

Competency for Fire Risk Assessors – Moving on to the Future?



What will be the three main words that you will hear coming out of DJH's Review?



Here's my Prediction!

Competence

Competence

Competence!



So! What makes you competent as a fire risk assessor?



- I have been to the fire service college Moreton in Marsh
- I have been in the fire service for over 30 years so I am competent
- There's no regulation for it, so don't need it
- I have done over 4000 fire risk assessments (that's about 1 every day of a 5 day week since the FSO was enacted!)
- I have attended an IOSH/Colin Todd/Vulcan etc course for fire risk assessors
- I am one the UKs leading experts in fire safety



So! What makes you competent as a fire risk assessor?



- I haven't got pots of money or time and don't need to put myself through any third party accreditation
- I have loads of work anyway so there's no pressure for me to get a qualification
- Fire Risk Assessment training course – recognised by the IFE
- Our assessors are former local authority fire inspectors so they are expertly equipped
- Our fire risk assessment is PAS (British Standard) compliant
- All our assessors are NEBOSH trained and the documents produced are to the recognised PAS 79 standards



So! What makes you competent as a fire risk assessor?



‘Fire risk assessments that I have undertaken and the significant findings thereof have been audited by several different local enforcing Fire Authorities, OFSTED inspectors and insurance assessors. To date these completed Fire Risk Assessments have been judged "not found wanting in any area" and "suitable and sufficient" to cover all articles of the Fire Safety Order’.



Is it really like this 'out there'?



£199 ^{+VAT}
*
FIXED PRICE
NO QUOTE REQUIRED BOOK NOW...



Dr Bob Docherty – Flamerisk Safety Solutions Ltd

So what do you need to be a fire risk assessor?

- Knowledge
- Competence
- Qualifications
- Experience



Competent Fire Risk Assessors



3 Key factors to remember:

1. The world of Fire Safety has a very regulated outcome but is a non-regulated world when it comes to who steers you to that outcome! There is no legislative imperative on the skills/competency of a fire risk assessor!
2. A fire risk assessor is not just for the assessment and the technical 'bits', he/she is for 'life'! They should be able to set clients objectives, priorities, strategies and policies
3. They should, as part of their contract, be willing and able to liaise with the local fire and rescue services on a clients behalf, if they are competent they will have no qualms about doing so.



What has the IFSM done about this?



- We contributed to the national competency standard for fire risk assessors and 'signed up' to the finished paper which supported third party accreditation
- We disbanded our old fire risk assessors register and started up the Nationally Accredited Fire Risk Assessors Register (NAFRAR) – only those who have been third party accredited/certified as competent can go on that register
- We continue to be totally involved in improving and driving up the standards for all of the profession that is involved in fire and life safety



What has the IFSM done about this?

- We are the only professional body in the fire sector that has actively engaged so far in trying to look to creating a career pathway for young professionals who want to achieve full competency as fire risk assessors
- We are heavily involved in the Fire Sector Federation workstream on competencies and this links into DJHs workgroups dealing with the same issues
- We give professional support to both BAFE and Warrington/EXOVA for their schemes for third party accreditation and certification of competency for fire risk assessors.



Incompetency in practice!

- FR assessor who restricted a building in the FRA to 50 people – the building had a capacity for 560!
- ‘Accountability Signatures’ on a FRA with statement ‘The person named below completed the fire risk assessment and has suitable experience and qualifications to be deemed competent....’





The Cautionary Tale!

Conviction of a Fire Risk Assessor - Competency of Fire Risk Assessors

- ‘The 2011 conviction of John O’Rourke at Nottingham Crown Court, whilst being a landmark case, was perhaps an inevitable occurrence that was bound to happen sooner or later in the unregulated field of fire risk assessment’ . (Dr Bob Docherty).
- He was jailed for 8 months and fined £6K
- Note – the responsible person also went to jail!!



The Cautionary Tale!



Conviction of a Fire Risk Assessor - Competency of Fire Risk Assessors

- 'The recent (2016) conviction of Graham Foote at Warrington Crown Court, He was jailed for 4 months suspended for 12 months plus £1000 costs.
- Note – the responsible person/company was also fined £40,000 plus £15000 costs.



Third Party Certification of Competency National Register



The Institute of Fire Safety Managers (IFSM) is the only professional body to keep a publicly accessible register for accredited/certified competent fire risk assessors called the Nationally Accredited Fire Risk Assessors Register (NAFRAR).

www.ifsm.org.uk



Dr Bob Docherty – Flamerisk Safety Solutions Ltd

Questions?

www.flamerisk.co.uk

www.ifsm.org.uk



Dr Bob Docherty – Flamerisk Safety Solutions Ltd