

NZSA Position Statement

Compliance concerns with regards to Security Systems with Smoke Detectors (SSWSD) October 2024

What is the problem?

There has been a change across councils in their approach to enforcement of the NZ Building Act and this has the potential to have significant consequences for those installing and servicing security systems, and our customers. This is most evident currently in Auckland where Auckland Council has set up an IQP Audit Team to check BWOF compliance, and particularly Specified Systems.

We expect that this approach will become common practice.

What is the current situation?

- SSWSD is a Specified System and as such, building consent is required for installation.
- Additionally the system has to be on the Compliance Schedule (CS) and a Producer Statement (PS) must be supplied by the installer detailing the type of equipment, number and location of detectors and maintenance (testing) schedule. This must be forwarded to the building owner or representative.
- It is the responsibility of the building owner to apply for Building Consent and changes to the Compliance Schedule (CS).
- It is in the best interests of installers to advise the building owner / representative of this requirement and request a consent number to add to the Producer Statement (PS) if no consent number is supplied then mention this on the PS.
- Note: This BWOF compliance relates to commercial / industrial buildings and not residential buildings where people are sleeping, such as apartments etc.
- Where Council identifies SSWSD that are not compliant, this will need to be rectified by either a Building Consent or a Certificate of Acceptance (CoA), neither of which are a cheap option (currently \$1,400 + GST for a CoA in Auckland).

What is the impact?

- It is possible that building owners when informed they must submit a Building Consent or Certificate of Acceptance will instruct installers to remove the smoke detectors off the security system (Intruder Detection) because the system is not consented and does not appear on the Compliance Schedule (CS).
- Even if the SSWSD is not consented, it is still regarded as a Specified System and consent is still required to remove the smoke detectors.
- We strongly advise where installers receive such a request that they inform the building owner / representative about this and the associated risks of removing smoke detectors and ask for a consent number prior to removal.
- Many buildings rely on SSWSD for fire detection and monitoring of fire conditions. Removing the detectors off the system introduces significant vulnerability and places assets at risk.

What is the NZSA doing?

NZSA has been in discussion with both Auckland Council and MBIE with regards to finding an easy solution to this issue – either via a short-term amnesty or a simplified Certificate of Acceptance process for non-compliant SSWSD. Unfortunately, at this time, neither of these options are being considered.

To support our position, we welcome feedback from our members on the frequency of non-compliant SSWSD being identified, and specific examples where customers are specifying removal of detectors in an effort to avoid following the compliance process.

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