

NORTHUMBERLAND FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT



INDEMNITY

This document has been produced as a tool to assist you in completing a fire risk assessment of your premises. It is used entirely at your own risk to identify what you consider are your significant findings, and also whether you consider the information therein to be suitable and sufficient. It is in no way exhaustive, and Northumberland Fire & Rescue Service accepts no liability for any circumstances which may arise as a result of using this tool.

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Introduction

Good management of fire safety is essential to ensure that fires are unlikely to occur; that if they do occur they are likely to be controlled or contained quickly, effectively and safely; or that, if a fire does occur and grow, everyone in your premises is able to escape to a place of total safety easily and quickly.

The risk assessment that you must carry out will help you ensure that your fire safety procedures, fire prevention measures, and fire precautions (plans, systems and equipment) are all in place and working properly, and the risk assessment should identify any issues that need attention.

A further consequence of the new regulations is the abolishment of fire certificates. If you previously had a fire certificate for your premises this will no longer be valid.

In these Guidance Notes we aim to assist you through the process of conducting a fire risk assessment. It is not possible to provide guidance for every set of circumstances that exist in all premises, but we have tried to cover most issues that are likely to arise. If you find you have circumstances that are not covered by this guidance or you have any other problems when conducting your risk assessment, you may have to consult a competent person for advice and assistance.

The Purpose of the Risk Assessment

A fire risk assessment is an organised and methodical look at your premises, the activities carried on there, and the likelihood that a fire could start and cause harm to those in and around the premises. The aims of the risk assessment are:-

- To identify the fire hazards
- To reduce the risk of those hazards causing harm to as low as is reasonably practicable
- To decide what physical fire precautions and management arrangements are necessary to ensure the safety of people in your branch if a fire does start.

The risk assessment will help you ensure that your fire safety precautions and procedures are all in place and working properly. It will also enable you to identify any improvements that are necessary.

The Steps Involved in Conducting a Fire Risk Assessment

Your approach to conducting the assessment should be organised and methodical. There are several steps involved in conducting the assessment and we have provided guidance in this document to help you at every stage of the process. The steps involved are:

- Step 1 Identify and List the Fire Hazards
- Step 2 Identify the Different Groups of People who are at Risk
- Step 3 Identify and List the Fire Risk Control Measures in Place
- Step 4 List the Required Corrective Actions

Guidance Notes

Step 1 - Identifying and Listing the Fire Hazards

Before we can assess the risk, we must first identify the ways in which a fire could start. All fires require three elements to be sustained. These are:

1. Heat to provide the source of ignition
2. Fuel to burn
3. Oxygen to feed the fire

Since oxygen is always present, we need to focus on identifying sources of ignition and fuel. Some examples of each that you might find in your premises are shown in the table below:

| Source of Ignition | Sources of Fuel |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Smoking Materials● Microwave Oven● Toaster● Iron● Gas Boilers● Wall Heaters● Lighting units | <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Garments● Stationery● Towels● Packaging● Display Items● Food Items |

Having identified both the ignition and fuel sources, you should then consider what circumstances could lead to a fire starting. For example an electrical item overheating, or combustible materials being left too close to a heater.

For each set of circumstances identified you should also consider the control measures that you already have in place to prevent a fire from starting. For example instructing staff to unplug electrical items when they are not in use, or ensuring that combustibles are stored well away from any heat sources.

Step 2 - Identify the Different Groups of People who are at Risk

The risk assessment must take into account all the different groups of people who might be present in the premises, and will therefore be at risk. You should list each group on the risk assessment form and consider if any of them have special requirements which you will need to address. For example do you have any very young members of staff who would need additional supervision or are there areas of your premises where a disabled person would find it difficult to evacuate in an emergency?

Step 3 - Identify and List the Fire Risk Control Measures in Place

In this section of the assessment we have included a checklist to help you decide if these minimum standards are met in your premises. To help you complete the checklist we have provided some brief guidance on each of the issues below. If you are not sure about something you should note it on the fire risk assessment and ask for further advice.

Management Responsibility

All employers are required to appoint a “Responsible Person” to conduct the risk assessment, and to ensure that the requirements identified as necessary are implemented and maintained. The owner/manager should normally be identified as the Responsible Person.

Multiple Occupancy Buildings

If your premises is part of a multiple occupancy building, there are additional responsibilities to co-operate with the main occupier to ensure that the required standards of fire safety are maintained. By asking to see the main occupier’s fire risk assessment you can check to see if the fire precautions in your premises meet the requirements that they have specified.

Fire Detection & Alarms

All premises should have a means of raising the alarm in the event of a fire. There are a number of ways of meeting this requirement. In new or recently refurbished premises it is likely that a fire detection and alarm system will have been installed. However in older premises this may not be the case.

If your premises already has a fire alarm system installed you will need to consider the following questions:

- Is the system effective? i.e. will it give sufficient warning to enable the premises to be evacuated safely?
- If there are no smoke detectors, are they necessary? Smoke detectors may be of benefit if there are parts of the premises that are not occupied for long periods where a large fire could develop without being seen.

- If there are manual call points (break glass units) are they located correctly?
They should be located at the exits so that they can be operated as people are leaving the building.

If your premises does not have a fire alarm system installed you should consider how you would raise the alarm if a fire were to occur. You will need to decide which is the most suitable method for doing this in your premises. Some examples that you might consider are:-

- Installation of an electronic alarm system may be necessary in larger premises
- In very small premises simply using word of mouth may be considered suitable. However this would not be acceptable if the premises has more than one floor, or if there are more than two rooms in the premises.
- In some small sized premises it may be acceptable to use a hand bell or klaxon to raise the alarm. If this option is selected the bell/klaxon should be located in a fixed position and all staff should know how to operate it.

All fire alarm systems should be tested and maintained regularly. A record of all tests and maintenance should be maintained in the fire alarm log book.

Means of Escape

It is important that people can escape quickly and safely from the premises in the event of a fire. It is therefore necessary to ensure that adequate means of escape are provided and maintained.

You will need to consider if your means of escape are:-

- Suitable
- Capable of being easily and safely used immediately
- Adequate for the number of people likely to use them
- Free from obstructions and slip/trip hazards
- Clearly signed

Emergency lighting may be provided to illuminate the means of escape in the event of a power failure. The need for emergency lighting will depend on the size of your premises. In many new or recently refurbished premises emergency lighting will have already been installed, in which case no further action other than ensuring that it is tested and maintained will be required.

If your premises does not have emergency lighting you should consider if it is necessary. Some of the issues you will need to take into account are:-

- Are the premises occupied during the hours of darkness?

- Are there other sources of lighting (e.g. external street lighting) that adequately illuminate the escape route
-

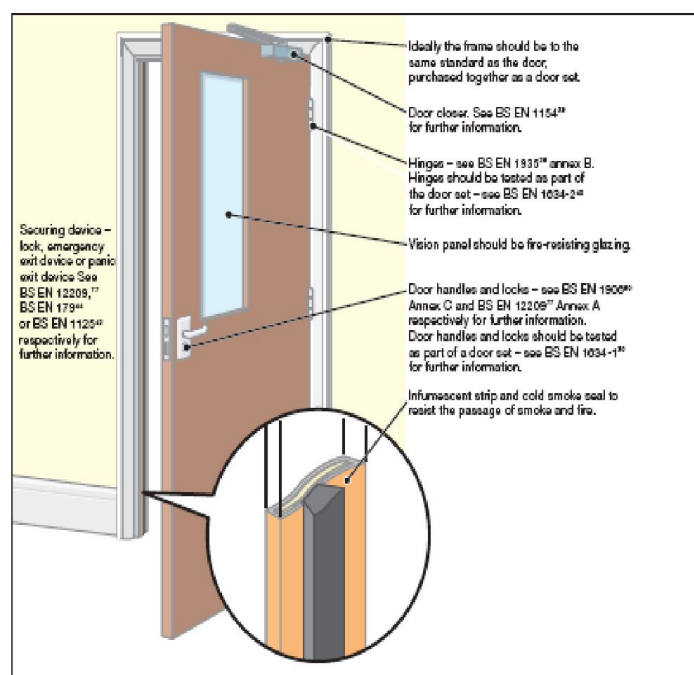
In some small premises it may be acceptable to have a torch available for use in an emergency. The torch should not however be used for other purposes and the batteries should be checked regularly

Fire doors play an important role in protecting the means of escape during a fire by stopping the spread of heat and smoke. Fire resisting doors should be provided where there is a requirement for a structure to be fire resisting – for example on escape stairs and lift lobbies. Because of the building regulations it is likely that you will have some fire doors in your premises. It is important that you recognise these doors and ensure that they are maintained in good condition and critically, NEVER wedged open.

All fire doors should be close fitting in the frame, and have a self closing device. If there is a glass panel, it should also be fire resisting. Some fire doors may also have a smoke seal to give extra protection against the spread of smoke.

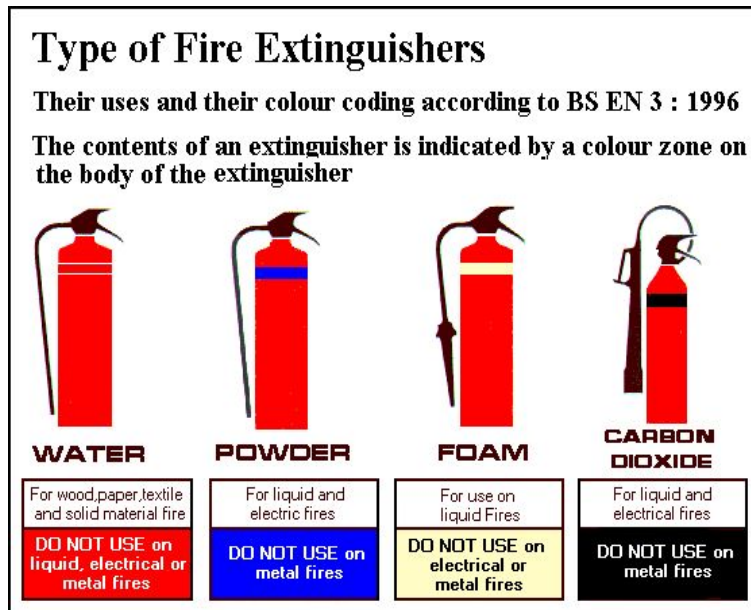
If you think that your premises needs extra fire doors please ask for specialist advice.

The diagram below shows some of the main properties of a fire door



Means for Fighting Fire

As part of your risk assessment you will need to decide if appropriate fire extinguishers have been provided and maintained. Different types of fire extinguishers are suitable for different kinds of fire. The table below shows the different types of extinguishers and the fires that they can be used on:-



Use this table and the questions in the checklist to determine if you have the right numbers and types of fire extinguishers in your branch.

Procedures & Training

It is essential that everybody knows what to do in the event of a fire in your premises. You should therefore have clearly documented procedures and ensure that your staff receive regular training.

All premises should have a fire evacuation procedure that takes into account any vulnerable groups who may need assistance in an emergency. The procedure should also allocate responsibility for calling the fire brigade.

All staff should receive regular instruction in the action to be taken in an emergency. This should begin on their first day of employment, and refresher training should be carried out at suitable intervals.

Once you have completed this risk assessment and identified the necessary fire precautions you should also make sure that all your staff are familiar with the requirements.

Step 4 - List the Required Corrective Actions

At each stage of the risk assessment it is possible that you will have identified some corrective actions that are necessary to ensure that a satisfactory standard of fire precautions are met. The final step in completing the risk assessment is to list these corrective actions on the front page of the form.

You should ensure that these corrective actions are implemented as soon as practicable.

Fire Risk Assessment Form

[illegible]

Step 1. Identify And List The Fire Hazards In Your Premises

A source of **ignition** is something that could set fire to combustible material. It will usually be a source of heat such as a flame, a hot surface, or an electrical source. A source of **fuel** can be anything that will burn such as cardboard, paper, or clothing. Once you have identified the fire hazards in your premises, you should list the circumstances that could lead to a fire starting and the necessary corrective actions to prevent this happening. Use the table below to record your findings.

| Sources of Ignition | Sources of Fuel | Circumstances that could lead to a fire starting | Control Measures |
|---------------------|-----------------|--|------------------|
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Step 2. Identify The Different Groups Of People Who Are At Risk

Identify all the persons (e.g. staff, work experience, customers, contractors and visitors) who might be present at your premises, and consider if any of them will require special assistance or training in the event of a fire or other emergency. Ensure the special requirements identified as necessary are included in the Branch emergency plans





| Persons at Risk | Special Requirements |
|-----------------|----------------------|
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Step 3. Identify And List The Fire Risk Control Measures in Place

Fire risk control measures are the arrangements that we put into place to reduce the risk of a fire occurring and to deal with them if they do happen. Various different kinds of control measures are required, and these are listed in the following sections. Complete the checklist and in each case where the answer is “no” state what **corrective action** is required. (On completion of assessment transfer all corrective actions to the front page)

| Part One - Management Responsibility | Yes | No | Required Corrective Action |
|--|-----|----|----------------------------|
| Has a Responsible Person been appointed to ensure that the findings of this risk assessment are implemented and maintained? If yes give the name of the responsible person below: | | | |
| Is the premises part of a multi-occupancy premise? If yes – ask to see the main occupiers risk assessment and fire certificate. | | | |
| Section Two – Fire Detection and Alarm | Yes | No | Required Corrective Action |
| Is there a suitable fire detection and alarm system? Does the alarm system have fault monitoring and a battery back up in case of power failure? | | | |
| Are there means for raising the alarm manually? | | | |
| Is the alarm system audible in <u>all parts</u> of the premises? | | | |
| Are the detection and alarm systems maintained and tested? | | | |

| Section Three – Means of Escape | Yes | No | Required Corrective Action |
|---------------------------------|-----|----|----------------------------|
|---------------------------------|-----|----|----------------------------|

| | | | | |
|--|---|------------|-----------|-----------------------------------|
| Are there any parts of the premises that are served only by a single means of escape? | | | | |
| If yes to the above – consult Appendix A | | | | |
| If more than one means of escape are provided – consult Appendix A. | | | | |
| Are all internal fire doors marked – “Fire Door – Keep Shut?” |  | | | |
| Are corridors, steps and stairs forming part of the means of escape in good condition and free from obstruction? | | | | |
| Is emergency lighting provided/necessary? If provided is it tested and maintained? | | | | |
| Are there any inner rooms or “dead end” corridors? If so are additional fire precautions necessary? | | | | |
| Are all means of escape clearly marked with fire exit signs? Text only signs are not acceptable – all signs must include a pictogram like the one shown |  | | | |
| Means For Fighting Fire | | Yes | No | Required Corrective Action |
| Are appropriate numbers and types of fire extinguishers provided? Fire extinguishers should be located adjacent to each fire exit, and near to special risks such as electrical switchgear. The location and type of each extinguisher should be listed separately. | | | | |
| Are extinguishers located correctly – can users access them without exposing themselves to risk? | | | | |
| Is the location of fire fighting equipment clearly marked by signage? Text only signs are not acceptable – all signs must include a pictogram like the one shown. |  | | | |
| Are fire extinguishers regularly checked and maintained? The date of the last maintenance inspection (which should be less than 12 months ago) must be clearly visible on the service label. | | | | |
| Is there a suitable fire evacuation procedure and are fire action notices clearly displayed in a prominent position? |  | | | |

| Procedures and Training | Yes | No | Required Corrective Action |
|--|-----|----|----------------------------|
| Are special arrangements of vulnerable groups e.g. elderly, young, and the disabled, included in the procedure? | | | |
| Does the plan designate responsibility for calling the emergency services? | | | |
| Is there a suitable means of calling the emergency services? The full address of the Branch should be displayed adjacent to the telephone. | | | |
| What arrangements are in place for calling the fire brigade if the branch telephone is not working (e.g. in the event of a power cut) | | | |
| Are fire drills held (maximum 12 monthly intervals)? | | | |
| Does induction training for new employees cover fire evacuation procedures? | | | |
| Is there a suitable number of staff trained in the use of extinguishers? | | | |
| Is a notice showing the different fire extinguisher colour codes clearly displayed?  | | | |
| Are suitable arrangements in place to ensure that all staff are aware of the requirements of this risk assessment | | | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|--|
| Premises Name: Golden Lion | | Address: 66 Front Street Ashington Northumberland | |
| Owner/Manager: John Smith | | Telephone Number: 01670 123456 | Premises Description Number Of Floors: 2 General Construction: (e.g. Brick with tile roof) Steel frame, brick walls, tile roof. |
| Date: August 31 st 2006 | Review Date: August 31 2007 | | |
| Required Corrective Actions (to be completed when the risk assessment has been finished) | | Target Date | Completed |
| Post notice detailing safety rules for use of toaster – i.e. do not leave unattended | | | |
| Post notice detailing safety rules for use of microwave – i.e. do not leave unattended, always follow instructions on food packaging etc | | | |
| Notice board above heater in main office – all staff to be briefed to check for loose papers etc that might fall on to the heater. | | | |
| Upgrade fire alarm system to include fault monitoring and battery back up | | | |
| 1 x tube in stock room too long and close to top shelf of rack. Shorter tube to be fitted. | | | |
| Staff to be aware of customers with disabilities (e.g. wheelchair users, hearing and visual impairments) and assist if necessary during an evacuation | | | |

| Required Corrective Actions (to be completed when the risk assessment has been finished) | Target Date | Completed |
|--|--------------------|------------------|
| All contractors to be briefed of emergency procedures when signing in | | |
| All visitors to be briefed of emergency procedures when signing in | | |
| Alarm to be tested weekly from a different call point on a rotational basis – a record to be maintained in the log book | | |
| Audibility checks to be included in weekly tests of alarm system | | |
| Visiting service engineers to complete the log book on completion of each service visit | | |
| Emergency lighting is provided but there is no evidence of testing and maintenance – arrangements to be confirmed and a record maintained | | |
| A member of staff to be designated as responsible for calling the emergency services | | |
| The branch address to be displayed clearly next to the telephone | | |
| Fire evacuation drills are required at maximum intervals of six months | | |
| Staff to be briefed not to attempt to fight fires if they have not been trained to do so | | |
| Branch Manager to brief staff of the requirements of the risk assessment | | |



Step 1. Identify And List The Fire Hazards In Your Premises



A source of **ignition** is something that could set fire to combustible material. It will usually be a source of heat such as materials. A source of **fuel** can be anything that will burn such as cardboard, paper, or clothing. Once you have identified circumstances that could lead to a fire starting and the necessary corrective actions to prevent this happening. Use form


| Sources of Ignition | Sources of Fuel | Circumstances that could lead to a fire starting | Control Measures i |
|----------------------|---|--|--|
| Electrical Equipment | Garments Towels Stationery Packaging | Overheating of electrical items igniting combustible material Malfunction of electrical items | Portable appliance testing Visual inspections electrical items |
| Toaster | Food Items | Overheating | Thermostat fitted Portable appliance testing Visual inspections electrical items |
| Microwave Oven | Food Items | Overheating | Portable appliance testing Visual inspections electrical items |

| Sources of Ignition | Sources of Fuel | Circumstances that could lead to a fire starting | Control Measures i |
|---------------------|---|--|---|
| Wall Heaters | Garments Towels Stationery Packaging | Heaters too close to combustible items Heaters being used for drying wet clothes etc Malfunction | Visual inspection Staff briefed to no heaters and to ens separation of combustible items |
| Smoking Materials | Garments Towels Stationery Packaging Leaves Litter | Poor housekeeping in smoking area – i.e. litter or leaf debris allowed to build up. No disposal facilities for smoking materials | Designated place provided for smok |
| Lighting | Garments Packaging | Combustible items stored too close to fluorescent tubes Fluorescent tubes becoming damaged and hot glass falling onto combustible items | N/A |

| | | | |
|--|------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| Step 2. Identify The Different Groups Of People Who Are At Risk Identify all the persons (e.g. staff, work experience, customers, contractors and visitors) who might be present at your premises, and consider if any of them will require special assistance or training in the event of a fire or other emergency. Ensure the special requirements identified as necessary are included in the Branch emergency plans | | | |
| Persons at Risk | | Special Requirements | |
| Staff | | N/A | |
| Young members of staff | | Supervision | |
| Customers | | N/A | |
| Disabled Persons (all retail facilities are located on ground floor) | | Staff to be aware of customers with disabilities (e.g. wheelchair users, hearing and visual impairments) and assist if necessary during an evacuation | |
| Contractors (may be unsupervised) | | All contractors to be briefed of emergency procedures when signing in | |
| Visitors | | All visitors to be briefed of emergency procedures when signing in | |
| Step 3. Identify And List The Fire Risk Control Measures in Place Fire risk control measures are the arrangements that we put into place to reduce the risk of a fire occurring and to deal with them if they do happen. Various different kinds of control measures are required, and these are listed in the following sections. Complete the checklist and in each case state what corrective action is required. (On completion of assessment transfer all corrective actions to the front page) | | | |
| Part One - Management Responsibility | Yes | No | Notes & Corrective Actions |
| Has a Responsible Person been appointed to ensure that the findings of this risk assessment are implemented and maintained? If yes give the name of the responsible person below:- J Smith | ✓ | | N/A |
| Is the Branch part of a multi-occupancy premise? If yes – ask to see the main occupiers risk assessment and fire certificate. | | ✓ | N/A |

| Section Two – Fire Detection and Alarm | | Yes | No | Notes & Corrective Actions |
|--|---|-----|----|--|
| Is there a suitable fire detection and alarm system? | | ✓ | | No fire detection – manual call points only. For a premises of this size this is considered to be satisfactory |
| Does the alarm system have fault monitoring and a battery back up in case of power failure? | | | ✓ | Upgrade fire alarm system to include fault monitoring and battery back up. |
| Are there means for raising the alarm manually? | | ✓ | | N/A |
| Is the alarm system audible in <u>all parts</u> of the premises? | | ✓ | | Bells located in every part of the premises |
| Are the detection and alarm systems maintained and tested? | | | ✓ | Alarm to be tested weekly from a different call point on a rotational basis – a record to be maintained in the log book Audibility checks to be included in weekly tests of alarm system Visiting service engineers to complete the log book on completion of each service visit |
| Section Three – Means of Escape | | Yes | No | Notes & Corrective Actions |
| Are there any parts of the premises that are served only by a single means of escape? | | | ✓ | N/A |
| If yes to the above consult appendix A. | | | | N/A |
| If more than one means of escape are provided consult appendix A | | | ✓ | N/A |
| Are all internal fire doors marked – “Fire Door – Keep Shut?” |  | ✓ | | N/A |
| Are corridors, steps and stairs forming part of the means of escape in good condition and free from obstruction? Note: Corridors should be a minimum of 750mm wide. Stairs should be a minimum of 1050mm wide | | | ✓ | The external corridor was partially obstructed by a plastic bag used to collect mail for the upstairs flats. This should be removed – Landlord to be contacted |
| Is emergency lighting provided/necessary? If provided is it tested and maintained? | | | ✓ | Emergency lighting is provided but there is no evidence of testing and maintenance – arrangements to be confirmed and a record maintained |
| Are there any inner rooms or “dead end” corridors? If so are additional fire precautions necessary? | | | ✓ | N/A |
| Are all means of escape clearly marked with fire exit signs? Text only signs are not acceptable – all signs must include a pictogram like the one shown |  | ✓ | | N/A |
| Means for Fighting Fire | | Yes | No | Notes & Corrective Actions |
| Are appropriate numbers and types of fire extinguishers provided? | | ✓ | | N/A |

| | | | | |
|---|--|------------|-----------|---|
| Fire extinguishers should be located adjacent to each fire exit, and near to special risks such as electrical switchgear. The location and type of each extinguisher should be listed separately. | | | | |
| Are extinguishers located correctly – can users access them without exposing themselves to risk? | | ✓ | | N/A |
| Is the location of fire fighting equipment clearly marked by signage? Text only signs are not acceptable – all signs must include a pictogram like the one shown. |  | ✓ | | N/A |
| Are fire extinguishers regularly checked and maintained? The date of the last maintenance inspection (which should be less than 12 months ago) must be clearly visible on the service label. | | ✓ | | Maintenance contract in place with A1 Fire. Last inspected in Aug 2006. This contract must be maintained. |
| Procedures and Training | | Yes | No | Notes & Corrective Actions |
| Is there a suitable fire evacuation procedure and are fire action notices clearly displayed in a prominent position? |  | ✓ | | N/A |
| Are special arrangements of vulnerable groups e.g. elderly, young, and the disabled, included in the procedure? | | | ✓ | Staff to be briefed on the need to be aware of customers who may need assistance |
| Does the plan designate responsibility for calling the emergency services? | | | ✓ | A member of staff to be designated as responsible for calling the emergency services |
| Is there a suitable means of calling the emergency services? The full address of the Branch should be displayed adjacent to the telephone. | | | ✓ | The branch address to be displayed clearly next to the telephone |
| What arrangements are in place for calling the fire brigade if the branch telephone is not working (e.g. in the event of a power cut) | | | ✓ | The location of the next nearest available telephone to be displayed near the cash desk |
| Are fire drills held (maximum 6 monthly intervals)? | | | ✓ | Fire evacuation drills are required at maximum intervals of six months |
| Does induction training for new employees cover fire evacuation procedures? | | ✓ | | N/A |
| Procedures and Training | | Yes | No | Notes & Corrective Actions |
| Is there a suitable number of staff trained in the use of extinguishers? | | | ✓ | Staff to be briefed not to attempt to fight fires if they have not been trained to do so |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Is a notice showing the different fire extinguisher colour codes clearly displayed? |  | ✓ | | N/A |
| Are suitable arrangements in place to ensure that all staff are aware of the requirements of this risk assessment | | | ✓ | Branch Manager to brief staff of the requirements of the risk assessment |

Appendix A

| Type Of Premises | Maximum Travel Distance | |
|--|---|---|
| | Single Escape | More Than One Escape |
| Sleeping Accommodation (Hotels etc.) | 18m (max 9 in a bedroom) | 35m (max 18 in a bedroom) |
| Small and Medium Places of Assembly (public house etc. less than 300 persons) | 32m | 45m |
| Theatres and Cinemas | 15m with seats in rows 18m other areas | 32m with seats in rows 45m other areas |
| Offices and Shops | 18m | 45m |
| Residential Care | 9m | 18m |
| Large Places of Assembly (more than 300 persons) | 15m with seats in rows 18m other areas | 32m with seats in rows 45m other areas |
| Factories and Warehouses | 25m | 45m |
| Transport Premises and Facilities | 15m with seats in rows 18m other areas | 32m with seats in rows 45m other areas |
| Schools | | |
| Area of Special Fire Hazard | 9m | 18m |
| Seated Rows | 15m | 32m |
| Areas not listed above | 18m | 45m |
| Ground Storey of Small Premises With Single Exit | 27m | N/A |