depending on the engineering of the building, smoke detection may also be provided in order to operate automatically opening vents to clear smoke from common areas.

If your flat was constructed in accordance with the requirements of the 2006 edition of Approved Document B [the ADB] it will have been fitted with a system incorporating one or more interlinked mains powered smoke and heat alarms. Each alarm will have its own integral standby supply and will be interlinked by wire or radio. Smoke alarms will normally be positioned in the circulation spaces between sleeping spaces and places where fires are most likely to start, such as kitchens and living rooms, to pick up smoke in the early stages.

Where the kitchen area is not separated from the circulation space by a door, there should be a compatible heat detector or heat alarm in the kitchen in addition to whatever smoke alarms are needed in the circulation space.

Smoke detectors should not be fixed in bathrooms, showers or cooking areas where steam, condensation or fumes could give rise to false alarms. Leaseholders should ensure that the system is maintained and when



required detector heads replaced in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

Leaseholders are encouraged to install smoke and heat detection within their flats to ensure that they can evacuate safely from their flats in a fire. Detectors and detection systems should:

- where ever possible be:
 - o mains powered;
 - o designed to the standards expected by the ADB; and
- be tested at least monthly.

LEASES

Most leases will include clauses requiring leaseholders to:

- comply with statutory requirements in respect of their own demised premises and/or to maintain their property in a condition to prevent others being put at risk, this of course would include maintaining any fire doors in a suitable condition;
- apply for a licence before making alterations to their property, this usually includes any alterations to the flat front door.

Not all leases are the same. You should consult your lease to identify who owns your flat front door and what your responsibilities are for its maintenance.

In general you are advised to contact your landlord or the managing agent for the block before making any changes to any part of your flat as this may affect the fire compartmentation of the building.

FRONT DOORS OF FLATS

Flat front doors are designed and installed to provide protection to the communal means of escape and are critical to most fire strategies for buildings.

Fire door sets which include, door, glazing, door furniture and frame must be:

- fitted with self-closing devices that are ideally manufactured and installed in accordance with BS EN 1154:1997; and
- fitted with fire rated hinges that are manufactured and installed in accordance with BS EN 1935:2002.



A fire door set can only offer protection in limiting the spread of smoke and fire if the door seals are working effectively and if the door can fully close into the recess under the action of its door closer. The self-closing device should be capable of closing the door securely into its frame from any open position, and overcoming the resistance of the door latch and edge seals. All fire door self-closing devices should be regularly checked and maintained to ensure that they are operating correctly.

If your door has a glazed panel(s) within it, the glass should either be Georgian wired or fire resistant. Fire resistant glass will be indicated by an etched mark 'BS476:22'. If the glazing does not have either, it's unlikely that the door is a fire door.

UPVC doors are not currently accepted as fire doors.

According to the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government [MHCLG] in their Advice Note 16⁸ which gives advice for owners of residential flats on assurance and replacing of flat entrance fire doors:

- flat entrance fire doors leading to a shared or communal area are required to provide fire and smoke protection and are critical to most fire strategies for buildings.
- all fire doors, including their closers, should be routinely checked or inspected by a suitably qualified professional;
- flat entrance fire doors should have test evidence demonstrating they meet the performance requirement in Building Regulations guidance for fire resistance and smoke control from both sides;
- test evidence used should be carefully checked to ensure it is to the same specifications of the doorsets being installed; and
- landlords or building owners should replace flat entrance door sets if they suspect they do not meet the fire or smoke resistance performance in the Building Regulations guidance.
- the fire risk assessment processes should be used to determine how urgently such doors should be replaced.

The fire risk assessment process can also be used to determine whether it is the door set or door leaf that needs to be changed. Such assessments must be undertaken by a competent person who has received UKAS accredited training to undertake such an assessment.

Article 17(4) of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 [Fire Safety Order]¹ requires the Landlord of a residential building in their capacity as the responsible person to ensure that flat entrance doors are subject to a suitable system of maintenance and are maintained in an efficient state, in efficient working order and in good repair. The Fire Safety Order allows the Responsible Person to make arrangements with the leaseholder or occupier of any flat to ensuring these requirements are met.

Article 17 of the Fire Safety Order also imposes a duty on both Leaseholders and occupiers of flats to co-operate with the Responsible Person so far as is necessary to allow them to comply with their duties under Article 17 which will include providing access to inspect flat entrance doors.

Altering or changing a flat entrance door

Altering or changing a flat entrance door that forms part of a fire compartment of the building, is categorised as controlled work under the Building Regulations 2010².

This means that anyone who wishes to change or alter their flat entrance door (or any other door between their flat and a communal area i.e. a secondary means of escape door), will need ensure the new or altered door and its installation complies with all relevant requirements of the Building Regulations 2010.

Details of a property owners duties in relation to the building regulations are detailed later in this guidance.

All new fire door sets to flats must provide the fire and smoke resistance required by the fire strategy for the building. This will be at least FD 30S to give fire resistance of not less than 30 min [FD30] and the same resistance to the passage of smoke at ambient temperature conditions [S].

In some properties the fire strategy may require the fire door set to provide higher levels of fire and smoke resistance. You must check with your landlord or managing agent what the required standard fire and smoke resistance standard is required for your door.

Doors must have been tested in accordance with BS476: Part 22 1987 or BS EN 1634-1 2000 and be supplied with a certificate to confirm that it meets the required standards. It is also recommended that new flat doors meet “security by design” standards.

Installing a fire door set correctly is as important as ensuring the door itself is to the correct standard. The Government’s expert panel advises third party certification by a UKAS accredited body. There are various third party accredited schemes, which allow you to view their registers and locate a suitably qualified trade person:

- BRE Group – LPCB scheme, LPS 1271 installation of fire and security door sets;¹⁵
- BM Trada Q Mark: Fire door installation scheme¹⁶; and
- Warrington Fire FIRAS scheme for fire doors.¹⁷

An installation certificate for all replacement doors will be provided to the homeowner by the contractor supplying/ fitting the door confirming that the door set meets the required standard and has been installed correctly.

You must provide a copy of any certification you receive to your landlord or the managing agent.

INTERNAL ALTERATIONS TO FLATS

Any alteration which affects the measure that were designed and installed to prevent the spread of fire and smoke in a building must comply with the relevant requirements of the Building Regulations 2010².

Examples of work that may affect the building fire compartmentation include:

- changing a flat entrance door and not replacing it with a suitably fire and smoke resisting and self-closing door;
- installing a letter box or 'cat flap' in a flat entrance door that is not appropriately fire rated;
- installing a new bathroom suite and not ensuring that breaches of riser walls created for new drains are fire-stopped afterwards to maintain fire separation to the common riser;
- removing the doors and walls to the kitchen and lounge to create an open plan living area, but in so doing making all the bedrooms inner rooms, and possibly impairing protection to the common parts;
- fitting non-condensing tumble dryers with holes through fire walls and doors for vent pipes without appropriate fire collars;
- installation of down lighters in a fire compartment ceiling, which are not of a 'fire-rated' design and which have not been fitted with intumescent fire hoods or covered by an insulation support box; and
- installation of television or satellite cable through fire resisting walls without fire stopping the holes around the cables.

Where holes have been made in compartment walls, floors or ceilings it is essential that any new openings are made good to ensure the levels of fire containment are not in any way reduced by such works.

Unauthorised alterations

If you have replaced your flat entrance my door or carried out alterations to your flat and did not obtain building control approval or your landlord's consent, you can, if you believe that your door meets the necessary standard, apply for retrospective consent for the alteration from both building control and your landlord.

Similarly if you have undertaken alterations to your flat without attaining consent, you can also apply for retrospective consent for the alteration, however you may be required to reinstate or alter the layout or features of the flat, if the work carried out does not comply with Building Regulation requirements. There will be charges for this consent.

If you do not obtain the necessary consents, you may find it difficult to sell your property in the future, as solicitors now require more detailed information regarding fire protection within blocks of flats as part of the conveyancing process.

If you are aware that your door does not meet the required standard you are strongly advised that you take the necessary steps to replace it, to ensure your families safety and the safety of other residents of the building, should a fire occur.

REPLACEMENT OF WINDOWS OR THE INSTALLATION OF SECURITY GRILLES OR SHUTTERS

In flats located at basement, ground and 1st floor level, or in flats accessed from communal walkways/ balconies the windows from living areas and bedrooms are often designed to be escape windows, to enable residents to use the windows to escape through, if there is a fire in their home.

As such if you would like to replace your windows, it will be necessary for the windows to meet the requirements of the Building Regulations in relation to their design and the size of the opening required. Where a window is an escape window, consent cannot be provided for security grilles or shutters to be installed, as the window must be maintained unobstructed to enable escape.

HOUSEKEEPING AND COMMON PARTS

The guidance on fire safety in purpose-built blocks⁴ of flats suggests two possible approaches to maintaining precautions in common parts: zero tolerance or managed use.

A zero tolerance approach is one in which residents are not permitted to use the common areas to store or dispose of their belongings or rubbish, with no exceptions.

A managed use approach allows for strictly defined use of common areas with certain low risk items to be present (e.g. pot plants, door mats etc.).

The most appropriate approach will depend on the specific circumstances, and whatever approach is taken should be considered within the overall context of the fire safety measures in the building. It should be considered as part of the fire risk assessment for the block. A managed use and its constraints should, where appropriate, be agreed by consultation with residents.

INSTALLATION OF SMOKE DETECTION

ARMA supports the Fire Kills Campaign [<https://firekills.campaign.gov.uk/>] and the advice given by the government in 'Fire Safety in the Home'¹³ and strongly recommend that all home owners:

- fit at least one smoke alarm on every level of their home;
- test their smoke alarms at least monthly.

If you don't already have smoke detection, get some. We would recommend that you fit hardwired independent smoke detectors, which have a limited life span subject to manufacturer's recommendations.

THE LAW

There are three main pieces of legislation which apply to fire safety in residential buildings, these are:

- The Building Regulations 2010 (also known as building control regulations) – which requires all home owners to comply with building control requirements, when undertaking any alterations to their property.
- The Regulatory (Reform Fire) Safety Order 2005 – which requires lessee's to cooperate and coordinate with [managing agent] to ensure the risk from fire is reduced as far as possible.
- The Housing Act 2004 – Which requires lessee's to reduce the risk from fire within the home (particularly relevant where a property is sublet).

The Building Regulations 2010²

The Building Regulations 2010 require that 'building work' is carried out so that it complies with the applicable requirements of the Regulations. The term building work includes the material alteration of a building where any part of it, would at any stage result in the building not complying with a relevant requirement where previously it did. Relevant requirements include any part of the structure designed and installed to inhibit the spread of fire within the building. Where a flat front door forms part of the compartmentation of a building, as they usually do, any alteration to or replacement of the door is 'building work'.

Where leaseholders employ a builder, the responsibility will usually be theirs – however they must confirm this before instructing the work.

The role of checking that building regulations are being complied with falls to building control bodies (BCBs).

Any building work undertaken must meet the relevant technical requirements in the building regulations and they must not make other fabric, services and fittings less compliant than they were before - or dangerous.

There are currently two types of building control bodies [BDBs], a local authority building control service and a private sector approved inspector building control service. Customers are free to choose which type they use on their project.

If a person carrying out building work contravenes the Building Regulations, the local authority may prosecute them in the Magistrates' Court where an unlimited fine may be imposed (sections 35 and 35A of the Building Act 1984). Prosecution is possible up to two years after the completion of the offending work. This action will usually be taken against the person carrying out the work (builder, installer or main contractor). Leaseholders should be aware however that if the work does not comply with the regulations they may be served with an enforcement notice.

Alternatively, or in addition, the local authority may serve an enforcement notice on the building owner requiring alteration or removal of work which contravenes the regulations (section 36 of the 1984 Act). If the owner does not comply with the notice the local authority has the power to undertake the work itself and recover the costs of doing so from the owner.

Notwithstanding the possibility of enforcement action, Leaseholders should bear in mind that if the local authority or approved inspector considers that building work carried out does not comply with the building regulations and it is not rectified, no completion/final certificate

will be issued and this is likely to come to light through a local land search enquiry when they wish to sell your property.

When the work has been satisfactorily completed you should obtain a 'Completion Certificate' from the BDB.

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005'

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 [Fire Safety Order] does not apply in relation to domestic premises, except for the requirements of article 31(10) which allow the fire and rescue authority to prohibit or restrict the use of premises (including flats) where they believe the use of premises involves or will involve a serious risk to relevant persons.

The Fire Safety Order does however apply to any part of the premises what are used in common by the occupants of more than one dwelling.

The Fire Safety Order requires the Responsible Person, who is typically, the freeholder or landlord, but may be a 'residential management company', to:

- make a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks to which relevant persons (which includes any occupants of flats) are exposed for the purpose of identifying the general fire precautions he needs to take to comply with the requirements and prohibitions imposed on him by or under the Order;
- in relation to relevant persons who are not his employees, take such general fire precautions as may reasonably be required in the circumstances of the case to ensure that the premises are safe;

"General fire precautions" means, measures to reduce the risk of fire and the risk of the spread of fire on the premises, and in relation to:

- the means of escape from the premises and the measures for securing that, at all material times, the means of escape can be safely and effectively used;
- the means for fighting fires and for detecting fire on the premises and giving warning in case of fire on the premises; and
- measures in relation to the arrangements for action to be taken in the event of fire on the premises, including instruction and training of employees and measures to mitigate the effects of the fire.

The fire risk assessment must be reviewed by the responsible person regularly so as to keep it up to date and particularly if:

- there is reason to suspect that it is no longer valid; or
- there has been a significant change in the matters to which it relates including when the premises, special, technical and organisational measures, or organisation of the work undergo significant changes, extensions, or conversions.

Article 5(3) of the Fire Safety Order states:

“Any duty imposed by articles 8 to 22 or by regulations made under article 24 on the responsible person in respect of premises shall also be imposed on every person, other than the responsible person referred to in paragraphs (1) and (2), who has, to any extent, control of those premises so far as the requirements relate to matters within his control.”

Article 5(4) of the Fire Safety Order states:

“Where a person has, by virtue of any contract or tenancy, an obligation of any extent in relation to:
(a) the maintenance or repair of any premises, including anything in or on premises; or
(b) the safety of any premises,
that person is to be treated, for the purposes of paragraph (3), as being a person who has control of the premises to the extent that his obligation so extends.”

The Chief Fire Officers' Association [CFOA] states in their Guidance Document 'Collected Perceived Insights Into and Application of The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 For the Benefit of Enforcing Authorities - 2015 Revision':

“For the purposes of clarity, the front doors to flats are considered to be a common protective measure, typically under the control of the occupier as an article 5(4) duty holder, because an early failure of the door can pose a serious risk to the safety of other relevant persons on the premises.”

This position is reinforced in 'Fire safety in purpose-built blocks of flats'⁴ which states:

“In the case of many existing leasehold flats, the responsibility for maintenance of the flat entrance doors rests with the residents.” and
“Under these circumstances, the residents might be regarded as other persons having control of premises (as defined by Article 5(3) of the FSO), with a duty to ensure the adequacy of the flat entrance doors.”

The responsible person has duties under Article 17 of the Fire Safety Order to ensure that flat entrance doors are subject to a suitable system of maintenance and are maintained in an efficient state, in efficient working order and in good repair and may make arrangements with the leaseholder or occupier of any flat to ensuring these requirements are met.

Article 17 also imposes a duty on both the leaseholder and the occupier of any flat to co-operate with the responsible person so far as is necessary to allow them to comply with their duties under Article 17 which includes providing access to inspect flat entrance doors.

The Housing Act 2004³

The Housing Act 2004 brought in a new system of regulation for fire safety in existing residential premises by way of the housing health and safety rating system (HHSRS).

The HHSRS is the principal tool for assessing fire safety risk and regulating standards in all types and tenures of residential accommodation. The HHSRS is the Government's approach to evaluation of the potential risks to health and safety from any deficiencies identified in dwellings. Twenty-nine categories of potential hazard are considered, one of which (hazard 24) is fire.

The underlying principle of the HHSRS is that any residential premises should provide a safe and healthy environment for any potential occupier or visitor.

The principle of the HHSRS is assessment of risk presented by a dwelling, based on:

- the likelihood of an occurrence that could cause harm (in this case uncontrolled fire and associated smoke); and
- the probable severity of the outcomes of such an occurrence.

The HHSRS uses judgments made by the inspector, based on an inspection of the dwelling, to generate a numerical score – the higher the score, the greater the risk.

The Operating Guidance to the HHSRS¹² makes it clear that “Internal doors (including the entrance doors to flats) should be made of appropriate materials and properly fitted, and where appropriate, fitted with self-closers.

Where, having completed, an assessment, the local housing authority are satisfied that a category 1 or category 2 hazard exists on any residential premises in one or more flats, it may take enforcement action against the owner of the premises or flat and where appropriate prohibit the use of one or more flats or the premises.

FURTHER INFORMATION

1. The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 [www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2005/1541/contents/made]
2. The Building Regulations 2010 [<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/2214/schedule/2/made>]
3. The Housing Act 2004 [<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/34>]
4. Fire safety in purpose-built blocks of flats [<https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/fire-safety-purpose-built-04b.pdf>]
5. LACORS guidance titled 'HOUSING – FIRE SAFETY: Guidance on fire safety provisions for certain types of existing housing' – download from] [<https://www.cieh.org/media/1244/guidance-on-fire-safety-provisions-for-certain-types-of-existing-housing.pdf>]
6. Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government: Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 Guidance Note No. 1: Enforcement [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/15111/guidance1enforcement2005.pdf]
7. The Chief Fire Officers' Association [CFOA] agree with this position in their Guidance Document 'Collected Perceived Insights Into and Application of The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 For the Benefit of Enforcing Authorities - 2015 Revision' [<http://www.cfoa.org.uk/download/19059>] otherwise known as the 'Enforcers' Guidance'.
8. Government Building Safety Programme – advice for building owners on assurance and replacing of flat entrance fire doors [<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/advice-for-building-owners-on-assurance-and-replacing-of-flat-entrance-fire-doors>]
9. Competency Criteria for Fire Risk Assessors [<http://www.cfoa.org.uk/download/21194>]
10. Building Regulations 2010 Approved Document B Volume 2 (Buildings other than dwelling houses) 2019 edition – for use in England [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/814935/Approved_Document_B__fire_safety__volume_2_buildings_other_than_dwellinghouses_2019.pdf]



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11. British Standard 9991 (Fire safety in the design, management and use of residential buildings) [<https://shop.bsigroup.com/ProductDetail?pid=000000000030351309>]
12. Housing health and safety rating system (HHSRS): guidance for landlords and property related professionals [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/9425/150940.pdf]
13. Fire Safety in the Home published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government - March 2015 [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/564803/Fire-Safety-in-the-Home.pdf]
14. NFCC National Fire Chiefs Council - Waking Watch / Common Fire Alarm - Guidance to support a temporary simultaneous evacuation strategy in a purpose-built block of flats [https://www.nationalfirechiefs.org.uk/write/MediaUploads/NFCC%20Guidance%20publications/Protection/01052018NFCC_simultaneous_Evacuation_guidance_final_doc.pdf]
15. BRE Group - LPCB scheme, LPS 1271 installation of fire and security door sets [<https://www.bregroup.com/a-z/windows-and-doors-fire-performance-certification-scheme/>]
16. BM Trada Q Mark: Fire door installation scheme. [<https://www.bmtrada.com/certification-services/third-party-certification-fire/bmtrada-q-mark-fire-door-installation-scheme>]
17. Warrington Fire FIRAS scheme for fire doors [<https://www.warringtonfire.com/certification-services/fire-certification/firas>]

Note:

Whilst every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information contained in this ARMA Advisory Note, it must be emphasised that because the Association has no control over the precise circumstances in which it will be used, the Association, its officers, employees and members can accept no liability arising out of its use, whether by members of the Association or otherwise.

The ARMA Advisory Note is of a general nature only and makes no attempt to state or conform to legal requirements; compliance with these must be the individual user's own responsibility and therefore it may be appropriate to seek independent advice.