



FIRE SAFETY ADVISER (FSA)

The *Building Fire Safety Regulation 2008* was introduced on 1 July 2008.

The most significant reform in the *Building Fire Safety Regulation 2008* is the requirement for occupiers of high occupancy buildings, as defined under the *Building Fire Safety Regulation 2008*, to appoint and train a Fire Safety Adviser (FSA).

What is a Fire Safety Adviser?

A FSA is a person who holds a building fire safety qualification for an approved building fire safety course, issued within the last 3 years.

The approved building fire safety course comprises 8 units of competency in

Workplace Emergency Response within the Australian Quality Training Framework. They are:

- PUAWER001B - Identify, prevent and report potential workplace emergency situations
- PUAWER002B - Ensure workplace emergency prevention procedures, systems and processes are implemented
- PUAWER003B - Manage and monitor workplace emergency, procedures, equipment and other resources
- PUAWER004B - Respond to workplace emergencies
- PUAWER005B - Operate as part of an emergency control organisation
- PUAWER006B - Lead an emergency control organisation
- PUAWER007B - Manage an emergency control organisation
- PUAWER008B - Confine small workplace emergencies

To determine if you need to appoint a FSA there are a number of things that you need to consider.

The *Building Fire Safety Regulation 2008* states that you are required to appoint a FSA if the building is:

- A class 2, 3, 5, 6, 7b, 8, 9a or 9b building that is a workplace where 30 or more workers are normally employed.

Who is classified as a “worker?”

A person is considered a worker if they carry out work regardless of whether they receive payment or not. For a person to be considered a “worker” they must, during the current year be employed or likely to be employed at the workplace for a total of any 40 days during the year.

- A class 2 or 3 building that is more than 25 metres in effective height.

What is “effective height”?

This means the height to the floor of the topmost storey from ground level (This is the definition provided under the Building Code of Australia). For these buildings the number of workers is irrelevant.

- A licensed premises that has been identified by the Commissioner as an at risk buildings.

What constitutes an “at risk licensed premises”?

An “at risk licensed premises” is a building that the QFES Commissioner is satisfied presents an unacceptable risk of overcrowding.

In multi-tenanted buildings where there are a number of tenancies employing 30 workers or more, each of those tenancies are required to appoint a FSA however it is acceptable and in fact recommended for those tenancies to liaise with the managing entity of the building and appoint the same FSA for the whole of the building. This solution allows all tenants to comply with the legislation and share the benefits of increased fire safety awareness for the whole of the building not just selected tenancies.

Building Classifications:-

- A class 2 building is a residential building containing 2 or more apartments or units.
- A class 3 building is a residential building such as a residential part of a motel, hotel or resort.
- A class 5 building is an office building.
- A class 6 building is a shop or other part of a hotel.
- A class 7b building is a storage facility or display area.
- A class 8 building is a laboratory or a factory.
- A class 9a building is a health care building.
- A class 9b building is an assembly building such as a night club.

What duties can a Fire Safety Adviser undertake?

A FSA is required to:

- Provide or arrange - First response evacuation instruction
- Provide or arrange - Evacuation coordination instructions

In addition the FSA may provide assistance to the occupier by:

- Liaising with occupiers to ensure the development of the Fire & Evacuation Plan
- Liaising with occupiers to ensure the development of the Evacuation Sign & Diagram
- Review the Fire & Evacuation Plan and Evacuation Sign & Diagram annually.
- Monitor the building's prescribed fire safety installation maintenance schedule and maintenance records and advise the occupier of discrepancies.
- Liaise with the QFES during building inspections. If possible be available at the time of inspection and have all relevant maintenance records and documents available at the time of inspection.
- Coordinate the establishment and manage the Emergency Control Organisation (ECO) where required.
- Arrange or provide general evacuation instruction as well as first response evacuation instruction and evacuation coordination instruction.
- Provide advice to the occupier of any possible breaches of the regulations.
- Coordinate evacuation practice.
- Perform the role of the Evacuation Coordinator if normally onsite during business hours.
- The FSA if a member of staff could provide invaluable assistance to the QFES attending an incident in the building due to their comprehensive knowledge of the building.

Does the Fire Safety Adviser have to be a person on staff?

There is no requirement for the FSA to be a person on staff. However, it is recommended that where practical the FSA is an existing staff member. Some reasons for this recommendation are:

- The occupier and staff have an easily accessible point of contact about fire safety matters
- The FSA is likely to have familiarity with the occupier's buildings and knowledge of protocols and fire safety arrangements internal to the organisation
- The FSA is more easily accessible for coordination of fire safety arrangements
- The FSA may easily be made aware of changes within the building or staff appointments or changes within the organisation
- Attending fire officers and licensed contractors engaged to maintain the fire safety installations for the organisation have a point of contact
- The FSA may, on behalf of the occupier, liaise with other FSAs in a multi-tenanted building to ensure that evacuation plans and procedures and coordinated

Occupancies with Workplace Health and Safety Officers may choose to nominate and train those persons as the FSA.

How many Fire Safety Advisers should the occupier appoint?

An FSA can be appointed for more than one building.

For example, a university may have one or more FSAs to cover its campus, or a company which has suites of offices in one or more buildings in any city or town may appoint one or more FSAs to cover those buildings.

When considering how many FSAs to appoint for high occupancy buildings, assessment should be made of the workload of the FSA to be effective in this important workplace role.

If I have a Fire Safety Adviser do I still need Building Fire Wardens?

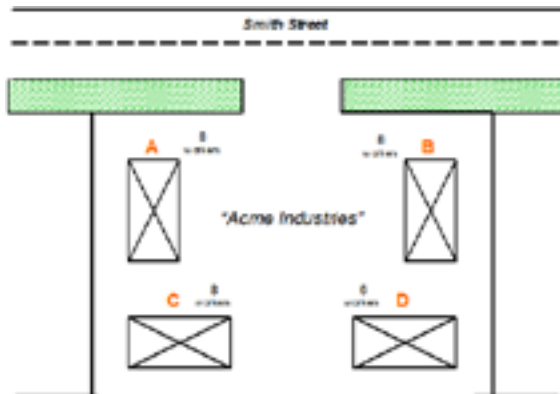
A FSA is one who has been trained in fire safety and workplace emergency response.

Having a FSA does not mean that building fire wardens are no longer required. A FSA is not necessarily building-specific and so may not be present in the building if a fire occurs. However, Building Fire Wardens are building-specific.

INFORMATION SHEET

Following are examples of common building configurations to assist in determining whether a FSA is required.

Example 1

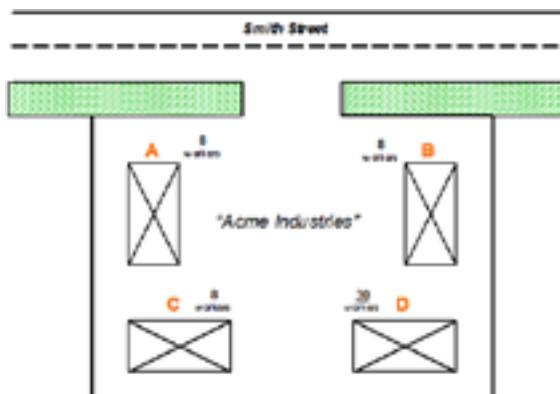


Requirement:

In this example the total number of workers at “Acme Industries” is 30 but as there are not more than 30 workers in any one building there is no requirement to appoint a FSA.

Note: If there is a common building such as a canteen or meal room where workers congregate and there are more than 30 present in the building a FSA is required.

Example 2



In this example there are 30 workers in Building D.

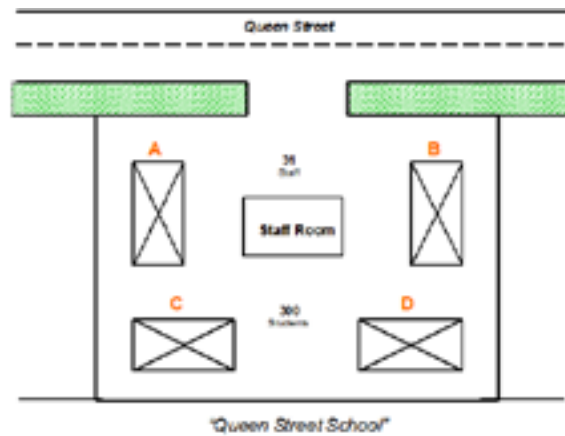
Requirement:

Under current legislation a FSA for Building D is required.

QFES Recommendation:

So as to provide consistency the FSA would not only cover Building D but also buildings A, B & C as the site is occupied by one entity. This will achieve increased fire safety awareness across the whole site not just in Building D.

Example 3



Requirement:

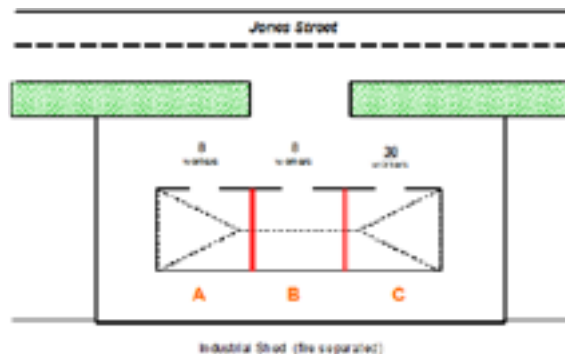
If there is a common building such as a staff room that is capable of accommodating 30 or more staff & there are 30 or more on site (as in the above example) then a FSA for the staff room is required.

If no building within the school has provisions to accommodate 30 or more staff (not including students) then there is no requirement to appoint a FSA.

QFES Recommendation:

If a FSA is required QFES would recommend a FSA be appointed for the whole site. This will achieve an increased fire safety awareness across the whole site not just in Building D.

Example 4

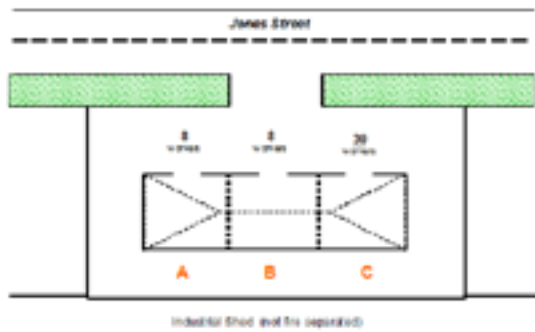


In this example there are 3 tenants in the same building. They are separated by fire walls.

Requirement:

As Tenancy C has more than 30 workers a FSA is required for Tenancy C.

Example 5



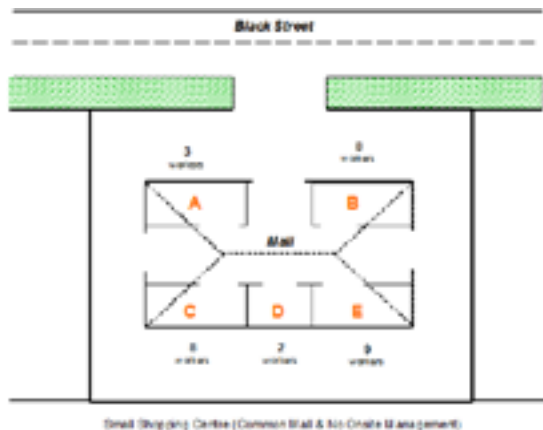
Requirement:

In this example (no fire separation between tenancies) a FSA is only required for Tenancy C.

QFES Recommendation:

As the tenancies are not fire separated the QFES would recommend that Tenancy C would approach the body corporate or managing entity with a view of appointing a FSA for all three tenancies A, B and C. This way all tenants can gain the benefit of increased fire safety awareness and the cost could be a shared arrangement.

Example 6



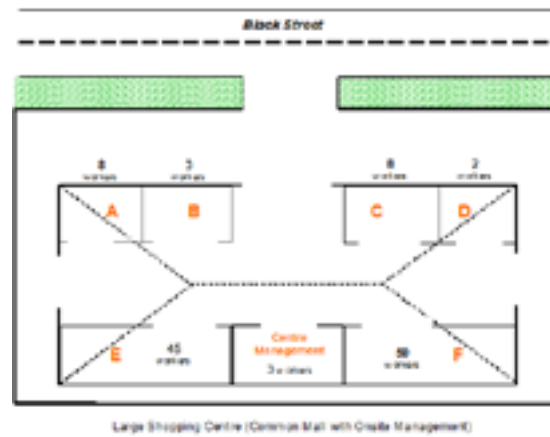
Requirement:

In this example there is no single tenancy with 30 or more employees. Therefore there is no requirement under current legislation for a FSA to be appointed.

QFES Recommendation:

As there are common areas, QFES would recommend that the Managing Entity appoint a FSA to increase the level of fire safety awareness in the building.

Example 7



Requirement:

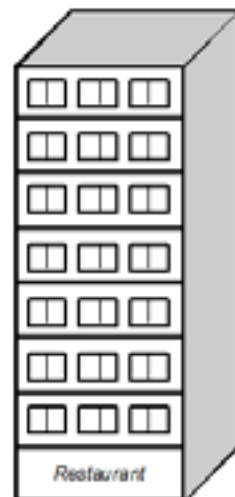
In this example, only tenancies E and F would be required to appoint a FSA.

QFES Recommendation:

As there are common areas, QFES would recommend that the Managing Entity appoint a FSA to increase the level of fire safety awareness in the building.

Tenancies E and F may still appoint their own FSA or agree to share the FSA appointed by centre management.

Example 8



Accommodation Building under 25 metres (Class 2 or 3) in effective height with a restaurant that has 31 workers.

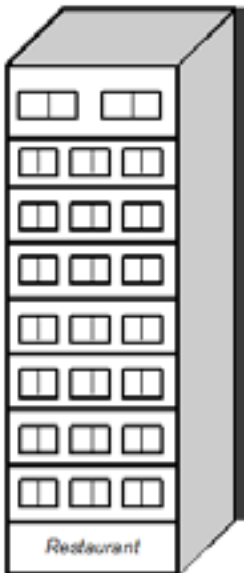
Requirement:

In this example, under current legislation the restaurant would require a FSA and the accommodation building would not require one.

QFES Recommendation:

As there are common areas, QFES would recommend that the Body Corporate or Managing Entity appoint a FSA to increase the level of fire safety awareness in the whole building. The restaurant may still appoint their own FSA or agree to share the FSA appointed by the Body Corporate or Managing Entity.

Example 9



Accommodation Building over 25 metres (Class 2 or 3) in effective height with a restaurant that has 15 workers.

Requirement:

In this example, the Body Corporate or Managing Entity would be required to appoint a FSA for the building regardless of the number of workers in the building as it is over 25 metres in height.

Example 10



High Rise Office Building

Business **A** occupies the 1st and 4th floors and has 20 workers on each floor. Total workers = 40.

Businesses **B**, **C**, **E** and **F** each employ 29 workers each.

Business **G** occupies the 7th and 9th floors and have 29 workers on each floor. Total workers = 58.

Requirement:

In this example under current legislation businesses A and G would require a FSA. This is because even though both businesses are spread across two levels each, both levels of each business are counted as the same workplace because they are in the same building.

QFES Recommendation:

As there are common areas, QFES would recommend that the Body Corporate or Managing Entity appoint a FSA to increase the level of fire safety awareness in the whole building.

Businesses A and G may still appoint their own FSA or agree to share the FSA appointed by the Body Corporate or Managing Entity.

This would give a consistent fire safety approach to the whole building and not just some of the levels.

Where can I go for more information?

If you require further information, visit the QFES website at www.fire.qld.gov.au/buildingsafety/legislation.asp for a contact list of Regional Community Safety Offices, the *Fire Safety Management Tool for Owner/Occupiers* and the associated *Advisory Notes*.