



**ASFP**  
ASSOCIATION  
FOR SPECIALIST  
FIRE PROTECTION

# ASFP E-BULLETIN

This news bulletin is brought straight to your desktop by the Association for Specialist Fire Protection (ASFP).

It provides brief, easy to digest information on current 'built in' fire protection advances, developments and issues.

To obtain further information, click the hyperlinks below each story.

[www.asfp.org.uk](http://www.asfp.org.uk)

Issue 12

## GET UP TO SPEED WITH 'BUILT-IN' FIRE PROTECTION

A one-day **ASFP Ireland** workshop seminar, designed specifically to address the key issues faced in the specification, installation, inspection and maintenance of 'built in' fire protection, in accordance with the legislative process, has been planned for the September 22nd in Dublin.

The event, entitled 'Fire Compartmentation - the Who, Why & How of Compliance', will provide guidance and support to individuals needing to understand the importance of fire compartmentation. It is the first of its kind in Ireland and will take place at the Royal Dublin Society, Dublin.

The subject matters will consider the respective roles of government and the fire industry, the role of fire engineering in creating a safe and sustainable future through both conventional and innovative modern methods of construction, fires in buildings of multiple-occupancy and the reality of fire risk over the life of a building.

Other matters to be addressed will include, identifying where legal responsibility rests, the essential need for third-party certification in relation to the Fire Risk Assessor, product manufacture and installation and ASFP Ireland will debut its new 'Passive Fire Protection Fire Risk Assessor Guide'. Both the morning and afternoon sessions will also include workshop debates.

The event will be chaired in the morning by Terence Flanagan TD – Fine Gael and in the afternoon by Brian Robinson – President of the ASFP and former Commissioner of the London Fire Service. Speakers will include David O'Reilly - Chairman ASFP Ireland, Niall Rowan – Technical Officer ASFP, C J Walsh - FireOx International, Eamonn O'Sullivan – HSA, Peter Barker – Chiltern International, Colin Keeley – Warrington Certification, Ian Stewart – BRE Global, Brian O'Connell - O'Connell Mahon Architects and Sir Ken Knight – Chief Advisor to the UK Fire Minister. The single delegate seminar fee, inclusive of lunch, is €145.00.

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## FIRE DAMPER TESTING MADE EASY

Following the recent International Firex in Birmingham, ASFP member, **Belimo Automation UK Ltd**, sponsored the Institution of Fire Engineers (IFE) Annual two day General Meeting and Conference in Cardiff. More than 150 delegates, from around the globe, attended.

The Conference theme - 'Green Engineering Solutions to Preserve the Built Environment', attracted many distinguished speakers and led to lively deliberations during question and answer sessions.

Belimo's exhibit theme - 'The Testing of Fire Dampers (or lack of it)' struck a chord with most delegates, who imparted many stories concerning both a scarcity of maintenance and testing. Debate on the subject was so intense that discussions continued during lunch and refreshment breaks, when delegates had the opportunity to mix and ponder the topic with the exhibitors.

Many appeared to agree that the best approach to ensuring fire dampers are tested in accordance with regulations would be to have them electronically connected to a control system. Although it was accepted that the initial cost of installation would be a major consideration, the life-time cost of testing curtain fire dampers, many of which are often inaccessible, would undoubtedly be far greater.

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## COURT MAKES IMPORTANT CARE HOME FIRE SAFETY RULING

A recent and very important judicial ruling has changed the interpretation of care home fire rules in relation to bedroom fire doors.

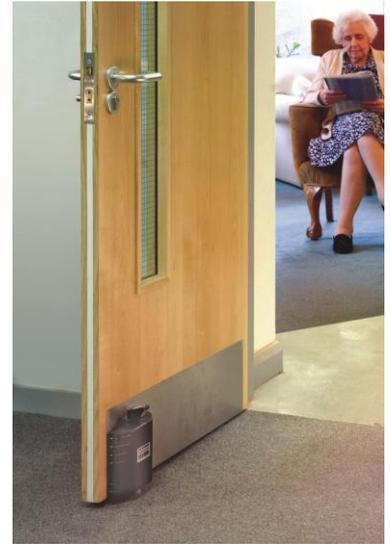
Although this latest determination was with regards to having self closing fire doors, the judge quite rightly ruled that, though the doors should be self closing they are likely to become wedged and, as such, they also require hold open devices. Put simply, this means that if fire doors are to be held open, this has to be done using a hold open device that is linked to the building's fire detection system and will automatically allow the door to close should there be a fire emergency.

Fireco's Commercial Director, Tom Welland, says that it's vital all owners and operators of care homes are aware of this important ruling as it underlines the dangers of wedging open fire doors and, in particular, those of residents' rooms. Quite clearly enforcement officers will take a very dim view of any care home that continues with this dangerous practice. Using staff to ensure doors are closed in an emergency situation is not an action that can be relied upon, so automatic devices must be used.

This ruling follows the recently published fatal accident inquiry report into the fire at Rosepark care home in Uddingston, Lanarkshire. The fire claimed the lives of 14 residents and concluded that 'A competent risk assessor experienced in fire safety, addressing the position at Rosepark, would have recommended the installation of self-closers (swing free, Dorgard or other similar devices) on bedroom doors as a matter of urgency ...'

ASFP member, **Fireco Ltd**, is the official fire safety consultants to the UK's leading care sector associations and manufacturers of a wide range of simple, effective wireless fire safety solutions including Dorgard and Freedor.

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## PRAISE FOR NEW BRE FIRE SAFETY DOCUMENT

In the year ending March 2009, there were approximately 75,000 fires in UK buildings, resulting in some 350 lives lost and about 10,000 non-fatal injuries. In addition, the annual cost in lost property and lost business is several billion pounds, making it vital to keep buildings as fire-safe as possible.

A critical weakness can be the penetration of fire compartment walls and floors by building services such as cables, pipes and ductwork, including dampers. Because ductwork is specifically designed to distribute air around a building, the potential for fire spread via a ductwork system is of particular concern. A fire attacking any such system that is not designed and installed properly has the potential to spread fire, smoke and toxic gases extremely rapidly throughout a building, with major consequences for the structure and consequently, life safety.

*"The latest 'Good Building Guide', published by the BRE (Building Research Establishment) and entitled 'Installing fire-resisting ductwork & dampers' (GBG 81), is therefore very welcome",* comments Bob Chapman of fire-resistant ductwork system manufacturer and ASFP member, **Fire Protection Ltd (FPL)**.

The new publication (available from: [brepres@ihs.com](mailto:brepres@ihs.com) or [www.brebookshop.com](http://www.brebookshop.com)) is designed to illustrate the importance of installing fire-resisting ductwork and dampers correctly, to ensure the safety of building occupants and the protection of the property, in the event of a fire. It also draws focus on the importance of test and assessment data being provided to ensure that systems fully meet the required criteria. The document therefore includes a 'decision tree' that states if test/assessment data is not provided, do not use.

*"This commendable document emphasises important installation factors in the use of these critical building components",* comments FPL's Bob Chapman. *"The correct choice and installation of damper and fire resistant ductwork is vital in protecting and maintaining adequate levels of compartmentation under fire conditions. This is a pre-requisite for controlling internal fire spread, protecting means of escape and affording access protection for Fire Services".*

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## FIRE PERFORMANCE OF LIGHT STEEL-FRAMED BUILDINGS

A new Information Paper (IP 6/11) from ASFP member, **BRE Global Ltd**, discusses the performance in fire of light steel-framed (LSF) buildings constructed from cold-formed steel.

The document highlights areas where designers and manufacturers may need to look beyond a simple reliance on standard fire test data and consider issues of detailing which may be critical to the performance of the building system in a real fire. Sources of design guidance are identified and the literature on LSF structures in fire is summarised.

Large-scale fire tests on LSF structures have raised issues that are not generally addressed in standard fire test and assessment procedures. For example:

- Premature failure of connections in a fire can compromise the performance of the whole system. Connections must have sufficient ductility and strength to accommodate the large deflections associated with light-gauge steel structures in fire.
- Connections must also be able to cope with the tensile forces generated during cooling.
- Melting of thermal insulation may create cavities and voids in the structure that allow fire and smoke to spread.

The Information Paper, by Tom Lennon and Danny Hopkin of the BRE Group and entitled '*Fire performance of light steel-framed buildings*', aims to give designers, insurers and regulators a better understanding of the important issues to be considered when LSF systems are used in the construction of buildings.

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## PROMAT PRODUCTS STAR AT AVIVA STADIUM

The need for reliable fire protection that would provide maximum performance when used in semi-exposed locations led to the selection of products from ASFP member, **Promat UK Ltd**, being used on Dublin's Aviva Stadium project.

Promat PROMATECT®-B reinforced calcium silicate board was used in many partly-exposed areas of the stadium. The lack of inorganic fibres and a water repellent silicone treatment to both faces make this Class 0, fibre-reinforced, medium density calcium silicate fire board ideal for this purpose.

A combination of 9mm thick Promat SUPALUX® and 9mm thick Promat PROMATECT®-HD was also used to create the most suitable fire protection solution for other areas of the stadium, such as semi-exposed wall linings which might be subject to both direct rain and impact damage.

Promat PROMATECT®-HD is a dense compressed building board manufactured from an autoclaved mixture of Portland cement, organic fibres and selected mineral fillers. The resulting board has high dimensional stability and considerable strength.

*"This is a very complex building with lots of semi exposed locations"* says Peter Keenan, Promat Business Manager for Ireland. *"As it was a rebuild project there were also numerous space limitations and so being able to accommodate these by sourcing a variety of different fire protection products from a single specialist manufacturer was a significant advantage."*

The project saw the rebuilding of the famous Lansdowne Road Stadium; one of the oldest international rugby stadiums in the world, to create a modern new facility that can seat an audience of over 50,000 people.

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## UL'S COMBINED FIRE RESISTANCE TESTING SERVICE SAVES TIME AND COSTS

ASFP member, **Underwriters Laboratories (UL)**, state-of-the-art test facilities and combined fire resistance testing facilities, now allows manufacturers to bundle product testing to UL, EN and BS standards, resulting in British Standards 'approvals' and European and UL certification, thus enabling them to obtain speedy global market access, whilst saving costs and time.

UL's unique ability to offer global certification solutions allows global market access for products via a single combined fire resistance test that includes critical requirements of the UL, EN and BS test standards.

The company's expertise in fire door testing includes recognised engineers from UL, EN and BS Standards backgrounds and relevant standards writing committees. UL's experts have created a single, combined test method that caters for all needs to assess compliance with all critical requirements, such as:

- UL Standards - includes specific requirements in UL10C including, for example, the hose stream test.
- EN Standards – includes additional requirements such as unexposed face thermocouple positioning and specific furnace pressure needs.

These can be combined with the needs of the British Standard to provide a single test capable of meeting all the above needs. Subsequent certification procedures provide quality marks to be added to the product/system's proof of compliance.

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## FIRE SAFETY REGISTER SETS NEW LEVELS

An alliance between ASFP member **Exova Warringtonfire** and London Underground Limited (LUL) has resulted in Exova Warringtonfire being authorised to independently propose products on LUL's new online products register as part of its ongoing added value service.

As part of the agreement, Exova Warringtonfire provides initial guidance to its clients on LUL fire safety performance requirements followed by testing and validation of products against the appropriate LUL standard. Exova Warringtonfire is then able to upload the appropriate documentation and propose the product for acceptance on the register. LUL can then choose products from the dedicated online register for specific projects.

Chris Dean, operations manager for Exova Warringtonfire, said *"The creation of this register means a saving in time and resource in procuring products project by project, as they will all be in one place and the selection process should then be much simpler. We believe that the trust afforded to us by LUL in them authorising us to propose products on the online register will provide suppliers with a direct and speedy route to the LUL market."*

The products register will cover all of those materials and products which may be used in a London Underground train, station or platform. These categories include everything from train seats to tunnel cables and flooring to seals.

London Underground Ltd, a wholly owned subsidiary of Transport for London, operates one of the world's most famous metro systems and is responsible for more than 3.5 million passenger journeys a day. During peak hours, more than 500 trains are in operation across its 11 lines covering 402km and serving 270 stations. More than one billion passenger journeys were made on the Tube in 2009/10.

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## DELEGATES PRAISE CHILTERN FIRE INTERNATIONAL TRAINING DAY

Delegates were quick to praise the first Chiltern International Fire (CIF) 'Passive Fire Protection Explained' training day, which included several live fire demonstrations to add visual impact.

CIF Chief Operating Officer, Jon Osborn, said the event was designed to bring clarity to the issues surrounding passive fire protection (PFP) *"for those whose day-to-day roles bring them into contact with this specialist area. CIF believes that everyone in the supply chain should take responsibility for ensuring fire safety, from the architect/designer and specifier, to the product manufacturer/supplier and main contractor."*

*"Feedback from the launch event", he added, "has been very positive. Delegate comments indicated that the course was well constructed, giving clear guidance on the legislative drivers for passive fire protection, such as the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order. The live fire demonstrations showed how quickly fire could gain hold if the correct measures were not in place, or if PFP products failed to perform, underlining visually and memorably the key messages delegates would take away from the day."*

Wilf Butcher, Chief Executive Officer for the Association for Specialist Fire Protection (ASFP), who attended the course, commented *"The development of education in this specialist area is of paramount importance, both for the end user and the installer of PFP products. As the ASFP, we would also underline the importance of independent monitoring of installation through third-party certification."*

'Passive Fire Protection Explained' will be repeated on 27<sup>th</sup> October 2011 at CIF's High Wycombe headquarters.

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## NEW FIRE SAFE PRODUCTS AND INSTALLERS ONLINE REGISTER

A new and unique fire safety register provides a quick and easy way to find certification schemes for fire safety products and for installers fitting them.

Produced by the Passive Fire Protection Federation (PFPF) and available on its website (at [www.pfpf.org.uk](http://www.pfpf.org.uk)), the register lists all the relevant certification bodies - organisations licensed to provide an independent assessment of fire-safety products, services and installers.

David Sugden, Chairman of the PFPF comments *"It's essential that all fire safety or fire resistant products be installed correctly and used according to their original specification. This register should be used as an invaluable tool for specifiers, contractors and building owners and operators – especially as the latter are responsible by law for a building's fire safety."*

Companies accredited by the schemes on the register will use certified products, made to exactly the same specification or formulation as the tested product. They will produce a Certificate of Conformity, acceptable to Building Control in the case of new construction and to Risk Assessors after work in an existing building. Third Party Certified Risk Assessors will be trained and qualified in producing valid fire risk assessments.

**Website:** [www.pfpf.org.uk](http://www.pfpf.org.uk)

