

East Sussex Fire Authority – General Service Standards

What you can expect from the Fire Authority

This document explains what you can expect of the Regulatory function of the Fire Authority (FA). Whether you run a business, are an employee or a member of the public, we are committed to providing you with an efficient, courteous and helpful service and this document tells you how we will achieve these aims and what standards we will meet.

Contents

Quick-guide.....	2
More about the regulatory function of the Fire and Rescue Authority.....	4
More about how we work	4
More about working with businesses and others we regulate.....	5
More about helping you get it right	5
More about inspections and other safety visits	6
More about Responding to non-compliance	6
More about requests for our service.....	7
This is how to contact us.....	7
More about us working with others	8
More about our team.....	9
More about having your say	9
More about developing our service to you	9
Appendix 1 – Table of Protection work undertaken.....	10

Quick-guide

The regulatory function of the Fire Authority

We work to protect people in case of fire and prevent and respond to fires and other emergencies. We regulate to protect people in case of fire. We focus on higher risks and have a strategy and priorities in place to help us do this. [To learn more, click here.](#)

How we work

We want to help those we regulate to provide safety, especially when they want to do so. We act proportionally to the risk that we see, so that minor matters are dealt with informally whereas serious matters are dealt with more formally. We comply with the Regulators' Code. [To learn more, click here.](#)

Working with businesses and others we regulate

We want to talk and engage with business. Our officers will adhere to established standards and will work with other authorities where it will benefit business. [To learn more, click here.](#)

Helping you get it right

We will welcome you contacting us about any fire safety matter that concerns you. We look to help before we look to enforce the law. Our advice will be the best we can provide, based on the information you give us. [To learn more, click here.](#)

Inspections and other safety visits

We visit businesses proactively and reactively. We give notice of proactive visits we plan to carry out. [To learn more, click here.](#)

Responding to non-compliance

When we find people at risk in case of fire we will act proportionately, taking into account the likelihood of fire and the consequences of fire if it breaks out. If we make requirements of you, we will explain what we want you to do and will provide contact details. [To learn more, click here.](#)

Requests for our service

When we receive requests for assistance, we will provide as much help as we can and will let you know what to expect at each step along the way. [To learn more, click here.](#)

How to contact us

You can find out contact details here. All contacts will be treated in confidence (unless you tell us otherwise). [To find them, click here.](#)

Working with others

Where we can, we work with other authorities to make our work more efficient and to save each of us collecting the same information from businesses. It also enables us to signpost information that might be helpful. [To learn more, click here.](#)

Our team

Our officers are competent for the tasks they deal with. [To learn more, click here.](#)

Having your say

We want you to be confident to talk to us, whether you want help or to challenge something we have asked you to do. You will find us willing to talk about all these matters. Whether it is good or bad, we want to hear from you. [To learn more, click here.](#)

Developing our service to you

We love to consult with the people we regulate; they make sure we ‘get it right’. If you would like to join them, we want to hear from you. [To learn more, click here.](#)

More about the regulatory function of the Fire Authority

The FA delivers services to the community in a number of ways including:

- Prevention activity (helping people to be safe on the roads and at home),
- Protection work (helping people to be safe at work and at leisure), and
- Response (helping people in all kinds of emergency situation)

While we do all we can to keep people safe and to provide a rescue and emergency service we only regulate (or enforce) fire safety and petroleum law as a part of our Protection work.

A table showing the Protection work that the FA undertakes is shown at [appendix 1](#) to this document. We involve ourselves where the risk to life, business, property and the environment is highest¹, and we make a fundamental contribution to the maintenance and improvement of public health, quality of life and wellbeing through our activity.

Details of our current strategy is available at [\[more\]](#)

We are committed to being transparent in our activities and we publish our performance data monthly. Our latest performance data is available at [\[more\]](#)

More about how we work

We carry out all our activities in a way that supports those we regulate to provide safety to people in case of fire and to grow as a business. Information and guidance is made available to help those we regulate. Where we can (in terms of time, effort and impact it would take to understand your business), we will tailor advice to your particular needs.

We use a risk-based and/or intelligence-led approach to target our resources, including how we monitor and check safety with statutory requirements. Each premises is assigned a risk score based on the type of occupancy (with sleeping in unfamiliar premises being the highest risk), past enforcement history and other relevant factors, including visits following a fire or when a complaint is received.

We deal proportionately with breaches of the law as set out in our enforcement policy, which is available at [\[more\]](#) and which includes the taking of firm enforcement action when necessary.

Our service will be delivered in accordance with the requirements of the Regulators Code, which can be seen by clicking [\[here\]](#).

We are ethical in the way we work and officers will treat people with courtesy, consideration, openness and honesty. We respect privacy. In the provision of our services this means we will:

- be independent, fair and consistent

¹ We may take enforcement action only when there is a risk to life in case of fire. Our influence under other risk circumstances relies on advice given and is based on our experience of dealing with emergencies.

- take full account of what people say to us
- establish the facts and communicate accurately, promptly and in plain language
- explain fully the reasons for decisions, and
- treat people with respect and not discriminate on any improper ground.

More about working with businesses and others we regulate

We would like to work with you to help your business to be successful. It is important to us that you / your business feel able to come to us for advice when you need it. You will find us ready to help you with working through issues relating to fire safety.

In all your dealings with us you can expect (and will receive) an efficient and professional service. Our team of officers will:

- be courteous and polite;
- identify themselves by name and provide you with their contact details;
- try to understand how your business operates and the pressures you face;
- provide details of how you can raise any concerns you may have;
- agree time scales, expectations and preferred methods of communications with you; and
- ensure that we are available to discuss progress against issues raised.

We recognise that your business will receive advice and inspections from other organisations. We will do our best to work alongside them and to ensure that you receive the best information, advice and service that we can provide.

More about helping you get it right

We would like to work with you to help your business to be successful. It is important to us that you / your business feel able to come to us for advice when you need it. You will find us ready to help you with working through issues relating to fire safety. If you contact us to discuss a fire safety issue, we will only take enforcement action if the safety of people in your premises is in danger.

We make information and guidance on meeting your statutory requirements available to you [[more](#)].

Where you need advice to help you meet your legal obligations we will:

- provide reliable advice that supports safety;

- provide advice that is appropriate to your circumstances (so far as time will reasonably allow)
- suggest the most straight forward (best value) solution for you;
- provide clear advice that can be easily understood and implemented by you;
- distinguish legal obligations from good practice advice;
- send written confirmation of our advice; and
- acknowledge good safety practices that you have in place.

We are open to discuss the Primary Authority scheme with businesses and groups to which that scheme is open [[more](#)].

More about inspections and other safety visits

Compliance is about providing safety in case of fire. We work proactively and reactively. Reactive work comes to us from complaints made to us about the safety of premises and following fires. Proactive work is based on information and intelligence we have about premises and which contribute to a risk-based or intelligence-led list of premises for us to visit. We always base our visits on an assessment of risk. When working proactively we will give you notice that we intend to visit your premises.

Depending on the nature of our visit, officers will (prior to or at the time of our visit):

- explain the reason and purpose of the visit;
- carry their identification (and authorisation) cards and produce them for you on request;
- exercise discretion in front of your customers and staff;
- consider how you approach fire safety in your premises and take this into account in future interactions with you;
- provide advice to support you in meeting your statutory obligations, if required;
- provide a written record of the visit (in most cases, especially if you request it);

We do not charge you for undertaking any of our visits although some charges are made for petroleum certification and other specific work [[more](#)].

More about Responding to non-compliance

Non-compliance means that we believe a person is (or people are) at risk in case of fire. In such cases we will respond proportionately, taking account the likelihood and severity of that risk.

When we require you to take action to remedy unsafe conditions we will:

- explain the nature of the risk;
- discuss what is required of you to achieve safety (taking into account your circumstances, if you have explained them to us);
- explain any advice, actions required or decisions that we have taken;
- agree timescales for making improvements that are reasonable to you and us;
- provide you with details in writing of how to appeal against our regulatory decisions (and how to complain about our conduct);
- explain what happens next, especially if you do not make improvements;
- provide you with our contact details; and
- keep in touch with you (where required) until you have provided safety.

More about requests for our service

We respond to requests for assistance that we receive, including requests for advice, appeals and complaints. We will:

- Acknowledge your request within 24 hours;
- Tell you when you can expect to receive a substantive response;
- Seek to fully understand the nature of your request;
- Explain what we may or may not be able to do, so that you know what to expect;
- Keep you informed of our progress throughout our involvement;
- Provide clear advice where appropriate; and
- Inform you of the outcome of our involvement as appropriate.

The standard time we intend to take to respond to your requests for assistance are shown in the Enforcement Concordat [[more](#)]. Please note that these are maximum time periods that we aim to work within.

This is how to contact us

Our contact information is shown here [[more](#)].

In all cases we will seek to work with you in the most appropriate way to meet your individual needs. We can make information available in different formats and we have access to translation and interpretation services if you need them.

We will treat your contact with us in confidence unless you have expressly informed us that we can share your details in relation to the matter you have raised with us. We respond to anonymous complaints and enquiries when we judge it appropriate to do so.

Personal data will be dealt with in accordance with our Data Protection Policy [\[more\]](#).

More about us working with others

We work closely with other regulators and council services including (among others):

- licensing authorities
- building control bodies
- housing authorities
- environmental health
- trading standards
- food standards
- the Health and Safety Executive

Working with our partners means that we can signpost you to advice and guidance that you might need or that might benefit your business and means that we can better target our resources to where they will be most beneficial or make / keep people safe.

We determine our activities each year by assessing the needs of local people and business communities, and considering the risks that require addressing. We do this by:

- organising a programme of business engagement events with various business sectors
- reviewing incidents of fire that occur and responding to emerging trends and issues
- and by using data and other information available to us and our partners.

These activities ensure our resources are targeted appropriately and in light of local needs and national priorities. Our aim is to provide a streamlined service and to maintain safe and healthy communities.

More about our team

We have a dedicated team of officers to deliver our services and have arrangements in place to ensure their ongoing professionalism and competence. Officers will seek to work with those they regulate in the most appropriate way to meet individual needs.

More about having your say

If for any reason you wish to challenge a regulatory decision or appeal against a notice, the method of how to do so is outlined in our Inspection and Enforcement Procedures [[more](#)].

To complain about the conduct of an officer, please see our Complaints procedure [[more](#)].

We are always willing to discuss with you why we have acted in a particular way or made particular requirements of you.

We value your input. To help us ensure that our service is meeting your needs we would like to hear from you whether your experience of us has been good or whether we need to improve. Hearing from you ensures that any changes we make to our services are made in the right way. From time to time we operate customer satisfaction surveys and while we encourage your participation in these, we would welcome your feedback to us at any time. You can provide feedback by following this link [[more](#)].

Any feedback we receive will be acknowledged, considered and responded to and where necessary, acted upon.

More about developing our service to you

We have a contacts database that we use to consult with interested parties to ensure that we are delivering our service well. We are always happy to welcome new members to this database.

If you would like to be added to this database, please contact our Communications Team on: 01323 462388.

Dated: 09/02/2016

Name: Richard Fowler

Job title: Head of Business Safety

Appendix 1 – Table of Protection work undertaken

This table shows the Protection work undertaken by the Fire Authority.

Enforcing authority	Consultations
<p>List of what we regulate / enforce:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire Safety • Petroleum Certification 	<p>List of authorities with whom we consult:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Licensing Authorities • Building Control Bodies • Housing Authorities • Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) • Care Quality Commission (CQC)
<p>Laws that apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 • Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 • The Explosives Regulations 2014 • The Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations 2002 	<p>Laws that apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Licensing Act 2003 • The Building Regulations 2010 • Housing Act 2004