BS 9997:2019

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Fire risk management systems — Requirements with guidance for use

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Contents

Summary of pages
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Foreword

Publishing information

This British Standard is published by BSI Standards Limited, under licence from The British Standards Institution, and came into effect on 31 August 2019. It was prepared by Technical Committee FSH/14, *Fire precautions in buildings*. A list of organizations represented on this committee can be obtained on request to its secretary.

Supersession

This British Standard supersedes PAS 7:2013, which is withdrawn.

Relationship with other publications

This British Standard has been prepared in line with ISO/IEC Directives Part 1:2016 – Consolidated ISO Supplement, Annex SL.

Information about this document

This British Standard enables an organization to use the process approach, coupled with the "plan, do, check, act" (PDCA) cycle and risk-based thinking, to align or integrate its fire risk management system with the requirements of other management system standards.

It is not the intent of this standard to prescribe how to meet its requirements, but to give the framework for an organization to do so itself in a manner that is appropriate to its needs and the needs of interested parties. These needs are shaped by legal, regulatory, organizational and industry requirements, the products and services provided, the processes employed, the size and structure of the organization, and the requirements of interested parties.

The implementation of multiple system standards and any associated conformity assessment in an integrated way can result in a more holistic approach to managing business risks, reducing duplication and bureaucracy, avoiding conflict between systems, and ensuring more effective and efficient audits both internally and externally. Attention is drawn to PAS 99, which is a Publicly Available Specification for integrating common management systems.

BS 9997 presents a strategic approach to fire risk management at organization level, and forms part of the BS 999X series. Particular attention is drawn to BS 9999:2017, Section **4**, which provides guidance for those designing fire risk management into buildings. BS 9999:2017, Section **9** provides further guidance on managing occupied buildings, which might prove useful to those implementing fire risk management systems in accordance with BS 9997.

Publication HTM 05-01 [1] sets out the Department of Health's policy on fire safety in the NHS in England. It includes guidance on management arrangements for fire safety in healthcare premises.

Certification. Users of this British Standard are advised to consider the desirability of third-party certification of conformity with this British Standard. Appropriate conformity attestation arrangements are described in BS EN ISO/IEC 17021-1. Users seeking assistance in identifying appropriate certification bodies or schemes may ask BSI to forward their enquiries to the relevant trade association.

Primary Authority Scheme. The Primary Authority Scheme came into effect on 1 October 2008 (with the Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions Act 2008 (RESA) [2]) and makes provision for more consistent and coordinated regulatory enforcement. Partnerships formed under Primary Authority apply to a wide range of regulatory services as well as to the regulation of fire safety. The Primary Authority Scheme is a statutory scheme that supports better local regulation and enables businesses

to form a statutory partnership with a single regulatory authority. A register is maintained of businesses and Fire and Rescue Authorities that are in partnership under the Primary Authority Scheme. Organizations that wish to enter into a Primary Authority Scheme are advised to consider the desirability of formalizing their fire risk management systems in accordance with BS 9997.

This publication can be withdrawn, revised, partially superseded or superseded. Information regarding the status of this publication can be found in the Standards Catalogue on the BSI website at bsigroup.com/standards, or by contacting the Customer Services team.

Where websites and webpages have been cited, they are provided for ease of reference and are correct at the time of publication. The location of a webpage or website, or its contents, cannot be guaranteed.

Presentational conventions

The provisions of this standard are presented in roman (i.e. upright) type. Its requirements are expressed in sentences in which the principal auxiliary verb is "shall".

Commentary, explanation and general informative material is presented in smaller italic type, and does not constitute a normative element.

Where words have alternative spellings, the preferred spelling of the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary is used (e.g. "organization" rather than "organisation").

Contractual and legal considerations

This publication does not purport to include all the necessary provisions of a contract. Users are responsible for its correct application.

Compliance with a British Standard cannot confer immunity from legal obligations.

Particular attention is drawn to the following legislation:

- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 [3];
- Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 [4];
- Fire Safety (Scotland) Regulations 2006 [5];
- Fire and Rescue Services (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 [6];
- Fire Safety Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010 [7].

0 Introduction

0.1 General

Current fire safety legislation and guidance is based on risk and focuses on individual premises and facilities. It is less specific about managing risk from fire at an organizational level. In many cases, the person(s) with duties under legislation might be part of a larger organization with multiple sites and facilities with common working practices and procedures. This can present challenges with regard to translating fire policy into effective strategies throughout the organization, where fire safety is unlikely to be the key driver.

Although fire safety legislation provides a legal instrument to prosecute if it is perceived that inadequate fire safety management in an organization has resulted in an offence under relevant legislation, there is no definitive guidance that dictates minimum standards, functions and accessibility of fire safety management information across a corporate entity or multiple site organization.

BS 9997 specifies requirements for an organizational fire risk management (FRM) system. The system can be applied in organizations that operate on multiple sites, separate management divisions within an organization, or individual premises within a single entity.

A documented FRM system provides a means of demonstrating that fire policy is translated into action to ensure that the fire risk to people and the organization is reduced as far as reasonably practicable while providing an increased level of assurance that legislative requirements have been met. The extent of the management system needs to be proportionate to the level of risk arising from the organization's activities and subsequent level of assurance sought.

NOTE An organization's risk tolerance (i.e. its readiness to bear risk, after risk treatment, in order to achieve its objectives) can be limited by legal or regulatory requirements.

Documentation of the FRM system and its processes can provide an auditable trail that demonstrates an organization's commitment to fire risk management.

0.2 Operational implications arising from building design

Legislation and most nationally accepted codes and standards offer minimum requirements that are "life safety" focused, and the property and construction sector has become accustomed to this level of protection. However, many organizations view their premises as assets and have well-defined property protection, mission continuity or environmental, economic and social sustainability objectives.

Fire safety management is a key aspect in controlling the risk to people, property and the environment from the destructive effects of fire in all buildings and needs to be taken into account at the design stage when developing the fire strategy.

There is an increased emphasis on fire safety management due to the proliferation of fire-engineered buildings. Such buildings might involve additional management considerations. For example, an enhanced fire safety management system, above and beyond the legal minimum compliance level, can be specified, and considered by approving authorities as a key component of the overall fire strategy. In addition, an enhanced level of management can ensure that robust procedures are put in place to support a specific fire-engineered solution, for example, an assumption that the fire load within the building will not exceed a prescribed limit.

The concept of enhanced management systems, audit and certification is not new. PD 7974-6 recommends that its highest management system level be subject to third-party certification.

Similarly, BS 9999:2017 refers to the need for fire safety management throughout the life of a building. There are two management system levels. Level 1 demonstrates best practice in which the organization's management system is determined to meet a management system standard such as PAS 7, now BS 9997. Level 2 demonstrates good practice with a basic level of management that satisfies the minimum requirements of legislation. This represents the default standard to be taken into account when designing a building.

0.3 Embedding fire safety throughout the construction process

In the early hours of 14 June 2017, a fire spread through Grenfell Tower in London. Seventy-two people died, many homes were destroyed and countless lives have been affected. Following this tragedy, a national programme of extensive testing of the cladding on other high-rise buildings revealed widespread use of aluminium composite materials which did not meet the limited combustibility requirements of building regulations guidance, and raised concerns for the safety of others.

Further concerns soon came to light about the adequacy of the structural design of cladding systems when materials fell from a building in Glasgow. A subsequent series of fire and rescue service audits of tower blocks led to the temporary evacuation in London of the Chalcots Estate, Camden, and resulted in the discovery of structural safety issues with four buildings at the Ledbury Estate, Southwark.

The Secretary of State for the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and the Home Secretary conducted an independent review of building regulations and fire safety in 2017, which culminated in a report [8] that was presented to Parliament in May 2018. A conclusion of this review was that principal designers and principal contractors have a critical role in embedding fire safety throughout the construction process. They assume primary ownership throughout the construction phase, and especially at handover to the occupation and maintenance phase.

The adoption of BS 9997 is expected to improve accountability and help create an audit trail, ensuring that the management of all stages of design and construction can be tracked through robust change control processes. A formalized FRM system can define, document, implement and maintain procedures to ensure that an adequate level of fire safety information is developed and retained from land acquisition through to handover and occupation, so that every development provides an enhanced level of assurance to occupiers and other interested parties. This approach leads to a clear, traceable pathway of information throughout the design and construction process.

0.4 Fire risk management in the built environment

Once a building has been constructed, the completion of a fire risk assessment is a legislative requirement, but this is only the start of satisfying these requirements. It is also a legislative requirement that the findings of the fire risk assessment are acted upon and that the significant findings of the assessment (and the assessment itself) are kept up to date. For example, a fire risk assessor could highlight a number of critical failings in a building but, unless the management have the resource, motivation and method to correct these, the assessment has no effect on the improvement of fire safety.

Since the introduction of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 [3] and equivalent legislation in Scotland ([4], [5]) and Northern Ireland ([6], [7]), fire and rescue service enforcement activity has progressively increased with a wide range of prosecutions across a wide range of occupancies and building types. A common factor in many prosecutions is the lack of fire safety management with regard to specific buildings that, in a number of cases, can be seen as organizational failures. The report of the fatal accident inquiry into the Rosepark care home fire [9], which resulted in the deaths of 14 residents in 2004, concluded:

"The deficiencies in the management of fire safety at Rosepark contributed to the deaths in that a number of key circumstances would have been quite different if there had been an adequate system of fire safety management".

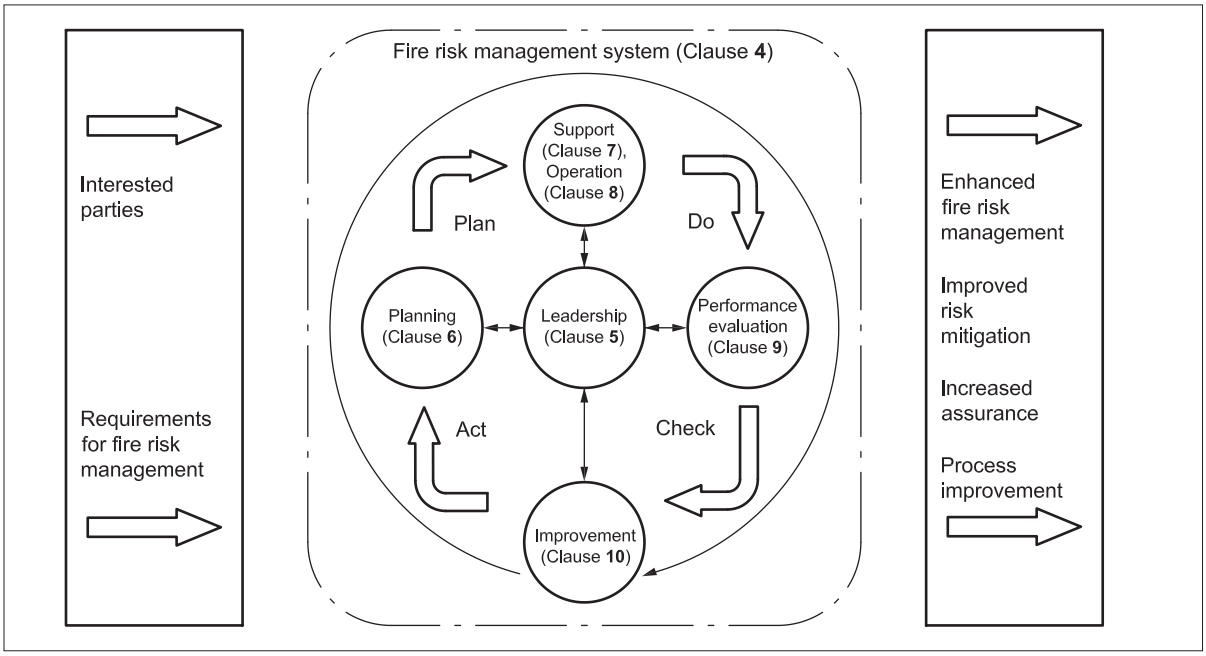
This is consistent with findings of multiple fatality fire inquiries. It can be a symptom of a failure of an inconsistent or haphazard FRM system.

0.5 The "plan, do, check, act" model

BS 9997 applies the "plan, do, check, act" (PDCA) model to implementing, maintaining and improving an FRM system. The basis of the approach is shown in Figure 1, which sets out the requirements of the FRM system in the context of the PDCA model, and is also briefly described as follows:

- **plan**: establish the objectives and processes necessary to deliver results in accordance with the organization's fire policy;
- **do**: implement the processes;
- **check**: monitor and measure processes against fire policy, strategic objectives, and legal and other requirements, and report the results;
- **act**: take actions to improve fire risk management performance continually.

Figure 1 — *Fire risk management "plan, do, check, act" model*



Application of the PDCA model ensures consistency with other risk management systems, such as those specified in BS EN ISO 22301, BS ISO 45001, BS ISO 31000 and BS EN ISO/IEC 27001.

BS 9997 specifies requirements for integrating fire safety as a management system approach. The level of the FRM system (i.e. the extent of documentation and resources devoted to it) depends on a number of factors, such as the scope of the system, the size of the organization and the nature of its activities, products and services, and organizational culture.

0.6 Claims of conformity

An organization can claim that its FRM system conforms to BS 9997. A claim of conformity can be made on the basis of:

a) a first-party conformity assessment performed by the organization itself (self-assessment);

b) a second-party conformity assessment performed by, for example, a trade association; or

c) a third-party conformity assessment performed by an organization, such as a certification body, that is independent of both the organization responsible for the FRM system and, for example, a trade association.

1 Scope

This British Standard specifies requirements for a fire risk management system (FRM system) that can be applied in:

a) organizations that operate on multiple sites;

b) separate management divisions within an organization; or

c) individual premises within a single organization.

This British Standard can accommodate diverse geographical, cultural and social conditions. It is applicable to any organization, regardless of its type or size, or the products and services it provides.

This British Standard provides a framework for an enhanced management system level (Management System Level 1) as described in BS 9999:2017, to provide a measurable assessment of the factors that can be fed into the risk profile for a specific building to allow design freedoms that might otherwise be unobtainable.

This British Standard is intended to be used by any organization that wishes to:

1) establish a formal FRM system to minimize risks to life, property, business continuity and the environment from the threat of fire which arises as a result of its activities;

2) implement, maintain and continually improve an FRM system; and

3) assure itself of its conformity with its stated fire policy and strategy.

NOTE Guidance on the use of this document is given in Annex A.

2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes provisions of this document[1]. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

BS 9999:2017, *Fire safety in the design, management and use of buildings — Code of practice*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this British Standard, the following terms and definitions apply.

3.1 asset

anything that has value to an organization

NOTE An organization's assets can include processes and brand/reputation.

1 Documents that are referred to solely in an informative manner are listed in the Bibliography.

