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- Designated Fire Safety -
Officer

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Designated Fire Safety Officer

Aims of this course:

By the completion of this course, learners should understand:

- What fire safety in the workplace is.
- The job of a fire safety officer, and the responsibilities/duties involved.
- The significance of and appropriate methods for performing fire risk assessments
- Details about fire safety equipment

Understanding the need for Fire Safety Training

Fire has proven to be lethal, with 294 individuals losing their lives in fires in England during 2016, as reported by the Department for Communities and Local Government. This marked a 21% increase compared to the preceding year. However, beyond its human toll, fire poses a significant financial threat. The substantial costs associated with fire damage have the potential to lead certain businesses to remain permanently closed.

Grasping the Duties of a Fire Safety Officer

The foremost duty of a Fire Safety Officer (FSO) is prevention. Within a business or organisation, the FSO holds the key responsibilities of preventing fires, ensuring ongoing adherence to fire safety regulations, and maintaining the prescribed building safety standards. These encompass a deep understanding of fire safety protocols and the vigilant oversight of fire-related matters.

Other roles include:

- The enforcement of safety regulations
- Performing risk analysis
- Educating individuals on appropriate actions to take during a fire emergency.
- Ensuring firefighting equipment is kept up to date and properly maintained.
- Making certain fire doors and escape routes are suitable for the situation.
- Guaranteeing that there is an emergency evacuation strategy in place, and all employees must be familiar with it.
- Making sure all electrical systems are secure.
- Taking into account fire detection and warning systems as well as the needs of those who are more susceptible, such as the elderly, the disabled, or very young individuals.
- Confirming that there is a plan for an emergency evacuation.

Which Responsibilities Should the Fire Safety Officer Carry Out?

The activities of a Fire Safety Officer include:

- Arranging routine tests and exercises of fire alarms

- Conducting risk evaluations and formulating fire strategies
- Providing instruction to fire marshals
- Collaborating with nearby fire services, when needed
- Instructing all personnel in fire prevention and evacuation protocols
- Examining occurrences
- Conducting unannounced inspections

The Fire Safety Order

Wales and England are covered under the Order. It covers general fire safety procedures and other responsibilities that are necessary to safeguard pertinent parties in the event of a fire within or close to most sites. According to the Order, fire safety measures must be taken when necessary and to the degree that doing so is practical and appropriate given the situation.

The responsible individual in charge of adhering to the Order includes the employer and any other party who may control any area of the workplace, such as the occupier or owner. The owner or owners of the property shall be liable for any additional premises that they are also in control of.

If there are many responsible parties on any form of property (for instance, a complex with multiple occupants), everyone must make every effort to cooperate and coordinate with one another.

The Government Document

The Order includes obligations that you must follow if you are an owner or management, according to the government document you shall:

Choose Capable Individuals -

Depending on the size of your premises, you must designate one or more competent individuals to help in carrying out any preventative and protective measures mandated by the Order (you might designate yourself for this purpose). A competent individual is one who possesses the necessary education, skills, knowledge, and other attributes to be able to carry out these measures effectively.

Offer Precise Guidance -

You are required to furnish your staff with precise and pertinent details regarding the hazards identified for them through the fire risk evaluation. This includes outlining the actions you've implemented to avert fires and how these measures will ensure their safety in the event of a fire outbreak.

Responsibilities -

You are obligated to hold consultations with your employees (or their elected representatives) regarding the appointment of individuals to fulfil specific roles related to fire safety and concerning ideas for enhancing fire precautions.

Minors -

Prior to employing a minor, you are required to provide the parent with comprehensive and relevant details concerning the hazards to which the child might be exposed as identified in the risk assessment. Additionally, you should communicate the fire safety measures in place to safeguard them from fire incidents and inform any other responsible individual about potential risks the child could encounter due to their job responsibilities.

Other obligations to the Fire Safety Order

The responsible individual shall:

- Impart information about relevant hazards, the names of designated competent individuals, and the building's fire safety measures to non-employees like students and temporary/contract workers.
- Collaborate and coordinate with other responsible parties within the same building to effectively manage risks that could pose threats to worker safety. Whilst communicating significant hazards identified and your strategies for addressing them. Employers of external workers on your premises should receive comprehensive information about associated risks.
- Provide pertinent instructions and hazard-related details to these external workers.
- Ensure adherence to the Order's criteria in areas you influence, even if you're not the employer but exert control over a multi-workplace environment.
- Establish a reliable means of reaching emergency services and share relevant information about hazardous chemicals.
- During onboarding and periodically, offer accurate information, instructions, and training on workplace fire precautions to new employees within their regular working hours.
- Guarantee that the building, firefighting equipment, fire detection and warning systems, and emergency routes/exits undergo suitable maintenance and remain in operational condition.

Supervision of Fire Safety

To make sure that fires are unlikely to occur, that they are likely to be controlled or contained quickly, effectively, and safely, or that everyone on your property can escape to a place of complete safety if a fire does break out and spread, good fire safety management is essential.

Your fire safety processes, fire prevention measures, and fire precautions (plans, systems, and equipment) must all be in place and functioning effectively. You are required to do a risk assessment as part of this process, and it should reveal any flaws that require addressing.

Regularly revisiting a fire risk assessment holds significance as it aids in pinpointing potential concerns and maintaining the safety of individuals. It's crucial to note that if your enterprise employs

more than 5 individuals, maintaining a written record of your fire risk assessment is mandatory. Even if your establishment has fewer than 5 people, documenting assessments could prove beneficial as a part of sound practice.

The Health and Safety Law

In accordance to the law, you must undertake a risk assessment for all work operations in your workplace in compliance with Health and Safety legislation (regulated by either the HSE or the local authorities). You must also put in place appropriate specialised, technological, or organisational measures. If your risk assessment for health and safety indicates that certain methods are prone to fire dangers or fire propagation, you must integrate this into your fire risk assessment as required by the Order. Following that, activities should be prioritised based on the level of risk.

Assessment of Fire Risks

How to Perform a Fire Risk Assessment?

Presented below are two crucial explanations:

Hazard: Anything with the capability to inflict damage.

Risk: The likelihood of that damage occurring.

To compile information for your fire risk assessment:

- Initiate discussions with colleagues or staff members.
- Conduct a comprehensive inspection of the premises to gather evidence and specific details.
- Approach the task in a systematic manner.
- Allocate sufficient time for thoroughness.
- Consider all areas of the environment, encompassing interiors, exteriors, and occasionally utilised spaces, as these factors can impact your evaluation.
- Ensure the needs of all individuals, especially those who are vulnerable, are accounted for.

Preventing Fires at Your Workplace

This is how to do a fire risk assessment, according to the government document:

1. Determine the fire risks.
2. Define those who are at risk.
3. Determine, eliminate, or lessen the dangers.
4. Compile a report of your findings, create an emergency plan, and impart instruction.
5. Regularly review and update the fire risk assessment.

Determining fire risks - Discover the sources of ignition, fuel sources and oxygen sources.

Define those who are at risk – Classify people on the premises and nearby highlighting those who are most at danger.

Determine, eliminate, or lessen the dangers -

- Assess the likelihood of a fire potentially igniting.
- Evaluate the risk that fire presents to individuals, including detection and alert systems.

Consider:

- Fire suppression techniques
- Exit routes and lighting.
- Signage and notifications
- Maintenance protocols
- Mitigate or reduce fire hazards.
- Mitigate or reduce risks to individuals.

Compile a report of your findings, create an emergency plan, and impart instruction –

- Keep track of noteworthy discoveries and actions made.
- Create a strategy for emergencies.
- Inform and educate those who need to know; work with others to cooperate and coordinate.
- Provide guidance.

Regularly review and update the fire risk assessment – Continuously monitor the assessment.
Update as needed.

Three factors are required to ignite a fire, according to the government paper Fire Safety Risk Assessment:

1. A Source of Ignition, including heated surfaces, electrical devices, static electricity, and bare lights
2. Combustible gases, liquids, and solids that can catch fire while being burned
3. Oxygen is constantly present in the air, with extra sources coming from surfaces that oxidise things.

If one of these is absent, a fire cannot start.

Searching for sources of ignition?

You can identify these sources as including:

- Electrical, gas, or oil-fired heaters (fixed or portable)
- Hot processes like welding in workshops and by contractors

- Cooking equipment
- Hot ducting, flues, and filters in areas like refectories, canteens, kitchens, and food technology spaces
- Naked flames from gas or liquid-fuelled open-flame equipment
- Incidents of arson, purposeful ignition, and vandalism

Searching for sources of fuel?

Anything that is combustible serves as potential fuel for a fire. Some of the most prevalent fuels encountered within premises include:

- Flammable liquids used in workshops, such as solvents and adhesives, or cooking oils in rooms or kitchens used for food technology.
- Displays of instructional or hotel-related items, as well as flammable substances such as cleaning products or photocopying chemicals.
- Combustible items including paper, books, clothes, electronics, and decorations.
- Cloakrooms located in common areas.
- Textiles and soft furnishings, such as curtains that are hung, as well as trash and abandoned goods.
- Crash pads and gym mats with cellular foam fillings.
- Rubber and plastic products, including furniture padded with polyurethane foam and video cassettes.
- Creative and curriculum-related displays on walls, radiators, and mobiles should be considered in early years settings.

Searching for sources of Oxygen?

The air surrounding us serves as a fire's primary supply of oxygen. This is provided by the ventilation system in use within a closed building.

For this reason there are often two categories:

- A/C Systems
- Natural airflow via holes in the walls, doors, and windows

How do you spot people who are at risk?

Consider:

- Employees
- Tourists
- Students
- Tradespeople
- Cleaners

- Security
- Members of the public
- Those with disabilities
- The elderly
- The very young

essentially everyone who uses the region.

Determine, eliminate, or lessen the dangers

Fires typically begin in one of these ways:

- Inadvertently, for instance, when smoking items are not properly put out.
- Unintentional instances are when lighting displays are pushed over.
- By deed or omission, such as when office equipment that uses electricity is not kept up to date or when trash is allowed to build up next to a heat source.
- Intentionally, such as during an arson assault in which trash cans outside the structure were set ablaze.

How does fire spread?

You must comprehend how fire spreads in order to assess the risk to visitors to your property. It is essential to know that there are three ways that fire spreads: Radiation, convection, and conduction.

Convection –

Among various types of fires, convectional fires stand as the most destructive, causing the highest number of injuries and fatalities. When flames ignite within enclosed spaces such as buildings, the smoke produced ascends and becomes trapped by the ceiling, eventually dispersing in all directions to form a layer that progressively deepens, enveloping the entire room. Openings such as cracks or holes in the walls, ceiling, or floor permit the smoke to infiltrate other sections of the structure. The accumulation of trapped heat from the fire also leads to overheating of the building.

Conduction –

Metal shutters and ducting are examples of materials that may absorb heat and carry it to the adjacent room, where it can ignite combustibles that come into touch with the hot material.

Radiation –

Similar to how an electric bar heater warms a room, radiation heats the air. Any material in close proximity to a fire will absorb the heat until it begins to smoulder, at which point it will burn.

Risks Associated with Smoke

Smoke poses significant dangers due to its content of gaseous toxins. When modern fixtures and materials undergo combustion, they release a thick, black smoke that can impede exits, obscure visibility, and lead to respiratory difficulties.

Risks associated with a Fire

You should take into account scenarios like:

- A fire starting on a lower floor and affecting the only escape route for people on upper floors or the only escape route for people with disabilities.
- Or a fire developing in an empty space that people must pass by to escape the building when evaluating this risk to people.
- People in distant places may be affected by fire or smoke spreading through a structure via vertical shafts, service ducts, ventilation systems that were improperly installed, neglected, or damaged walls, partitions, or ceilings.
- Poor fire safety procedures installation, such as wrongly built fire doors or services piercing fire walls, can cause fire and smoke to spread throughout a structure.
- Fire and smoke moving through the structure as a result of poorly maintained and broken fire doors or fire doors that are stuck open
- Fire spreading quickly through the building owing to combustible structural features and/or huge amounts of combustible material

Is it possible to mitigate risks?

One can:

- Eliminate dangers if you can
- Minimise risks if at all feasible

Sources of Ignition

Risks can be minimised by:

- Installing permanent convector heaters or a central heating system in place of bare flame and radiant heaters. Guard against open fires and place restrictions on the movement of portable heaters.
- Regulating contractors' hot work by implementing permit-to-work programs
- If feasible, substitute a less dangerous source for a potential ignition source.
- Taking measures to prevent arson
- Guaranteeing the installation, usage, maintenance, and safety of electrical, mechanical, and gas equipment according to the guidelines provided by the manufacturer.
- Running a safe-smoking program in designated smoking areas

- Ensuring there are enough ashtrays in designated places, and ensure that it is well cleaned, and ban smoking elsewhere.
- Isolating combustibles from ignition sources, such as leaving enough space between lights and combustibles.
- Ensuring that cooking and catering equipment is set up, utilised, cared for, and protected in accordance with the manufacturer's guidelines.
- Verifying all places where hot work (such as welding) has been done to make sure no fires have started or that there are no smouldering items left that may start one.
- Preventing anybody from using any source of fire, such as blowlamps or hot-air pistols, when working on gas fittings, which includes exposing pipes that either contain or have previously held flammable gas.

Sources of Fuel

Risks can be minimised by:

- By keeping the amount of flammable objects, liquids, and gases on display in public spaces to a minimal, you can lessen the hazards. Keep the very minimum needed to run your business in specialised storerooms or storage locations, ideally outside, where the general public is not permitted.
- Ensuring that flammable products, such as liquids and gases, are stored appropriately and with sufficient separation distances between them.
- Guaranteeing that scenery, stands, fake and dried vegetation, and other display materials are fire-resistant or have had a special fire-retardant treatment to improve their fire performance.
- Making sure that all upholstered furniture, curtains, drapes, and other soft furnishings are fire retardant or have been treated with a proprietary fire-retardant treatment designed to improve their fire performance.
- Reducing the amount of combustible display materials in corridors, entrances, and circulation spaces, such as information boards, displays
- Keeping flammable solids, liquids, and gases apart
- Removing, covering, or treating large areas of highly combustible wall and ceiling linings, such as polystyrene or carpet tiles, to slow the rate of flame spread across the surface.
- Making sure trash does not accumulate, is carefully stored, and is disposed of correctly.

Sources of Oxygen

Risks can be minimised by:

- Closing all doors, windows, and other openings not necessary for ventilation, especially after hours
- Turning off ventilation systems that are not necessary for the operation of the premises
- Not storing oxidising materials near or within any heat source or flammable materials.

- You can also control the use and storage of oxygen cylinders by making sure they are not leaking, are not used to sweeten the air, and that where they are located are not in a place where they could cause a fire.

Alert Mechanisms

If a fire broke out in a small region, someone would probably notice it and intervene, unless it happened after business hours. Hence its essential that electrical systems with shatter glass boxes should be installed in larger buildings. With staff training, these will be more efficient.

Fire Suppression Gear

Using fire extinguishers helps lessen the possibility of a minor fire growing into a bigger one. However, the first thing to do when a fire is discovered is to raise the alarm. It is more crucial to evacuate the building than to attempt to put out the fire.

Categories of Fire

Different fire classifications have been identified in order to handle various fires.

Class A Fires: Involving paper, wood, and textiles.

Class B Fires: Involving flammable liquids such as paint, gasoline, and diesel.

Class C Fires: Involving flammable gases, including natural gas.

Class D Fires: Involving flammable metals.

Electrical Fires: Involving electronic devices like laptops and music players.

Class F Fires: Involving combustible cooking media such as cooking oils.

Fire Extinguishers

Fire extinguishing devices have been formulated to address distinct fire classifications.

The available fire extinguishers encompass:

- Water
- Dry Powder (Special Powders)
- Water Spray
- Foam (AFFF)
- Water Mist (Dry Water Mist)
- Carbon Dioxide
- Dry Powder (Multi-Purpose)
- Wet Chemical

Water

Appropriate for fires involving:

- Wood
- paper
- Textiles
- Solid materials

Unsuitable for fires involving:

- Inappropriate for fires involving:
- Liquids
- Electrical equipment
- Metals

Dry Powder

Recommended for fires involving:

- Liquids (excluding fat pan fires)
- Electrical equipment
- Wood
- Paper
- Textiles

Not suitable for fires involving:

- Metals

Foam

Suitable for fires including:

- Liquid (not on fat pan fires)
- Wood
- Textiles
- Paper

Not suitable for fires including:

- Metals
- Electrical equipment

Carbon Dioxide (CO2)

Suitable for fires including:

- Liquid (not on fat pan fires)

- Electrical

Not suitable for fires including:

- Metals
- Wood
- Paper

Wet Chemicals –

Suitable for use on fires that are:

- Cooking oils and fats
- Wood
- Textile
- Paper

In small spaces, one or two suitable, portable extinguishers may be sufficient. A variety of extinguishers ought to be accessible in more complicated buildings.

There ought to also be:

- Fire extinguishers on exit strategies and every floor
- Signs indicating their location.

Fire Blankets

Fire blankets ought to be simple to get to. They might be light duty for small container fires or for usage in industries, heavy duty. These can be used to put out tiny flames, such as a pan fire or a person's burning clothing. For the blanket to work, it needs to be laid gently over the fire.

Hose Reel and Fire Bucket

Hose Reel:

This may be used to solid materials including paper, plastic, wood, and fabric. It cannot be applied to oil or fat.

Fire Bucket:

These may be stocked with sand or water.

- Water is used to put out fires burning plastics, paper, coal, and other materials.
- Sand is used to put out flammable liquid spills.

Evacuation Routes

Everyone need to be able to leave the building safely in the case of a fire.

Evaluate your escape options after taking into account:

- The kind and amount of visitors, the people's capacity to flee the area now, and how fast they can do so.
- The building's age and construction: Are the walls, ceilings, and floors built to fire resistance standards?
- The use of phased or delayed alarm evacuation - assembly points assisted means of escape/personal evacuation plans; this may require staff training to assist disabled persons.
- The number and complexity of escape routes and exits.
- Exit doors do not require keys.
- Stairways and corridors should be clear.
- Doors should open fully and close fully.

Disabled people

Extra precautions may be required while evacuating handicapped people:

- Evacuation lifts stairs lift for firefighting.
- Horizontal refuges for evacuation – ramps

Indicators and Alerts

There must be signs indicating:

- Escape routes
- Equipment for fighting fires.
- Emergency fire telephones
- Emergency lights may also be deployed.

The following information should be conveyed through the use of notices:

- Instruction manuals for all fire safety equipment
- The procedures to follow in the case of a fire
- Assistance for the fire and rescue services (for example, the placement of sprinkler valves or electrical cut-off switches)
- All alerts and signage must be placed such that they clearly seen and comprehensible.

Checks and Maintenance

All tools should be:

- Installed by a qualified individual
- Maintained in functional order
- Regularly maintained

What information ought to include on a daily check?

- Verify that fire doors open completely and close securely
- Verify that the exits are clear.
- Verify that the fire alarm is on.
- Verify all notifications and signage.

What information ought to have on a weekly check?

- Test fire alarm and detection systems
- Verify that fire extinguishers are placed properly.

An annual check should contain what?

- Verify the emergency lighting
- Inspect the firefighting apparatus
- Verify sprinklers
- Inspect the smoke systems
- Review the fire alarms

What should a monthly check contain?

- Testing all emerging torches and lighting systems
- Verify each fire door.
- Test all emergency lighting and torches

What information should be documented?

Details on the following should be included in significant findings:

- The fire hazards you've found
- The steps you have taken or plan to take to avoid or lessen the likelihood of a fire happening.
- Those who might be at danger, especially those who are most at risk
- The steps you have taken or plan to take to lessen the chance that fire and smoke may spread and endanger persons
- The steps that need to be taken by people in the event of a fire, together with information on any people designated to carry out a certain role (your emergency plan)
- The knowledge, education, and training you've determined individuals need, together with how it will be delivered.

Training on Fire Safety

Your employees need to receive proper fire safety training. Based on the unique characteristics of your property, the training should:

- Consider the results of the fire risk assessment.
- Describe your emergency plans.
- Consider the work activities and outline the tasks of the personnel.
- Training must occur during regular business hours and, as necessary, be repeated frequently. And must be simple to grasp by your personnel and any other attendees.
- Must include fire drill tests

You should receive the following training:

- What to do when a fire is discovered
- How to sound the fire alarm, what occurs next, and what to do after that
- The protocols for warning staff, kids, members of the public, and guests, including, when necessary, pointing them in the direction of exits.
- Calling procedures for the fire and rescue service
- The evacuation protocols for everyone on your property (including small children or those with mobility issues) to go to an assembly point in a completely safe location.
- The positioning of firefighting tools and their usage when necessary
- The positioning of escape routes, particularly those not frequently used.
- How to operate all escape doors in an emergency the significance of keeping fire doors closed to stop the spread of fire, heat, and smoke
- How to shut down machines and processes and isolate power sources in the event of a fire
- The reason to avoid using lifts (aside from those installed or designated specifically for the evacuation of people with disabilities after a suitable fire risk assessment).
- The dangers associated with handling or storing highly flammable or explosive materials.
- The necessity of general fire safety, including proper housekeeping; and the usage of facilities by outside entities; Anyone with new responsibilities, like fire wardens, should get additional training.

A Review

You should keep an eye on the fire risk assessment at all times.

For the following reasons, a review may be essential as things change:

- Alterations to your workday or how you structure it, such as the addition of new tools (For instance, setting up computer hardware in a classroom) a portion of your property being put to another purpose, as a public performance space at a school
- Changes to the structure, including to the interior design.
- The failure of fire safety safeguards, such as fire-detection systems and alarm systems, life safety sprinklers or the introduction, change of usage, or increase in storage of hazardous chemicals.
- Ventilation systems important display material modifications

- A noticeable rise in the number of attendees the presence of individuals with disabilities

Creating a Fire Safety Policy

A documented policy that is adaptable and permits adjustment should exist.

The statement should state:

- Who will be in charge of fire safety at the board level (or a similar position)
- Who will be accountable for each of their locations (this will be the person in charge overall)?
- The framework under which individuals in charge of fire safety shall, If required, designate in writing each individuals responsibilities if a fire is present.
- Procedures to offer people renting out the property pertinent information
- Arrangements to monitor and verify that each person responsible for fire safety is adhering to the fire safety legislation.

Electrical Safety

Which factors contribute most to fires?

- Elevated temperatures in cables and machinery, often due to circuit overloads, tangled or coiled cables, or impaired cooling fans.
- Improper equipment installation or utilisation.
- Compromised or insufficient insulation on cables or wiring.
- Placing flammable materials in close proximity to electrical equipment, which can release heat during regular operation or become heated due to malfunctions.
- Electrical equipment producing arcing or sparking.
- Clusters of cables passing through insulation, generating excessive heat.
- Neglecting maintenance or testing.

Fire Drill Exercises and Alerts

Fire safety training is required for all new hires.

Fire Safety in the Workplace, a government document, states:

- Every year, you should conduct at least one fire exercise and document the outcomes.
- The findings must be kept as part of your evacuation and fire safety strategy.

What is a fire drill?

According to The Shield Safety Group:

The steps conducted in the case of a genuine fire, including the rapid and easy evacuation of the building, the ringing of the fire alarms, and the fire evacuation protocol, are replicated during a fire drill.

To guarantee that all coworkers are aware of fire safety procedures and what to do in the event of a fire, training is required.

A fire drill is mandated by law.

The Necessity of Fire Drills

Fire drills are crucial because they:

Provide personnel a chance to practice a safe evacuation; assess the effectiveness of escape routes; and allow alarms to be tested.

Is it Necessary to Pre-announce a Fire Drill to Staff?

Euro Fire Protection provided the following information:

There are reasons both in favour of and against letting people know about fire drills in advance. Some claim that keeping personnel in the dark about drills adds a sense of surprise and makes them take them more seriously. However, in a genuine fire, this might potentially have the reverse effect, leading some to believe it is only a simulation when they hear the alarm.

The benefit of alerting staff members in advance about fire drills is that they won't panic, reducing the risk of injuries that would result from a hasty evacuation. Second, people will behave properly if the alarm goes off without any prior notice since there will be no doubt about whether it is a drill or not.

It is advisable to inform the public in public areas like shopping mall into knowing when a drill is going to start.

Prepping for a Fire Drill

When organising a fire drill, you should choose a specific area that you will keep an eye on.

This might be a particular element of your escape strategy that you have identified as needing development or a more general objective, like cutting down on the length of time it takes for everyone to leave the building. To oversee fire drills and ensure that everyone leaves the building safely, a team of fire marshals with a head fire Marshall and deputy in command should be selected among the personnel. All marshals will need specific training for their responsibilities.

Deputies should have the chance to take part in fire drills so they may become familiar with their responsibilities in the event that the chief fire marshal is absent, and a real fire breaks out.

You must also take the necessary steps to prevent the fire brigade from making a pointless trip if your system automatically alerts the fire department when the alarm is triggered. Before the fire drill, turn off any systems, but make sure to turn them back on when the practice is through. In order for residents in neighbouring buildings to know that the fire alarm is not a false alarm, you should also let them know in advance when the exercise will take place.

During the Fire Drill

Observers should be stationed at strategic locations around the building, such as stairwells, to keep an eye out for both positive and poor behaviours during fire drills. Any areas that might use improvement can be highlighted and discussed at the debriefing meeting that follows the exercise. As in a real fire, certain areas of the structure can be unreachable due to fire or smoke, the major entrances in buildings with multiple escape routes should be sealed off to urge personnel to utilise alternate escape routes.

Set a timer to record how long it takes for the entire evacuation to occur. Fire marshals should conduct a roll call and mark off each person who has left the building. Fire marshals should also quickly search the facility, including the restrooms, before leaving to make sure no one is still inside and trapped.

Evaluate the effectiveness of the Fire Drill

After the fire exercise, there should be a debriefing to review the observations of the observers and assess the efficiency of the evacuation processes. It is important to pay close attention to the areas that the original planning identified as needing improvement.

You might also ask employees to give their suggestions for how they believe the exercise could have been improved in order to have a better understanding of how effective it was.

Fire Evacuation Protocols

Key Points for Fire Evacuation Protocol:

- Consider the means of alerting individuals in the event of a fire and clearly indicate the designated assembly point.
- Facilitate the safe evacuation of all individuals and their prompt relocation to a secure area.
- Keep the instructions concise to ensure swift evacuation, taking into account individuals with disabilities and slower mobility on staircases.
- Implement measures to ensure that no one remains trapped indoors.
- Ensure that doors along evacuation routes can be readily opened without the need for keys or key code pads.
- Maintain unobstructed escape routes at all times.
- Outline the specific responsibilities of different staff members assigned to fire-related tasks.

What Notices Need to be Displayed?

Fire safety signage is governed by two main documents:

- The Regulations on Safety Signs and Signals (1996) under Health and Safety guidelines.
- The Fire Safety Order (2005) as part of Regulatory Reform.

Every business must display fire safety signs, and these signs fall into four main categories:

Mandatory Fire Action Notice:

- Clearly outlines the necessary actions to take in case of a fire.
- Compulsory for display.

Fire Exit Routes, Doors, and Assembly Points:

- Highlights directions to fire exits, doors, and designated assembly points.

Fire Fighting Equipment Location Signs:

- Indicates the positions of firefighting equipment.

Warning and Prohibition Fire Safety Signs:

- Displays cautionary and prohibition information related to fire safety.

Adhering to these notice requirements is vital to ensure a safe and prepared environment in the event of a fire.