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### ECA guidance notes for contractors post the publication of the Hackitt report 2021

As we will all know, the media frenzy post the Grenfell fire put everything within the life safety market under the microscope, the lack of mandatory requirements made it easy for substandard and non-compliant work to be provided without the client/customer being any the wiser.

Whilst mandatory third-party certification is still not mandatory, it is, in most cases a project or contract requirement and as such the input from those with TPC needs to ensure that whatever is provided is all 100% correct and in line with the various British Standards that will form part of a modern building be this a new build or a refurbishment.

Thus, the introduction of in the 1<sup>st</sup> instance the “golden thread” and then 2<sup>nd</sup> the “Gateway” post the publication of the Hackitt report has pushed the need for full project compliance right to the top of the conversation, such issues as value-engineering are no longer acceptable as a method of hijacking the specification to drive down costs with inferior or non-approved product.

Processes now require a 3 part sign off program from the start of the project so that once part 1 is agreed (product and certification/compliance) it cannot be changed, and you cannot move into stage 2 unless and until the part 1 sign off is agreed, then from part 2 to part 3 likewise full sign off is required to move to the 3<sup>rd</sup> and final element.

The fundamental requirements now, post Hackitt are that ALL elements of the fire and life safety program are covered by full third-party certification, BAFE/IFE/FRACS, BM Trada, NICEIC etc and only those who can if necessary provide their bona-fides in court should actually be engaging in this type of work.

Furthermore, the insurance market is now far more aware of the issues here and they will be asking for the planning and implementation elements and all of the TPC paperwork in the event of a fire (or other significant loss) to ensure that all of the policy conditions are adhered too.

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Graduate of the Institute of Fire Engineers GFireE | Member of the Institute of Fire Safety Managers IFSM  
Support partner of Jactone for their LPS 1223 Kitchen Suppression system and LPS 1666 Electrical Enclosure suppression systems.  
Veritas is proud to be working with certified contractors under the BM Trada Q-Mark fire door Maintenance & Installation scheme.  
Steve Dilloway GFireE, the business owner, is a Graduate member of the Institution of Fire Engineers.  
Veritas Fire Support is an Affiliate Organisation of the Institution of Fire Engineers.

It must also be understood that since the start of 2018 it has been a policy condition for a commercial customer to fully disclose any and all identified but uninstructed non compliance elements within the life safety provision for a commercial building – this will of course include sites with a sleep-in provision – so that they can make their appreciations as to risk, cost and policy conditions, thus, any site where a take-over test, dilapidation report or planned maintenance/service has identified issue, these must if uninstructed must be made available to the clients broker to ensure that the underwriters are fully apprised of the facts.

Since Hackitt, the fire risk assessment (FRA) has become the prima-face document within a buildings life safety provision and again only those with fully insured third party certification should undertake such work so that their competence and knowledge can give confidence to the customer/RP.

In the current climate a client cannot rely on “statutory defence” in the event of a prosecution by the FRS unless they have appointed a certified FRA provider so the need to use someone off one of the TPC registers is crucial to protect both client and contractor.

The levels of liability that may apply to those involved are significant so where contractors are asked to provide costs for works, such as a fire alarm or evacuation system from a W50 specification then the use of a third-party certified partner is essential to ensure that there is traceability and documentation to validate all that has been done against the original W50.

The FRA will ask for both the O/M and potentially also photographic /video evidence of certain elements of a project, for example fire doors and passive fire protection (fire stopping) they will also want to see all of the fire alarm and emergency lighting design notes, design and commissioning certification, disability planning and provision in accordance with the 2010 equalities act.

Appreciations as to the use of the building, be that single or multi-occupancy, business activities etc will all form part of the plan for the assessment to help educate and inform the responsible or accountable person of their issues and responsibilities.

From the clients perspective there are now mandated requirements for the RP to ensure that whomever they appoint is competent and qualified to provide them with all of the information they need, the use of non-certified partners is unlikely to protect them in court - nor appease their insurance provider.

From the contractors position it is key indeed vital that they have access to competent qualified partners to provide fire risk assessment support and thus ensure that they have the correct information and allow them to make informed decisions.

Your business may already have access to such people but if not Veritas will be, as a current ECA associate member, happy to support you nationwide.

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