

Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service



Service Procedure Note

No. FS-PR-025

Unwanted Fire Signal (UwFS) - Cost Recovery

Document Overview

The following areas are covered by this document:

- Introduction;
- Recording of UwFS details
- Where Cost recovery applies
- Cost recovery
- Recording of UwFS
- Audit, Monitoring & Quality Assurance;
- Further Reading.

Document Control

Version	Date	Author	Reasons for Change
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Sign-Off List

Position
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Approved By (to be completed by author)

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SLT	✓	
Other		
Comment		

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Completed (✓)

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 In support of the overall Unwanted Fire Signals Policy (UwFS) and strategy, Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service will apply a cost recovery process where appliances are mobilised to a premises where a persistent issue of UwFS's has been identified. For further background information regarding the Cost Recovery Policy refer to Service Policy Note FS-PO-016 AFA Cost Recovery.

2.0 Recording of UwFS details

- 2.1 On attendance at an Automatic Fire Alarm Signal (AFA) the Officer in Charge of the appliance must ensure that the following information is accurately recorded.
- the address of the premises where the fire alarm system activated as the address for the incident.
 - the cause of the UwFS
 - the property type as being the main use for the premises where the AFA actuation occurred

3.0 Where Cost Recovery applies

- 3.1 Cost recovery will be applied to all Non-Domestic premises where the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (RRO) applies. Under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 (FRSA) the alarm must be classified as being generated as a result of a malfunction or misinstallation, (see FS-PO-016).
- 3.2 Non-domestic premises are:
- all workplaces and commercial premises
 - all premises the public have access to
 - the common areas of multi-occupied residential buildings
- 3.3 The following alarm actuation causes will **not** generate an application of the cost recovery process.
- False alarm incident resulting from the testing of the system
 - False alarm incidents resulting from the activation of a break-glass call point

4.0 Cost Recovery

- 4.1 Following four and subsequent UwFS's received by the Service from a premises, within a rolling twelve month period the cost recovery process will be applied.
- 4.2 A sum of £207.82 + VAT will be applied to the cost recovery process.

- 4.3 Following consultation with NFRS Fire Safety Inspecting Officer a reduced predetermined attendance will be applied to premises with three UwFS's in a twelve month period, this is to reduce the impact of UwFS's on NFRS resource and minimise the financial impact on businesses where UwFS's are generated. The option of retaining the original predetermined attendance will be available to the responsible person on the understanding that cost recovery will be applied to each appliances mobilised.

5.0 Recording of UwFS

- 5.1 All UwFS's are monitored by Fire Support Services, the details are entered onto the Community Risk Fire Management Information System (CFRMIS).
- 5.2 CFRMIS will automatically inform Fire Control and Fire Safety on the trigger point of a third UwFS in a twelve month rolling period. This will allow for the predetermined attendance (PDA) to be reduced to one appliance and create a job for the Fire Safety Officer to contact the premises responsible person to establish any underlying causes for the UwFS's.
- 5.3 The PDA will be restored to previous levels as soon as the trigger point of three actuations in twelve months no longer applies.
- 5.4 NFRS will:
- advise the responsible person that they have generated three UwFS's in the previous twelve months and that subsequent UwFS's will instigate the cost recovery process.
 - educate and inform the responsible person in ways of reducing false alarms/UwFS.
 - inspect the fire risk assessment/emergency plan.
 - consider the use of regulatory powers.
- 5.5 If action has been instigated under regulatory powers to address a misinstallation of an automatic alarm system, the cost recovery procedure will not be applied during the period agreed to address the identified issue. If a further UwFS is received after the agreed period to carry out actions has expired then this will be subject to cost recovery.
- 5.6 On the fourth UwFS CFRMIS will generate an email to the Group Manager of Fire Safety where following confirmation of the cause of actuation an invoice will be raised.

6.0 Audit, Monitoring & Quality Assurance

- 6.1 The Fire Safety Department will perform an internal organisational audit of this policy and related procedures/guidance every three years or if a change in circumstances occurs.
- 6.2 Any recommendations resulting from policy audits will be incorporated into the existing policy and related procedures/guidance.

7.0 FURTHER READING

- CFOA Policy: Model Agreement between Fire and Rescue Authorities on Unwanted Fire Signals and Users of Remotely Monitored Fire Alarm Systems.
- CFOA Codes of Practice: Best Practice for Summoning a Fire Response via Fire Alarm Receiving Organisations.

- CFOA Protocol for the Reduction of False Alarms and Unwanted Fire Signals.
- Fire Safety Procedure Notes FS/PR/002, FS/PR/005.
- Northumberland County Council Fire and Rescue Plan 2014 – 2017.
- Regulatory reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- Localism Act 2011.

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