

**Fire Risk Assessment**

**Mintern Street, Flats 11-21**

Version 3

4 September 2023



Review Date: 4 September 2024

Score: Tolerable Risk

Assessor: Mark Thomas

# Contents

<b>1 Action Plan Summary</b> .....	3
<b>2 Introduction</b> .....	5
<b>3 Executive Summary</b> .....	6
<b>4 Premises Details</b> .....	7
<b>5 Fire Prevention</b> .....	9
<b>6 Escape Routes &amp; Fire Spread</b> .....	12
<b>7 Detection &amp; Warning</b> .....	17
<b>8 Firefighting</b> .....	19
<b>9 Lighting</b> .....	20
<b>10 Signs &amp; Notices</b> .....	21
<b>11 Fire Safety Management</b> .....	23
<b>12 Tasks</b> .....	25
<b>13 Risk Score</b> .....	28

## Action Plan Summary

Task No.	Category	Sub Category	Action Required	Priority	Status	Action Taken	Date Completed
1	Escape Routes & Fire Spread	Construction and Glazing	<p>There are some cable and pipe penetrations in the electrical cupboard which requires fire stopping.</p> <p>With the provision of a common fire alarm this has been afforded a low priority.</p>	Low	Identified		
2	Detection & Warning	Manual Fire Alarms	Consider removal of the fire alarm system from communal areas, as it conflicts with national guidance which recommends a stay-put policy for buildings of this type.	Advisory	Identified		
3	Detection & Warning	Automatic Fire Detection	The provision of a common fire alarm system contradicts National Guidance for a building of this type (general needs, purpose built, self contained flats). A letter dated 6th January 2020 from QFSM Ltd to ISHA regarding the provision of fire alarms in common parts of blocks of flats offers guidance and recommendations on this matter and this letter should be referred to when considering whether this is a necessary provision, or if it is considered a necessary provision whether this fire alarm is of the Standard required.	Advisory	Identified		

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4	Signs & Notices	Fire Door Signage	Provide Automatic Fire Door Keep Clear signs on the following doors:	Low	Identified
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Cross corridor doors.

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5	Signs & Notices	Other Signage	There are two conflicting fire action notices provided, one for a stay-put policy and the other for a simultaneous evacuation policy.	Medium	Identified
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Ensure the provided Fire Action Notice accurately reflects the evacuation policy in place and gives correct information and instruction to all persons as to the action to be taken in the event of a fire.

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# Introduction

This report presents the significant findings of a fire risk assessment carried-out at the premises by QFSM Ltd. The scope, format and limitations of the fire risk assessment have been discussed and agreed with the client.

The scope of the assessment does not include individual dwellings. Notwithstanding any statement or recommendation made with respect to smoke/heat alarms within dwellings, it is always recommended as best practice to ensure that working smoke alarms are provided in all dwellings at least to a BS 5839-6 Category LD3 standard. These should ideally be Grade D alarms (mains powered with integral battery back-up), although Grade F alarms (battery powered only) are a reasonable short term measure.

The report includes an action plan which contains recommended tasks, each with a suggested due date. These due dates are only our suggestions, and may or may not be appropriate, depending on individual circumstances such as financial constraints and requirements of enforcing authorities.

The premises risk score was assessed at the time of the fire risk assessment, and a recommended review date has been provided. The actual level of risk may change over time, as a result of tasks being completed, or new risks arising. Regardless of the review date, the fire risk assessment should be reviewed regularly so as to keep it up to date and particularly if:

- there is reason to suspect that the fire risk assessment is no longer valid; or
- there has been a significant change in the matters to which the fire risk assessment relates.

If you have any queries please contact QFSM Ltd at [office@qfsm ltd.co.uk](mailto:office@qfsm ltd.co.uk).

## Executive Summary

The previous FRA for this building was reviewed prior to this inspection, paying particular attention to any tasks generated by that FRA. During this inspection these tasks were inspected where access was possible, to ascertain if the recommended remedial work had been completed, and comments regarding the progress of any remedial work made accordingly. It was noted that there remains a number of tasks outstanding from the previous FRA which detail recommended remedial work required to ensure the safety of the building and that it is compliant with relative fire safety regulations and guidance. It is imperative that such remedial work is carried out within the recommended time frames given.

Records for the testing and maintenance of fire safety related systems are not kept on site. These are managed centrally and are held at the ISHA Head Office.

The wall, floors and stairs in the common areas are of masonry/concrete construction.

There is a BS5839-1 fire alarm provided in the common parts of this building. This may be provided due to concerns over compartmentation within the building. No documentation regarding the cause and effect of the system was available and it cannot be confirmed whether the fire alarm in the common areas is interlinked to those installed within flats, or the extra care accommodation which occupies the ground floor of the building, but is imperforate to these flats which occupy the first floor. The provision of a common fire alarm system contradicts National Guidance for a building of this type (general needs, purpose built, self contained flats). A letter dated 6th January 2020 from QFSM Ltd to ISHA regarding the provision of fire alarms in common parts of blocks of flats offers guidance and recommendations on this matter and this letter should be referred to when considering whether this is a necessary provision, or if it is considered a necessary provision whether this fire alarm is of the Standard required.

Fire extinguishers have been removed from the common parts of the building, however the fire extinguisher signage remains, and this should be removed to avoid confusion to residents.

There are two different Fire Action Notices provided, each giving conflicting information regarding the action to be taken in the event of a fire in the building. It is imperative that residents and visitors are given clear instructions as to the action they should take in the event of a fire.

Giving consideration to the general fire safety arrangements within the building, and the tasks recommended as detailed within this report, it is assessed that this building presents a tolerable risk.

This new version was created on 04/09/2023 and is not a review of the fire risk assessment. This is purely an on-site audit carried out at the request of the client to ascertain the progress of any action carried out against previous tasks identified in previous versions of this fire risk assessment.

# Premises Details

## Building Information

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Address line 1	Mintern Street
Address line 2	Flats 11-21
Town	Hackney
Postcode	N1 3EF

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FRA Type	Type 1 - Common parts only (non-destructive)
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Description	<p>A Type 1 fire risk assessment has been conducted at this building. This means the inspection of the building has been non-destructive. As well as considering the arrangements for means of escape, the fire risk assessment has included, where possible, the examination of a sample of flat entrance doors. It has also considered, so far as reasonably practicable, the separating construction between the flats and the common parts without any intrusive examination of construction. This Type of fire risk assessment has not involved entry to flats beyond the area of the flat entrance door.</p>
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Client	ISHA
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Use	Purpose-built, self-contained flats
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Number of floors - ground and above	2
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Number of floors - below ground	0
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Number of flats	6
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Number of stair cores	1
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Approach to flats

- Via protected lobbies / corridors

Approximate period of construction

1990-2000

Is the top occupied storey over 18 metres above access level?

No

Construction details

Traditional brick construction with solid concrete intermediate floors and a covered pitched roof. The flats occupy the first floor of the building, the ground floor contains supported-living accommodation and is imperforate to the first floor.

Access to common area via secure door entry system with flats accessed from lobbies/corridors at first floor level (flats 15 & 17 to right side corridor, flats 11, 13, 19 & 21 to left side corridor).

Riser cupboard located on first floor landing.



External walls - end elevation.



External walls - end elevation.



External walls - front elevation.

External wall details

External walls are of brick and mortar construction to across all elevations.

Are there any private balconies?

No

## People

Are there any people especially at risk from fire?

Not Known



# Fire Prevention

## Electrical

Are electrical installations and appliances free from any obvious defect?

Yes

Are fixed installations periodically inspected and tested?

Yes

Are portable electrical appliances used?

No

### Comments

Documentation regarding the testing and maintenance of fixed electrical installations is held centrally by ISHA. The Neighbourhood Officer has confirmed these are all up to date.

There are electrical sockets in the common areas, presumably for use by cleaning staff. These were in good condition and showed no evidence of misuse by residents or visitors.



Electrical sockets provided in common area

## Gas

Are gas installations and appliances free from any obvious defect?

N/A

Is gas equipment protected/located so as not to be prone to accidental damage?

N/A

### Comments

There is no gas provision or equipment in the common areas.

## Heating

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Are fixed heating installations free from any obvious defect?

N/A

Are portable heaters used?

No

Comments

There is no heating provision in the common areas.

## Cooking

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Does cooking take place on the premises?

No

Comments

Cooking takes place within flats only and does not take place in the common parts.

## Arson

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Is security against arson reasonable?

Yes

Is there a reasonable absence of external fuels and ignition sources?

Yes

Comments

Access was gained into this building via a secured main entrance door. The main entrance door was found to be locked and secure, preventing unauthorised access.

## Housekeeping

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Is accumulation of combustibles or waste avoided?

Yes

Are there appropriate storage facilities for combustible & hazardous materials?

Yes

Comments

All common areas appeared clean, tidy and free of combustible items.

## Building Works

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Are there any hot works being carried-out at this time?

No

Are the premises free of any obvious signs of incorrect hot work procedures in the past?

Yes

## Smoking

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Are there suitable arrangements taken to prevent fires caused by smoking?

Yes

Comments

“No Smoking” signage is provided, and there is no evidence of smoking taking place in the common parts.



“No smoking” signage is provided

## Dangerous Substances

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Are dangerous substances present, or liable to be present?

No

## Lightning

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Is a lightning protection system installed?

Not Known

Comments

There is no lightning protection visible, However, if there is lightening protection in place it should be periodically inspected by a competent person, to the frequency recommended in BS EN 62305.

# Escape Routes & Fire Spread

## Ease of Use

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Are exits easily and immediately openable?

Yes

Do fire exits open in direction of escape where necessary?

N/A

Are escape routes unobstructed and safe to use?

Yes

Are there reasonable measures for the evacuation of disabled people?

Yes

### Comments

The provision of thumb turn devices on final exits means the doors can be opened without the use of a key.

Tenants are presumed to be a typical cross section of the public and could include visitors and contractors. It is assumed that all occupants and visitors are capable of using the means of escape unaided to reach a place of ultimate safety.



Thumb-turn on main entrance door

## Dimensions

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Are travel distances reasonable?

Yes

Is there sufficient exit capacity?

Yes



Distance from common corridor, down  
common staircase to main entrance  
door

## Fire Doors

Doors which are expected to be fire resisting:

- Cross-Corridors
- Electrical Cupboards
- Flats

Cross-Corridor Doors

- FD30S self-closing

Electrical Cupboard Doors

- FD30S

Flat Doors

- Not confirmed

Are fire doors to a suitable standard?

No

Is there suitable provision of self-closing devices?

Yes

Is there suitable provision of hold-open devices?

Yes

Are doors kept locked where appropriate?

Yes

Comments

It is understood that communal doors are inspected regularly by neighbourhood officers and formally recorded in the quarterly/6 monthly estate inspections with residents. Records are held with the neighbourhood officers. Flat entrance doors are inspected during the annual LGSR visits where the gas engineers record on their PDA if a door closer exists and intumescent strips and cold smoke seals exist.

The flat entrance doors within the building could not be assessed due to access within the scope of this Type 1 Fire Risk Assessment. However from external examination only, the flat entrance doors appear to be flush timber original doors from the time of the buildings construction which should provide a notional 30 minutes fire resistance. All flat entrance doors appear to be of the same age, condition and design and were probably all installed at the same time. It is therefore reasonable to assume that they are of the same FD30 (notional) fire resisting standard.

There are externally fitted self closing devices on flat entrance doors although these could not be tested. The provision and condition intumescent strips/cold smoke seals, and effective door closing action of these doors however could not be assessed and this should be confirmed ensure all doors afford FD30SC standard of fire resistance.



Example of typical flat entrance doors in the building



Automatic self-closing corridor doors - tested during inspection



Automatic self-closing cross-corridor door not closing fully

## Construction & Glazing

Are escape routes protected with suitable walls and floors?

Yes

Is there adequate compartmentation?

No

Is there reasonable limitation of linings that might promote fire spread?

Yes

Glazing which is expected to be fire resisting, inc vision panels and fanlights:

- Cross-Corridors

Cross-Corridor Glazing

- Georgian wired

Is glazing reasonable and free from any obvious defects?

Yes

Comments

There are some cable and pipe penetrations in the electrical cupboard which requires fire stopping.



Georgian wired glazing installed in corridor doors.



The roof space was not inspected within the scope of this FRA

## Dampers, Ducts & Chutes

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Are there suitable measures to restrict fire spread via ducts and concealed spaces?

Not Confirmed

Comments

No Dampers, Ducts or Chutes evident.

## Smoke Ventilation

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Areas where smoke ventilation is expected:

• None

Is smoke ventilation reasonable and free from any obvious defects?

Yes

Comments

Manually operated smoke ventilation is provided, however there common fire alarm has been provided indicating a simultaneous evacuation policy is in place.

Please see the comments and task in the detection and alarm section of this report regarding the provision of common fire alarms and recommended evacuation policies.



Break-glass manually operated ventilation system



# Detection & Warning

## Control Equipment

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Is an electrical fire alarm system expected?

No

Why not?

Purpose-built flats

Is a fire detection and/or alarm system provided?

Yes

Areas covered

- Communal areas

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### Communal Areas

System Category

- BS 5839 Pt1 Category L3

Cause & Effect

- Not confirmed

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Is the control equipment suitably located?

N/A

Is the control equipment free from any obvious fault or defect?

N/A

## Manual Fire Alarms

Are there sufficient means of manually raising an alarm?

Minor Defects

Are manual callpoints appropriately located and free from obvious defect?

Yes

### Comments

Consider removal of the fire alarm system from communal areas, as it conflicts with national guidance which recommends a stay-put policy for buildings of this type.



Manual alarm provided in the common corridor

## Automatic Fire Detection

Is there sufficient provision of automatic fire detection?

Minor Defects

Is the type of automatic fire detection suitable and free from obvious defect?

Yes

### Comments

There is a BS5839-1 fire alarm provided in the common parts of this building. This may have been provided due to concerns over compartmentation within the building. No documentation regarding the cause and effect of the system was available and it cannot be confirmed whether the fire alarm in the common areas is interlinked to those installed within flats. The provision of a common fire alarm system contradicts National Guidance for a building of this type (general needs, purpose built, self contained flats). A letter dated 6th January 2020 from QFSM Ltd to ISHA regarding the provision of fire alarms in common parts of blocks of flats offers guidance and recommendations on this matter and this letter should be referred to when considering whether this is a necessary provision, or if it is considered a necessary provision whether this fire alarm is of the Standard required.

## Audibility

Are there adequate means of alerting all relevant persons?

Yes

# Firefighting

## Fire Extinguishers

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Are fire extinguishers expected?

No

Why not?

- Not practicable to train residents
- Fire unlikely in communal areas
- Vandalism concerns

Are fire extinguishers provided?

No

Is the provision of fire extinguishers reasonable?

Yes

Comments

It appears fire fighting equipment was once provided, however this has been removed.

The fire extinguisher signage remains, and this should be removed to avoid confusion to residents.

## Fixed Systems

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Are any fixed systems provided?

No

Is provision of fixed systems reasonable?

Yes

## Fire Service Facilities

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Are any fire service facilities provided?

Yes

Types of facility

- Smoke ventilation

Is provision of fire service facilities reasonable?

Yes

# Lighting

## Normal Lighting

Is there adequate lighting of internal escape routes?

Yes

Is there adequate lighting of external escape routes?

Yes

Is there adequate lighting in risk critical areas?

N/A

## Emergency Lighting

Method of emergency lighting of internal escape routes:

- Maintained emergency lighting (local)

Is this provision reasonable?

Yes

Method of emergency lighting of external escape routes:

- Borrowed light

Is this provision reasonable?

Yes

Method of emergency lighting of other areas:

- Not applicable

Is this provision reasonable?

Yes

Comments

Although this inspection took place during daylight hours, given the provision of street lighting in the immediate vicinity and lighting provided by surrounding buildings, it is reasonable to assume there would be sufficient borrowed light to aid escape in these areas.



Maintained (local) emergency lighting provided in the common parts

# Signs & Notices

## Escape Routes

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Is escape route signage necessary?

No

Why not?

- Simple escape routes
- Routes in ordinary use

Is escape route signage provided?

Yes

Is provision of escape route signage suitable?

Yes

## Fire Doors

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Is there signage suitable for self-closing fire doors?

N/A

Is there signage suitable for locked fire doors?

Yes

Is there signage suitable for automatic fire doors?

No

Comments

Provide Automatic Fire Door Keep Clear signs on the Cross corridor doors.

## Other Signs & Notices

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Is there suitable signage for fire service facilities?

No

Are fire action notices suitable?

No

Are there suitable notices for fire extinguishers?

N/A

Is there suitable zone information for the fire alarm system?

N/A

### Comments

Signage should be provided indicating the location of the manual smoke ventilation operating break-glass point.

There are two conflicting fire action notices provided, one for a stay-put policy and the other for a simultaneous evacuation policy. The provision of a common fire alarm indicates a simultaneous evacuation policy is in place, however, please see comments in the detection and alarm section of this report regarding this matter.

# Fire Safety Management

## Procedures & Arrangements

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Current evacuation policy

Simultaneous

Further details

Please see comments and tasks in the automatic fire detection section of this report regarding the provision of a common fire alarm which contradicts the expected evacuation policy for a building of this type.

Are fire action procedures suitable and appropriately documented?

Not Known

Are there suitable arrangements for calling the fire service?

N/A

Is there a suitable fire assembly point?

N/A

Are there suitable arrangements for the evacuation of disabled people?

Yes

Comments

These are general needs flats and as such no specific occupancy risk is identified. Tenants are presumed to be a typical cross section of public and could include visitors and contractors. It is assumed that all occupants and visitors are capable of using the means of escape unaided to reach a place of ultimate safety.

## Training & Drills

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Are staff regularly on the premises?

No

Are employees from outside organisations given appropriate fire safety information?

No

Comments

Please see comments in "Signs and Notices" regarding the importance of providing the correct Fire Action Notice.

## Testing & Maintenance

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Was testing & maintenance information available?

No

Are fire extinguishers subject to suitable test & maintenance?

N/A

Comments

Fire Safety documentation for the testing and maintenance of fire safety systems is held centrally at the ISHA Head Office. The ISHA Neighbourhood Officer has confirmed that these are up to date.

Fire Risk Assessment

Mintern Street, Flats 11-21

Version 3

## Record Keeping

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Were fire safety records available?

No

Comments

Fire Safety documentation for the testing and maintenance of fire safety systems is held centrally at the ISHA Head Office. The ISHA Neighbourhood Officer has confirmed that these are up to date.



# Tasks

## Task 1

Source Version	1
Category	Escape Routes & Fire Spread
Sub Category	Construction and Glazing
Action Required	There are some cable and pipe penetrations in the electrical cupboard which requires fire stopping.  With the provision of a common fire alarm this has been afforded a low priority.
Priority	Low
Status	Identified
Owner	Customer Homes
Due Date	17 June 2021

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## Task 2

Source Version	1
Category	Detection & Warning
Sub Category	Manual Fire Alarms
Action Required	Consider removal of the fire alarm system from communal areas, as it conflicts with national guidance which recommends a stay-put policy for buildings of this type.
Priority	Advisory
Status	Identified
Owner	Customer Homes
Due Date	17 June 2022

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### Task 3

Source Version	1
Category	Detection & Warning
Sub Category	Automatic Fire Detection
Action Required	The provision of a common fire alarm system contradicts National Guidance for a building of this type (general needs, purpose built, self contained flats). A letter dated 6th January 2020 from QFSM Ltd to ISHA regarding the provision of fire alarms in common parts of blocks of flats offers guidance and recommendations on this matter and this letter should be referred to when considering whether this is a necessary provision, or if it is considered a necessary provision whether this fire alarm is of the Standard required.
Priority	Advisory
Status	Identified
Owner	Customer Homes
Due Date	17 June 2022

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### Task 4

Source Version	1
Category	Signs & Notices
Sub Category	Fire Door Signage
Action Required	Provide Automatic Fire Door Keep Clear signs on the following doors:  Cross corridor doors.
Priority	Low
Status	Identified
Owner	Neighbourhood Services
Due Date	17 June 2021

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## Task 5

Source Version	1
Category	Signs & Notices
Sub Category	Other Signage
Action Required	<p>There are two conflicting fire action notices provided, one for a stay-put policy and the other for a simultaneous evacuation policy.</p> <p>Ensure the provided Fire Action Notice accurately reflects the evacuation policy in place and gives correct information and instruction to all persons as to the action to be taken in the event of a fire.</p>
Priority	Medium
Status	Identified
Owner	Neighbourhood Services
Due Date	16 December 2020

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# Risk Score

Risk Score

Tolerable Risk

Next Assessment Due

4 September 2024

Likelihood	Potential Consequence		
	Slight Harm	Moderate Harm	Extreme Harm
High	Moderate	Substantial	Intolerable
Medium	<b>Tolerable</b>	Moderate	Substantial
Low	Trivial	Tolerable	Moderate

## Likelihood

- Low** Unusually low likelihood of fire as a result of negligible potential sources of ignition.
- Medium** Normal fire hazards (e.g. potential ignition sources) for this type of occupancy, with fire hazards generally subject to appropriate controls (other than minor shortcomings).
- High** Lack of adequate controls applied to one or more significant fire hazards, such as to result in significant increase in likelihood of fire.

## Consequence

- Slight** Outbreak of fire unlikely to result in serious injury or death of any occupant (other than an occupant sleeping in a room in which a fire occurs).
- Moderate** Outbreak of fire could foreseeably result in injury (including serious injury) of one or more occupants, but it is unlikely to involve multiple fatalities.
- Extreme** Significant potential for serious injury or death of one or more occupants.