

GUIDANCE ON APPROVED DOCUMENT B – FIRE SAFETY – 2006 Edition

The 2006 edition of Approved Document B – Fire Safety (ADB) introduces a number of changes with respect to the 2000 edition. This Guidance Note explains only those changes that will affect timber windows, and door manufacturers. The advice assumes knowledge of the previous versions of this Approved Document. Copies of the all Approved Documents can be downloaded free of charge by following the Department of Communities and Local Government web site link <http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/england/professionals/en/> . To aid reading the clause/appendix references are attached to each comment as well as which Volume.

General

The Approved Document has been produced in two parts. Implementation date: - April 2007

AD B Volume 1 – *Dwellinghouses* - covers all guidance for dwellings whether detached, semi detached or terraced. But does not include flats.

AD B Volume 2 – *Buildings other than dwellinghouses* - covers all other buildings, including flats (the terms maisonette has been dropped), whether in stand alone blocks or attached to other purpose group properties.

Maintenance

Manufacturers and builders are encouraged to provide information on the operation and maintenance of their products for the end user. Vol 1 Cl-0.11; Vol 2 Cl-1.18

Third Party Certification

Guidance on the acceptability of third party product, material and installation certification schemes has been expanded. The acceptability of such schemes is more positively endorsed. Vol 1 & Vol 2 Cl-0.15. The BWF-CERTIFIRE Fire Door & Doorset Scheme is such an acceptable scheme.

Windows

There is no change in the dimensions or location recommendations for “Emergency egress windows”. Vol 1 Cl-2.8; Vol 2 Cl-2.9.

It is acknowledged that windows may be fitted with locks and child resistant safety stays even an escape route. Vol 1 Cl-2.8-Note 2; Vol 2 Cl-2.9-Note 2.

A new recommendation is that emergency egress windows should remain open without being held by the ‘escapee’. This will mean that friction hinges or additional restraints will be needed on top hung, pivot and fully reversible windows. Vol 1 Cl-2.8-Note 3; Vol 2 Cl-2.9-Note 3. This clause does not apply to side hung windows.

There is clarification on the recommendations for replacement windows, confirming the “not worse than” guidance in AD L. Vol 1 Cl-2.19a.

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Doors

Fire resisting internal doors to houses and flats will no longer need to be fitted with any form of self-closer. Vol 1 & Vol 2 Appendix B Cl-2.

Doors between houses and garages and also flat entrance doors will still need to be self-closing. Vol 1 & Vol 2 Appendix B Cl-2.

New is a recommendation that doors between a house and an integral garage should be fitted with smoke seals. Vol 1 Table B 1.

There are changes to the recommendations for adding a loft extension. In these circumstances a protected shaft should be created for the means of escape. This will require fire-resisting doors to all openings of the shaft, although it will not be necessary to fit them with self-closers. This will mean it will no longer be acceptable to use the existing non-fire resisting doors. Vol 1 Cl-2.20b.

In all non-domestic situations the clear opening width definition has been brought in line with the recommendation in AD M. Vol 2 Appendix C Cl-4.

Advice is introduced that the test evidence for fire door assemblies should be checked to ensure that there has not been any deviation from the specification that could affect the performance. Vol 1 & Vol 2 Appendix B Cl-1.

JAH – 2 February 2007