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Changes to Fire Regulations for Tourism businesses

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (RRFSO) came into force on October 1st 2006.

- The Fire Safety Order, will apply in England and Wales. (Northern Ireland and Scotland will have their own laws.)
- The main effect of the changes will be a move towards greater emphasis on fire prevention in all non-domestic premises, including the voluntary sector and self-employed people with premises separate from their homes.
- Fire certificates will be abolished and will cease to have legal status.
- It covers 'general fire precautions' and other fire safety duties which are needed to protect 'relevant persons' in case of fire in and around most 'premises'.
- The order requires fire precautions to be put in place "where necessary" and to the extent that it is reasonable and practicable in the circumstances of the case.
- Responsibility for complying with the Fire Safety Order rests with the '*responsible person*'. In a workplace, this is the employer and any other person who may have control of any part of the premises, eg the occupier or owner. In all other premises the person or people in control of the premises will be responsible. If there is more than one responsible person in any type of premises, all must take all reasonable steps to work with each other.
- If you are the responsible person you must carry out a fire risk assessment which must focus on the safety in case of fire of all 'relevant persons'. It should pay particular attention to those at special risk, such as the disabled and those with special needs, and must include consideration of any dangerous substance likely to be on the premises. Your fire risk assessment will help you identify risks that can be removed or reduced and to decide the nature and extent of the general fire precautions you need to take to protect people against the fire risks that remain.
- If you employ five or more people you must record the significant findings of the assessment.

The Department for Communities and Local Government have produced a small entry-level guide and a series of more detailed guides that will give information on risk assessments and other issues. Follow these links to the Government Website that provides further information –

Entry Level Guide - A short guide to making your premises safe from fire -

www.communities.gov.uk/publications/fire/regulatoryreformfire

Fire Safety Risk Assessment - Sleeping Accommodation -

www.communities.gov.uk/publications/fire/firesafetyrisk4

Fire Safety Risk Assessment – Small & Medium Places of Assembly -

www.communities.gov.uk/publications/fire/firesafetyrisk7

5 Step Risk Assessment - short checklist

www.communities.gov.uk/documents/fire/pdf/151102.pdf

A guide called “**Keep your business in Business**” has also been produced by the West Midlands Fire Service which can be found at - www.wmfs.net/arson/kybib.jsp

For further information in the meantime contact –

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Fire Regulations – VisitBritain assistance

The Quality Department at VisitBritain is aware that there has been, and continues to be a great deal of consternation around the new Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order – RRFSO.

Fire Risk Assessment Template

To help you carry this out VisitBritain has commissioned a simple www.fire-assessments.co.uk to help smaller businesses. You must read the information in the template carefully and ask yourself the questions it suggests in order to identify any risks. This will all help you form an action plan and when those actions have been dealt with record the date this was done. You will then need to keep a copy safe and regularly update it. Indeed it is always best to keep a copy off site too in case a fire does happen as you will need this to prove to your local fire brigade and insurance company that you did in fact, carry one out.

FireCo Ltd

They have also set up an arrangement with a fire consultancy company – FireCo Ltd, who are experts in the field of fire prevention, fire safety and fire consultancy.

The package of benefits that we have arranged for VisitBritain quality assessment scheme participants includes:

- From May 1st 2008 VisitBritain quality assessment scheme participants will be able to get advice and help from a member of their team for the vastly reduced price of £15 + VAT for half an hour. This is only available via a form submitted online to VisitBritain (see www.visitbritain.com/quality). A member of the FireCo team will then get in touch to discuss the issues.
- If after the initial 30 minutes of advice additional advice is required, a further hour's consultancy service is available for £70 + VAT, please note this amount would not cover a site visit. A discount of 10% is provided on all further consultancy services as required.
- A fire risk assessment template for operators to use, with guidance, is also shortly to be available on the VisitBritain website for downloading and applying to their own property. It should be useable for any type of accommodation that falls under B and B's, guesthouses, farmhouses, inns with rooms and all types of individual self catering properties – with floors not exceeding three storeys (or 7.5 metres) in height.
- FireCo are also able to provide various consultancy services including carrying out fire risk assessments, fire awareness training and fire risk assessment training – so operators could get together with their local B and B group or a self catering agency and run one of the FireCo courses. These are all subject to a 10% discount for VisitBritain quality assurance scheme participants.

In addition for local authorities (RDA's, DMO's etc), FireCo will offer to run "surgeries" where a couple of their consultants will be available all day for operators to discuss their issues. The only thing you need to do is provide a venue and refreshments and a system of booking timeslots for operators. These are available at a cost of £2000 +VAT a day, with a reduction in cost if you provide the venue and refreshments. If you would like to go ahead with one of these or require further information please email alison.barham@visitbritain.org