



September 2019

Means of Escape editorial input from the perspective of the FRA and assessor

As a recently badged BAFE 205 Risk Assessor, I wanted to bring into the conversation the usual limitations within both the FRA document and the customers appreciation and expectations of any comments to do with directional signage.

In the event of an evacuation, the directional provision becomes one of the key elements of safely escaping the building, the other being emergency escape lighting and, the two together should be seen as 2 sides of the same coin.

Sadly though this is rarely the case, the directional signage elements are in a lot of cases the element given the least consideration and whatever was left in the budget to “throw up a few arrows”.

When considering the implications of compliance, and the insurance consequences of this not being the case, the overall DS provision must be given a greater degree of importance, as should, in site specific environments photoluminescent tape to aid travel through an escape route in the event of smoke or very low light (or both)

Insurance providers now insist on the disclosure of uninstructed non-compliance issues and the DS issues will fall within this along with the EL and Fire Alarm.

Within the assessment, it should not be the case, that the client must “refer to an expert” the assessor should have a sufficient grasp of BS 5499 along with other elements other of the standards to be able steer the client towards the correct choice.

The client should expect more from both assessor and incumbent service partner to cover these works and as an industry we should strive for better in terms of making the client and RP aware of the need so that this element of life safety gets the budget and respect it deserves

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