



DEPARTMENT OF FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

DIRECT BRIGADE ALARM (DBA) TECHNICAL BULLETIN

DECEMBER 2015 (ADVICE 13)

Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) will commence charging a fee for false fire alarm attendances to DBA premises on 11 January 2016.

As a result of this, the fire alarm industry may be asked by many clients to alter existing smoke detection to heat detection in a bid to mitigate a false fire alarm fee.

HEAT DETECTION

Australian Standard (AS) 1670.1 (2004) Clause 3.25.1(b) states that the use of heat detections in lieu of smoke detectors is not recommended.

In addition, the Building Code of Australia (BCA) requires certain buildings to have smoke detection, not heat detection. By changing the smoke detection to heat detection, these requirements may compromise the Building Occupancy Certificate.

Therefore, DFES will not approve any smoke detection to be changed to heat detection unless the relevant Permit Authority, i.e. the Local Government Authority, is made aware of the changes and issues approval.

Private Surveyors may be employed to assist with this process, however they are not empowered to authorise any such changes unless consultation and approval by the Permit Authority has occurred.

Note – For simple change of detector type due to spurious false alarms caused by incorrect installation, i.e. a smoke detector installed over cookers at local shopping centre, agents should contact DFES and discuss the proposal prior to any potential change being made..

ALARM DELAYS

Clients may also request a delay be incorporated into the Fire Indicator Panel (FIP) programming, so the Master Alarm Function (MAF) does not initiate the alarm relay to the Alarm Signalling Equipment (ASE) immediately upon alarm activation.

This is permissible in certain extenuating circumstances and AS1670.1 (2004) provides various options for alarm delays, i.e. AVF, AIF, and AAF, however in all circumstances where these delays are considered, the client must consult a Building Surveyor to present a case to the Permit Authority to obtain permission to set an alarm delay.



This may also require the submission of a Fire Safety Engineering Report (FSER) with an Alternative Solution addressing the requirement for the alarm delay.

DFES APPROVAL

Once the Permit Authority issues approval for either the change of detector type, or the use of any alarm delays, the fire alarm agent must submit a DFES C8 form to DFES

The C8 form must be accompanied by the Permit Authority approvals and the Building Surveyors documentation.

DFES will not authorise any C8 requests where the Permit Authority has refused to issue authority or where insufficient documentation has been provided.

Any changes made to an alarm system connected as a DBA, without DFES approval, are in breach of the DFES/Client DBA End User Agreement. The consequences to the breach can be significant and include the alarm being 'OFF-LINED' and the DFES Disconnection Process being initiated.

DFES reserve the right to refuse any such changes irrespective of any other Approvals issued by the Permit Authority or the Building Surveyor.