



FIRE AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE POLICY & PROCEDURE

South Central Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust
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DOCUMENT INFORMATION

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1. INTRODUCTION

South Central Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (The Trust) is committed to providing management commitment, professional competence and the relevant resources necessary to manage fire safety risks at all Trust locations.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all people using any SCAS buildings

3. EQUALITY STATEMENT

- 3.1** The Trust is committed to promoting positive measures that eliminate all forms of unlawful or unfair discrimination on the grounds of age, marriage and civil partnership, disability, race, gender, religion/belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and pregnancy/maternity or any other basis not justified by law or relevant to the requirements of the post. The Trust will therefore take every possible step to ensure that this procedure is applied fairly to all employees regardless of the afore mentioned protected characteristics, whether full or part time or employed under a permanent or a fixed term contract or any other irrelevant factor.
- 3.2** By committing to a policy encouraging equality of opportunity and diversity, the Trust values differences between members of the community and within its existing workforce, and actively seeks to benefit from their differing skills, knowledge, and experiences in order to provide an exemplary healthcare service. The Trust is committed to promoting equality and diversity best practice both within the workforce and in any other area where it has influence.
- 3.3** Where there are barriers to understanding; for example, an employee has difficulty in reading or writing, or where English is not their first language, additional support will be put in place wherever necessary to ensure that the process to be followed is understood and that the employee is not disadvantaged at any stage in the procedure. Further information on the support available can be sought from the Human Resources Department.

4. AIM

The Trust is committed to meeting its legal, contractual and service quality requirements and shall ensure that:

- a) All properties under their control are subject to a fire risk assessment
- b) Fire risk assessments are conducted by a competent fire safety consultant
- c) Fire hazards are eliminated, or the associated level of risk is reduced to a minimum in line with the recommendations within the fire risk assessment
- d) Fire risk assessments are reviewed at least annually
- e) Emergency plans are site specific for each location under their control

- f) Emergency plans are communicated to all employees
- g) Persons are appointed and instructed on how to evacuate a location should there be suspicion of a fire or a fire situation
- h) Fire safety provisions are subject to inspection, testing, servicing and maintenance at all properties under their control
- i) The level of fire safety training is proportionate with roles
- j) Location specific fire safety information is communicated to contractors and visitors via notices, safety signs and verbal instruction

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 Trust Board

5.1.1 The Trust Board will ensure that there are suitable and sufficient arrangements and adequate resources for the effective implementation of this and other associated policies.

5.1.2 It will also ensure that there are suitable and sufficient arrangements for the management of health and safety and the identification, assessment and management and control of risks to patients, staff, the general public (anyone affected by the activities of the Trust), Community First Responders, Contractors, Agency Staff and Bank Staff.

5.2 Chief Executive

5.2.1 The Chief Executive is the person on whom the statutory duty falls (Duty Holder), they have overall responsibility for fire safety within all Trust premises.

5.2.2 This duty is delegated to the Director of Finance, as the Director with responsibility for estates and facilities.

5.3 Executive Director

5.3.1 Executive Directors are responsible for the effective implementation of this policy within their directorates and for ensuring that there are adequate resources available to fulfil the requirements of this policy.

5.3.2 They are also responsible for the provision, application and monitoring of Health and Safety policies and procedures within their Directorate. They will ensure that all arrangements for the health, safety and security of staff, employed within their Directorate, are made known, maintained and reviewed whenever there is a change of operation, equipment or process.

5.4 Director of Finance

5.4.1. The Director of Finance, as the Director with responsibility for estates and facilities, is responsible for exercising the Trusts duty of care with respect to the estates and facilities functions and shall ensure suitable and sufficient arrangement are in place for implementing this policy.

5.4.2. The director of Finance delegates this responsibility to the competent responsible person, the Head of Estates.

5.5 The Head of Estates shall ensure that:

- The fire safety policy is reviewed annually to ensure that the policy continues to meet the needs of the Trust and legal compliance
- A competent fire safety consultant is appointed to conduct a fire risk assessment for each location in line with policy requirements
- Adequate resources are available to assist with the completion of actions raised as a result of the fire risk assessment
- Fire safety provisions are installed at all properties in line with the requirements set out within the fire risk assessment
- Specific policies and procedures are developed and implemented for the storage of gas cylinders and fuel
- The management of fire safety is proactively monitored at each location
- The health and safety committee are informed of the fire safety status of each location

5.6 Estates Managers shall ensure that:

- Premises Representatives are informed of their fire safety responsibilities
- Premises Representatives fulfil their fire safety responsibilities
- Premises Representatives are trained how to test the fire alarm or appoint a contractor to carry out this task
- Competent service engineers are appointed to service and maintain the fire alarm system in line with the manufacturers' requirements
- They complete the agreed proactive monitoring programme for all locations under their control – i.e., biannual walkover with Premises Representative
- The Local Authority is informed of higher risk locations and communicate emergency plans
- That premises representatives are aware of the need to maintain records of fire alarm testing and other events as set out in section 7 and Appendix 2

5.7 Premises Representatives

5.7.1 Shall ensure that:

- Location specific fire safety procedures are developed and communicated to all employees based at the location
- Location specific fire safety procedures are tested by means of a practice evacuation drill at least once per year at all premises where fire wardens are in place. In the absence of a fire drill,
- The fire alarm is tested weekly as instructed by the Estates Manager
- The emergency lighting is tested monthly as instructed by the Estates Manager
- The fire logbook is completed for all testing and servicing activity of the

fire safety provisions

- Employees under their control comply with the requirements set out in this policy
- An inspection of the facility is carried out and recorded as instructed by the Estates Manager
- Contractors are informed of the local fire safety arrangements
- Good housekeeping standards are promoted and maintained
- Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPS) are in place for anybody with reduced mobility
- Where required, an up-to-date list of fire marshals with relevant training is maintained at specific locations:
 - Basingstoke RC
 - SCFS premises at Reading and it's replacement premises in Didcot from August 2018 Bletchley RC
 - Northarbour RC
 - High Wycombe RC
 - Northern House
 - Southern House
 - Nursling RC
 - Oxford City RC
 - Winchester and Eastleigh RC
 - Bone Lane training venue, Newbury
 - SCAS Unit 2, Bicester

5.7.2 Also during an incident

5.7.2.1 Upon activation of the fire alarm, the Premises Representative/most senior person in the building must check the fire alarm panel for the source of the alarm, if there is a false alarm, the system can be silenced.

5.7.2.2 If the system continues to activate a false alarm, inform the Estates Manager who will arrange for a service engineer to investigate further and resolve the issue.

5.7.2.3 In a real fire situation the alarm must only be reset with the permission from the Fire Brigade.

5.7.2.4 Where there is suspicion of a fire or a fire situation:

- a) Fully evacuate the building (contractors, visitors, etc.)
- b) Contact the fire brigade and inform them of the fire situation
- c) Meet and direct the fire brigade and advise of the incident status
- d) Persons not accounted for must be highlighted to the fire brigade
- e) Alert the Estates Manager immediately of the fire situation
- f) Complete the Incident Report and forward to the Estates Manager

5.7.2.5 Training on the above will be required for the Representative

5.8 All Managers and Supervisors are responsible for:

- attending any training to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities outlined in this policy
- bring this policy to the attention of staff within their areas of responsibility
- ensuring that all staff within their area of responsibility comply with this policy and any associated protocols and procedures

5.9 All staff

5.9.1 All staff have the following responsibilities:

- to make themselves fully aware of this policy and abide by it
- to take reasonable care for their health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions
- report any unsafe behaviour of contractors
- They report any fire hazards to their Duty Manager/Premises Representative
- Emergency exits are not obstructed
- They follow the emergency plans and cooperate during an evacuation
- Unsafe behaviour of colleagues, visitors or contractors is reported to their Duty Manager/Premises Representative
- They adhere to the requirements set out in this policy

5.10 Fire Safety Advisor shall ensure that they:

- Advise the Head of Estates on technical fire safety issues
- Advise on the interpretation and application of fire safety legislation
- Complete a suitable and sufficient fire risk assessment for each location
- Attend regular Trust safety meetings

6. FIRE SAFETY MANAGEMENT

6.1 Fire risk assessment

The Trust shall arrange for a 'suitable and sufficient' fire risk assessment to be carried out by a competent fire safety consultant for all properties under their control.

The objective of the fire risk assessment process is to assess all fire related hazards and risks and to decide if current control measures are sufficient or if more needs to be done.

Fire risk assessments shall be reviewed annually or sooner if any of the following occur:

- a) There is reason to believe a significant change in the structure or layout of the building has occurred that may affect the validity of the assessment
- b) Following changes in health and safety legislation or best practice

c) Following a fire, or a fire near miss at the location

6.2 Training

The following fire safety training shall be provided:

- a) Evacuation drills - to test the adequacy and understanding of the emergency procedures
- b) Duty Manager/Premises Representatives - competence in allocated fire procedures
- c) Fire awareness and extinguisher foundation training - all staff
- d) Induction training – all staff
- e) Site orientation - on appointment of a new site, to test knowledge of site locations, hazards, gas controls, fire panels, zones, call points, equipment, exits, escape routes, etc.

6.3 Fire extinguisher use

The correct selection, use and limitations of fire extinguishers are communicated to all employees via fire awareness and extinguisher foundation training.

6.4 Practice evacuation drill

To test the effectiveness and understanding of the emergency evacuation procedures, at least one practice evacuation drill shall take place for each location annually where fire wardens are in place:

- Basingstoke RC
- SCFS premises at Reading and it's replacement premises in Didcot from August 2018 Bletchley RC
- Northarbour RC
- High Wycombe RC
- Northern House
- Southern House
- Nursling RC
- Oxford City RC
- Winchester and Eastleigh RC
- Bone Lane training venue, Newbury
- SCAS Unit 2, Bicester

In the absence of fire drills, a small selection of buildings is taken and an annual questioning of staff (unannounced) is taken to check their knowledge of the systems on site, and a form will be completed and added to the Estates File – Important Information for all Contractors (see appendix 2 for a copy of the form)

On discovering or suspicion of fire:

- Immediately raise the alarm by operating the nearest call point or by alerting others with a shout of 'fire, fire, evacuate the building'
- Never attempt to tackle a fire unless you have been trained in the correct selection and use of extinguishers, you are confident to use the extinguisher and the fire is in its early/contained stages
- Follow the directional exit signs to the nearest fire exit and then to the designated assembly point
- Obey the instructions of the Premises Representative or most senior officer
- Do not re-enter the premises until the fire safety officer and the Duty Manager/Premises Representatives are satisfied that the premises are safe to re-enter
- Do not delay evacuation by stopping to collect personal belongings

On hearing the fire alarm:

- Evacuate the premises immediately
- Remain calm and proceed in an orderly manner
- Follow the directional exit signs to the nearest fire exit and then to the designated assembly point
- Obey the instructions of the of the Duty Manager/Premises Representatives
- Do not re-enter the premises until the fire safety officer and the Duty Manager/Premises Representatives are satisfied that the premises are safe to re-enter

7. Systems for Ensuring Compliance and Monitoring

7.1 Fire Safety Logbook

At every SCAS building there is a physical lever arch file entitled Estates File – Important Information for all Contractors – this includes a Fire Safety Logbook. This logbook includes sections to be completed as followed:

By the premises representative:

- Fire Alarm System –Record of Tests Weekly
- Fire Alarm Activations

By the estate managers:

- Fire Alarm System – Data
- Fire Alarm Service

7.2 Electronic Records

Electronic records of the following are maintained by the estate managers:

- Fire Risk Assessments
- Fire Alarm Servicing – 6 monthly
- Emergency Lighting Testing - annual and monthly

- Fire equipment testing – annual

Appendix 1 Policy Reporting

Many of our policies have an 'Internal staff form' attached that is relevant to the document. The 'Policy Reporting' guidance is included with this policy but for security and accessibility reasons it is only available on our [Staff Intranet](#).

Appendix 2 Fire Safety Logbook and Template for Questioning Staff about their knowledge of fire evacuation

Many of our policies have an 'Internal staff form' attached that is relevant to the document. The 'Fire Safety Logbook and Template' is included with this policy but for security and accessibility reasons it is only available on our [Staff Intranet](#).

Appendix 3 Equality Impact Assessment Form Section One – Screening

A full Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out on this policy and is available on request to the public and internally via our [Staff Intranet](#).

Appendix 4 Equality Impact Assessment Form Section Two – Full Assessment

A full Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out on this policy and is available on request to the public and internally via our [Staff Intranet](#).

Appendix 5 Ratification Checklist Section 1

To be completed by Author prior to submission for ratification