**Fire alarm maintenance protocol**

**Inspection and Servicing by a competent person**

The inspection and servicing should be undertaken by organisations with the appropriate competence. This can be assured by the use of organisations that are third party certificated - by BAFE or another UKAS accredited certification body - specifically to carry out inspection and servicing of fire detection and fire alarm systems.

*Periodic inspection and testing*

* The period between visits to undertake inspection and service should he based upon a risk assessment but the maximum period between visits should not exceed six months.
* The log book should be inspected
* A visual inspection should be made to check whether structural or occupancy changes have been made that require changes to the fire detection and fire alarm system.
* False alarm records should be checked and relevant action taken if necessary
* Batteries should be checked and tested
* Control panel functions should be checked and tested
* Fire alarm devices should be tested
* Facilities for automatic transmission of alarm signals to an alarm receiving centre (ARC) should be checked after advising the ARC of the proposed actions
* All fault indicators and circuits should be tested and checked
* Printers should be tested
* Other checks and tests recommended by the manufacturer should be carried out
* Outstanding defects should be reported and the logbook completed and servicing certificate issued.

*Inspection and test of a system over a 12 month period*

* The switch mechanism of every manual call point should be tested
* Every automatic fire detector should be examined and functionally tested. This includes, but is not limited to; smoke detectors, resettable heat detectors, optical beam smoke detectors, aspirating fire detection systems, carbon monoxide fire detectors and flame detectors
* All fire alarm devices (both visual and audible) should be tested
* Certain filament lamps should be replaced
* Radio fire detection and fire alarm system signal strengths should be checked
* Visual inspection of readily accessible cable fixings should be undertaken
* The cause and effect programme should be checked
* The standby power supply capacity should be checked
* Other annual checks and tests recommended by the system component manufacturers should be undertaken
* Outstanding defects should be reported and the servicing certificate issued.
* As this is labour-intensive servicing, it is recommended that the work can be spread over two or more service visits during each twelve-month period

These arrangements are intended to maintain the system in operation under normal circumstances and would be covered by an ordinary Service Agreement.

However, from time to time, the fire alarm system is likely to require non-routine attention, including special maintenance.

**Non-routine attention**

*Non-routine maintenance includes:*

* special inspection of an existing fire alarm system when a new servicing organization takes over servicing the system;
* repair of faults or damage;
* modification to take account of extensions, alterations, changes in occupancy or false alarms;
* action to address an unacceptable rate of false alarms;
* inspection and test of the system following a fire.

*False alarms*

Any false alarm investigation and subsequent modifications to the system takes into account the guidance provided in BS5839. Any organisation undertaking false alarm investigations and related remedial work should be able to demonstrate their competence to undertake such work.

The measures to limit false alarms are divided into eight groups:

* Siting and selection of manual call points
* Selection and siting of automatic fire detectors
* Selection of system type
* Protection against electromagnetic interference
* Performance monitoring of newly commissioned systems
* Filtering measures
* System management
* Regular servicing and maintenance

Non-routine maintenance falls outside the terms of an ordinary Service Agreement and shall be charged separately.

**British Standards Relating to Fire Alarms**

The appropriate British standard for installation of a fire alarm in non domestic premises (from which the above has been abstracted) is BS 5839-1:2013 and BS 5839-6:2013 for the design, installation and maintenance of fire detection and fire alarm systems in dwellings.

**BAFE -** *Promoting Quality In Fire Safety*

Established in 1984, BAFE is the independent organisation dedicated to improving standards in fire protection. BAFE is the not for profit, registration body for Companies throughout the UK that achieve third party certification for their fire protection services. Organisations that are registered to BAFE schemes demonstrate a commitment to service excellence.

BAFE ensures that companies that provide fire protection services meet all the appropriate standards and are independently audited. BAFE third party certificated schemes are a recognised measure of the quality required to provide fire protection services.

The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) states: "We support third party certification schemes as an effective means of assuring the quality, reliability and safety of products and services, and recognise the valuable role BAFE plays in bringing to the marketplace recognised registration schemes for these products and services".

NKM Fire Protection Limited