

DOCUMENT NO	SWP 358
AUTHOR	J Slate
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SWP 358 - Actions in the event of fire alarm sounding

Procedure

Action to be taken when the fire alarm sounds to manage genuine alarms and manage and reduce false alarms from the building's fire detection and alarm system.

Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure that all activities take place in a controlled manner and without accidents or incidents which may harm the health and safety of personnel or contravene the conditions of the environmental permit.

Scope

Applies to the management team.

Associated Risk Assessment	Associated MS Forms
QP27	
PPE Requirements	Tool & Equipment Requirements
	Manual Call Point key – spare kept by fire panel

Safety Requirements

This procedure is written following guidance in the Fire Industry Association Guidance for Responsible Persons on False Alarm Management of Fire Detection and Alarm Systems.

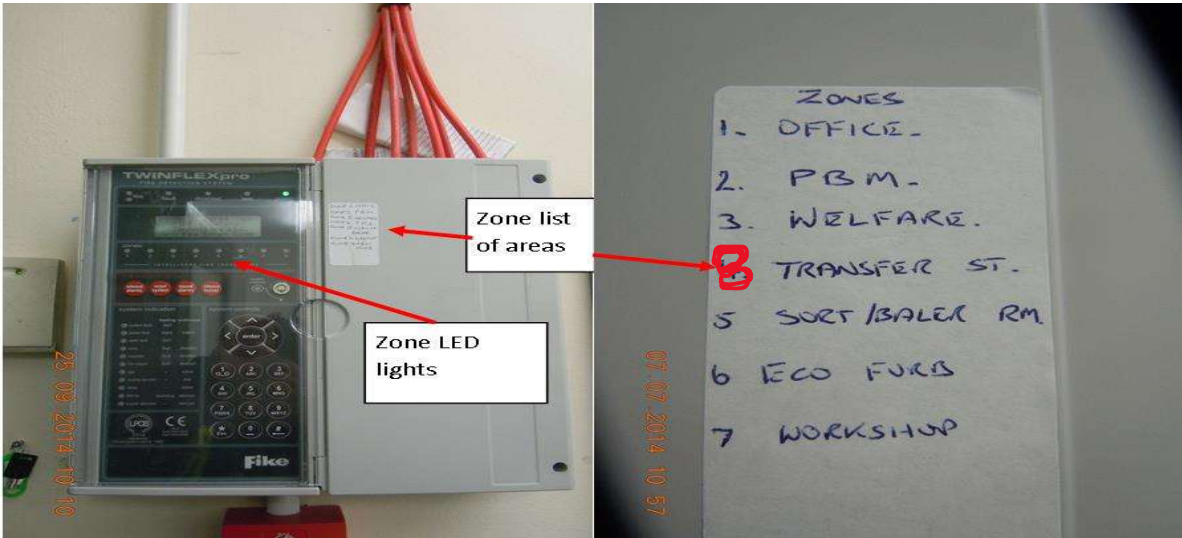
There will be a delay between the manual call point being pressed and the activation of the alarm due to electronic sensing and the distance of some alarms from the main control system. This delay will be no more than 10 seconds.

	Refer to points:	Who
If you hear the alarm	1-3	Anyone out on site
Identify the location of the fire	4-6	Any senior person in the office
Identify genuine or false alarm	7-12	Senior person available
Identify location, size, type of fire	7-12	Senior person available
Decide whether to call the fire service	8-12	Senior person available
False alarms	12-13, 20-22	Senior person available
How to silence the alarm	15	Senior person available
Reset the alarms	16-17	Senior person available
If alarm will not silence or reset	19	Senior person available
Investigate false alarm	23-25	Senior person available
Out of hours	26-31	Any person hearing alarm
Recording the event	32	Person in attendance
Investigating the event	33-37	Site Manager

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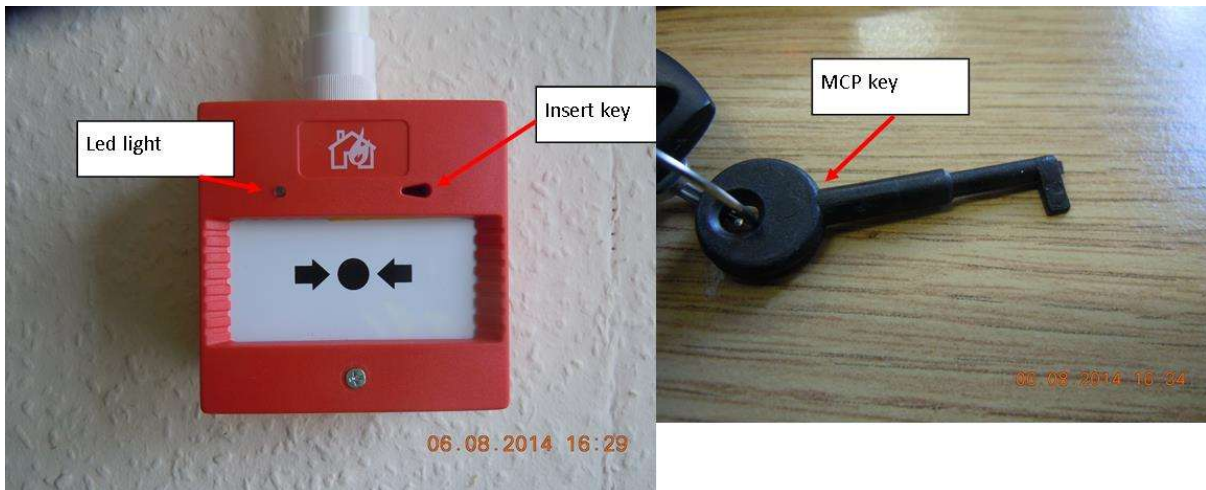
SWP 358 - Actions in the event of fire alarm sounding

Method – ON HEARING THE FIRE ALARM

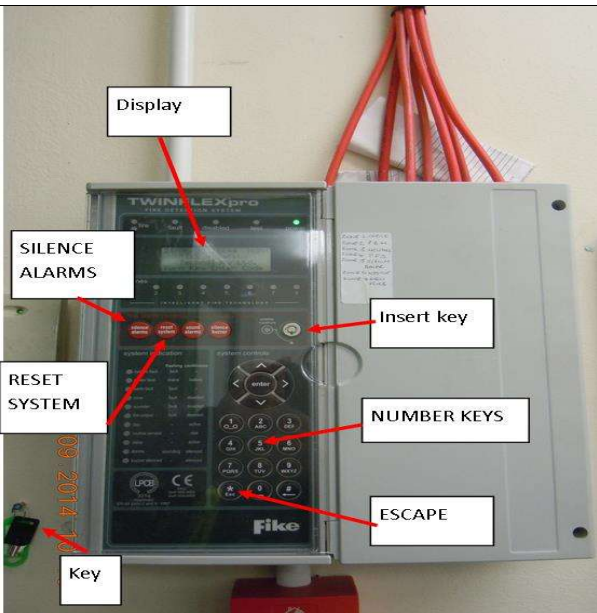
1	If you hear the alarm, ensure that all workers in the vicinity of where you are working stop work immediately and proceed to their emergency evacuation assembly points in accordance with MS170 Fire & Emergency Evacuation Procedure. DO NOT SILENCE THE ALARMS
2	If you are working in the area where the alarm has sounded due to fire or smoke, leave the area immediately, and then telephone a Senior Manager/Supervisor and advise them of the location, size and type of fire.
3	If you do not know where the alarm has sounded, ask workers as they exit buildings if there is any evidence of fire or smoke. Where possible, look into each building as you pass to try to establish if fire or smoke is present. Do not enter the building. When you reach the assembly point ask if anyone knows the reason for the alarm sounding. Advise Site Manager immediately if you can provide any information in relation to incident. Do not ring if you have no information.
4	Any senior Manager/Supervisor present in office area is to view the fire alarm control panel in the main office.
5	This procedure will be kept next to the fire alarm system for reference.
6	Look at the fire alarm control panel and see which zone LED light has lit up and then look at the list of zones to identify which zone is the source of the alarm. DO NOT SILENCE THE ALARMS.
 The left photograph shows a fire alarm control panel with the brand name 'TWINFLEXpro' and 'Fike' visible. It has a digital display and several buttons. Red arrows point to specific features: one points to a label 'Zone LED lights' and another points to a label 'Zone list of areas'. The right photograph shows a handwritten list of zones on a piece of paper. The zones are: 1. OFFICE., 2. P.B.M., 3. WELFARE., 4. TRANSFER ST. (circled in red), 5. SORT/BALEA RM, 6. ECO FURS, 7. WORKSHOP. A red arrow points from the 'Zone list of areas' label in the left photo to the circled 'TRANSFER ST.' in the right photo.	
7	It is important we have arrangements in place to quickly establish whether an alarm is genuine or false to avoid calling out the fire service for a false alarm. Anyone on site that has information or knowledge about the location, size, or type of fire (points 2 & 3 above) should advise the most senior person on site.
8	If you have received reliable information in relation to the exact location, size, type and cause of fire, and know that it has been extinguished or is so small it can be controlled i.e. a piece of paper burning in a bin, you can attend the

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SWP 358 - Actions in the event of fire alarm sounding

	area and extinguish the fire using proprietary fire equipment. Ensure the area has been sufficiently doused in water to prevent any re-ignition.
9	If you have NOT received reliable information in relation to the exact location, size, type and cause of fire, a decision has to be taken as to whether the fire service should be called immediately. If the alarm has sounded in zone 7 or 8, there is potential for fire or explosion and for any small fire to spread quickly due to flammable materials/substances. In these instances, the fire service should be called and you should proceed to the designated assembly point.
10	If the fire alarm has sounded in any other zone, visit the area quickly to identify if the fire alarm is genuine or false.
11	If you identify a genuine alarm, but the fire is already extinguished or can be easily extinguished in a few seconds, you can use a fire extinguisher to do so. If you have ANY doubts as to whether the fire can be easily controlled, call the fire service and proceed to the designated assembly point.
12	If you visit the zone and you are absolutely sure that there is no fire or smoke or overheating and this is a false alarm, you can silence the alarms.
13	You should try to identify the source of the false alarm before allowing staff back into the zone.
	SILENCING THE ALARMS AND RESET THE FIRE CONTROL SYSTEM
14	Once the fire has been extinguished and it is safe to return to site or a false alarm has been identified, the alarms will need to be silenced and reset.
15	If a manual call point (MCP) was pressed, this particular MCP will need to be reset at source. You will need to take the MCP key and turn it clockwise in the MCP keyhole to switch off the internal microswitch and return it to its normal position. The Led light will go off.
	
16	Once the source of the alarm has been reset, the fire control system can be reset.
17	The key is on a hook next to the fire alarm control panel. Put the key into position and turn. Press SILENCE ALARMS and then RESET SYSTEM. If the key is not available, press the 4 digit code 7877 then SILENCE ALARMS and then RESET SYSTEM. Then press ESCAPE. There may a slight delay up to 10 seconds for the system to reset due to electronic sensing.

SWP 358 - Actions in the event of fire alarm sounding

		
18	If you cannot silence the alarms or reset the system, this will indicate a fault on the system. Note any fault messages or LED lights which are continuously on or flashing. You will need to call maintenance to rectify the problem.	
19	In the event that the alarms cannot be silenced or reset due to the temperature in a zone activating the heat detector, the temperature must be lowered or the heat detector adjusted.	
	FALSE ALARMS	
20	Identify the cause of the false alarm. Walk around the building and see if there is any sign of a manual call point or a smoke detector with the LED light illuminated. 	
21	If you identify that equipment fault/failure may be the cause of the false alarm, silence the alarms but do NOT reset the system as this will erase the information needed to investigate the cause of the false alarm. Notify maintenance to come to rectify the fault.	
22	To silence the alarms follow points 15-17 above.	
	FALSE ALARM INVESTIGATION	
23	As soon as possible after the false alarm, visit the area, and try to find out why the alarm was triggered e.g. vandalism, accidental damage, burnt food, pollutant in the air acting like smoke i.e. furniture polish. Sometimes	

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	smoke detectors are set off due to the presence of insects inside or the presence of steam, dust or aerosols. Heat detectors can be set off by an increase in the ambient temperature and may need to be reset. MCPs do not usually cause false alarms due to fault but may be due to accidental damage.
24	Check when they were last examined and tested.
25	If you are unable to locate the source of the false alarm, the maintenance team will need to test the equipment and identify any faults to ensure there are no further false alarms.
	OUT OF HOURS
26	The alarm panel is linked to a 24 hour contact centre called Securiguard via Fire and Safety Systems Ltd. Securiguard monitor the fire alarm panel out of hours. In the event of an activation the Securiguard call centre will call the below list of individuals in the event the alarm panel is activated: Eryl Davies – 07495 547410 Jenny Slate – 07891 372942 Dan Lewis – 07970 759797 Marilyn Sarre – 07903 106582 Note: When calling Securiguard please quote 0123224 and use the password = MBGAMEX All the above are key holders and have been trained to use the system.
27	In the event that the fire alarm sounds and the fire service are called by a third party, at least one senior person should attend site.
28	In the event that a driver or effluent plant operator calls the site contact number out of hours to attend to a fire alarm, the person on call should try to establish with that person whether there are any signs of fire. A senior person will attend site as soon as possible. Staff must evacuate to the assembly point. On attending site out of hours, prior to entering the main office, the on-call person must check for signs of smoke or fire by looking through the doors and windows to the front and side of the office. If there is any sign of smoke or fire in this area, the fire service should be called.
29	If there are no signs, the on-call person can unlock the front door and silence the intruder alarm.
30	The on-call person will then look at the fire alarm control panel and see which zone LED light has lit up and then look at the list of zones to identify which zone is the source of the alarm. DO NOT SILENCE THE ALARMS.
31	Follow the advice in points 9 – 12 above, to make a decision about whether it is a genuine or false alarm. If you are the only person on site and you cannot identify the source of the alarm easily, you should ensure that the fire service attends site to identify the cause of the alarm and not put yourself in any danger.
	RECORDING THE FIRE EVENT IN THE FIRE LOG



Mekatek Business Group

Quality Management System

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32	Anyone in attendance should make a note of the circumstances and action taken and pass to the Site Manager, so that an accurate record can be made and an investigation can be carried out if necessary.
33	Site Manager is responsible for recording any event in the fire log be it a genuine alarm, false alarms, faults or tests etc. In the absence of the Site Manager, another senior manager/supervisor deputises. In the absence of both, the on-call person attending the alarm deputises. Maintenance should check all Equipment false alarms.
34	If the fire event was the result of fire/smoke/heat detection record on form MS186 Fire Event Log in the folder kept by the fire alarm system.
35	Record the date, time (24hr), zone, device, event e.g. fire alarm test, fire alarm signal, maintenance work, Action taken e.g. site evacuated, fire service called, fire extinguished, and any action taken to prevent recurrence.
36	If the fire event was the result of a false alarm, record on form MS186 False Alarm Log in the folder kept by the fire alarm system.
37	Record the date, time (24hr), zone, device, cause e.g. manual call point pressed, smoke detector fault, Action required e.g. maintenance visit, Action taken, Category of false alarm, Any further action required. Category of false alarm codes: G - Unwanted genuine alarm – an unwanted incident like burning toast or steam that has produced fire like phenomena that a fire detector has mistaken as an indication of a real fire. E - Equipment false alarm – an alarm generated by a piece of equipment that is faulty M - Malicious false alarm – someone deliberately breaking/pressing a manual call point without good intent F - False alarms with good intent – someone smelling smoke or sensing a possible fire.

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Page | 6