

Automatic Fire Suppression System (AFSS)

Position Statement

1 Introduction

- 1.1 London Fire Brigade (LFB) believes that Automatic Fire Suppression Systems (AFSS) play a significant role, as part of an appropriate package of fire safety measures, in reducing the impact of fire on people, property and the environment. They also assist firefighters in carrying out search and rescue operations by limiting fire development, which significantly reduces the risks to firefighters.
- 1.2 There is clear evidence that AFSS (also referred to as Automatic Water Fire Suppression Systems - AWFSS), such as sprinklers and watermist systems are effective in the rapid suppression of fires. We therefore recommend AFSS in the following building types to protect those living in, working in and visiting London:

2 Residential premises

- 2.1 While current Building Regulations recognise that all new residential buildings in excess of 30m height should be provided with AFSS, LFB are of the opinion that this should be extended to existing buildings and that is that the appropriate height is 18m in both cases. We therefore recommend AFSS in:
 - All new residential developments over 18m in height.
 - Existing residential blocks over 18m in height (retrofitting), subject to a risk based approach that should include consideration of the vulnerability of the residents.

3 Schools

- 3.1 Building Bulletin 100 (BB100): Design for fire safety in schools, published in 2007, introduced the 'expectation' that all new schools would have AFSS installed. We recommend that:
 - AFSS is mandatory in all new school builds and as part of major refurbishments.

4 Care homes and sheltered (specialised) accommodation

- 4.1 We recommend the inclusion of AFSS in:
 - All new residential care homes and sheltered (specialised) accommodation.
 - Existing residential care homes and sheltered (specialised) accommodation (retrofitting), subject to a risk based approach that should include consideration of the vulnerability of the residents.

5 Other priorities

- 5.1 We also strongly advocate the use of AFSS in the following premises:
 - All homes occupied by the most vulnerable in our communities.

- All other residential properties which include hotels, hostels and student accommodation, over 18m in height.
- All new London Fire Brigade buildings.

6 Other premises

6.1 We will also continue to promote the installation of AFSS within the following types of properties throughout London:

- Heritage buildings.
- Complex and deep sub surface structures such as basements.
- Large warehouses.

Additional information supporting this statement is available on the London Fire Brigade website:

<http://www.london-fire.gov.uk/sprinklers.asp>