

WARWICKSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

INFORMATION DELIVERY SYSTEM

PART NO: 1 - OPERATIONAL POLICIES

SECTION NO: 02 - OPERATIONS

NO:22 – REDUCING UNWANTED FIRE SIGNALS

SUMMARY:

This Order sets out the policy to be used by the Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service (the Service) for reducing unwanted fire signals (UwFS) from Automatic Fire Detection Systems (AFAs).

It also lays down the responsibilities of personnel on the monitoring of AFA false alarms and UwFS, and the subsequent action to take.

The Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA) policy document for the Reduction of False Alarms and Unwanted Fire Signals, Published September 2010 will be used throughout the implementation of this policy and will be deemed best practice.

False alarm calls are a drain on the resources of businesses, but more importantly they could affect the response made by occupiers of buildings, increasing building evacuation times which may lead to persons being trapped or injured by fire or the investigation of the alarm being delayed due to complacency

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**WARWICKSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
INFORMATION DELIVERY SYSTEM
SERVICE ORDER 01.02.22**

KEY INFORMATION

1.1 ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN

The following actions will be taken by specified personnel.

1.2 ACTION TO BE TAKEN BY INCIDENT COMMANDER

Incident Commanders are to investigate all attended UwFS from AFAs and identify the most probable cause of the false signal. Form FPG40d (see appendix 4.1) is to be completed and handed to the Responsible Person at the premises for filing with the Fire Alarm Logbook.

The Incident Commander should ask to see the premises Fire Alarm Logbook to ascertain whether:

- the system is being maintained and tested
- the details are being recorded in the Fire Alarm Logbook
- a reputable engineer has been called to inspect the system to rectify any fault(s).

An incident STOP CODE must be sent to Service Control indicating the correct cause of the AFA activation.

NB. It is important to note that where the alarm was caused by burning cooking materials or food, a determination should be made as to whether the alarm alerted the occupier of a situation which if left unattended would have caused material fire damage. (e.g. damage to the toaster or cooker). If this is the case STOP code 9, False Alarm - Good Intent must be used.

Only where cooking fumes caused the alarm, (e.g. steam from boiling water or fumes issuing from an oven when opened) and there is no immediate fire risk should the False Alarm – due to apparatus STOP code 10 be used.

For domestic / residential premises where the incident is verified as a False Alarm the STOP code will be suffixed by the letter D, (e.g. STOP code 10, 63, D).

Where a return call confirms an UFS before booking in attendance, a signal appliance will continue under normal road conditions to gather information and give advice using Form FPG40d and the STOP code will be suffixed by the letter S. (e.g. STOP code 10, 65, S)

It should also be remembered that at no time should Service personnel ever reset the alarm system. Doing this could reduce the effectiveness of any investigation by a

competent engineer into the cause of the alarm. It also reduces the onus on the owner/occupier to have the system checked.

1.3 ACTION TO BE TAKEN BY PERFORMANCE INFORMATION DEPARTMENT (PID).

PID will forward details of **all** AFA calls to the Fire Alarm Reduction Manager (FARM), at Community Fire Safety HQ, Old Budbrooke Road, Warwick, CV35 7FP, on the next working day following the incident. This includes calls attended by fire crews and those abandoned by Service Control where confirmation of fire can not be given.

1.4 ACTION TO BE TAKEN BY FIRE ALARM REDUCTION MANAGER

The FARM will enter details of AFA calls into the Tocsin Fire Alarm Management Database.

Where a UwFS is received directly from a premises, the FARM will contact the premises Responsible Person to give advice on reducing UwFS, how to put in place a safe procedure for checking for signs of fire before calling the fire service and to inform them that a system Unique Reference Number (URN) is now required.

In the unlikely event that the cause of the unwanted signals cannot be prevented from reoccurring by telephone and letter, the FARM will arrange for a fire protection audit of the premises to be carried out. The audit will include advice on managing the AFA system effectively and how to reduce UwFS. Although the inspector may suggest that the alarm system may be incompatible with the processes being carried out in the premises, on no account will the inspector specify system design changes, as this is the responsibility of an accredited alarm design engineer.

All Alarm Receiving Centres (ARCs) and Telecare Service Providers (TSPs) must sign the standard agreement (see section 3), which is based on the CFOA model agreement between Fire and Rescue Authorities and ARCs.

This agreement specifies the procedures to be followed by the ARC/TSP on receipt of an automatic alarm signal.

Performance Level monitoring.

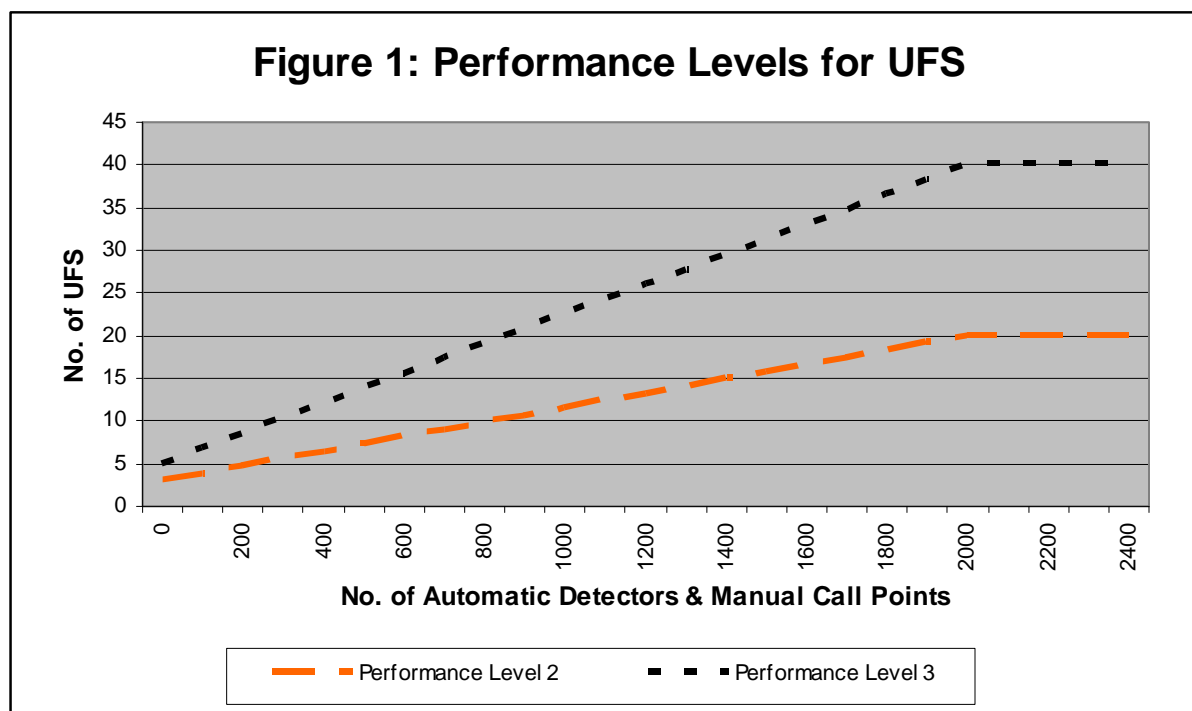
All AFAs causing false signals will be assigned a URN by the Service. Frequency of calls from premises will be monitored and the alarm systems will be classified into three Performance Levels based upon reliability (i.e. number of UFSs compared with the number of automatic detectors and manual call points on the premises) as indicated in figure 1.

Green (Performance Level 1): Good record of reliability in relation to the number of detectors installed.

Amber (Performance Level 2): Recent history of unreliability in relation to the number of detectors installed.

Black (Performance Level 3): Very poor history of unreliability in relation to the number of detectors installed.

Where the Performance Level of an AFA is changed the relevant ARC/TSP will be informed by the FARM, and a record of the amended Performance Level will be recorded against the premises Tocsin information.



Where repeated UwFS continue to be received **after** the alarm's Performance Level has reached the **Amber** threshold. The FARM will inform the relevant Area Risk Team within whose area the premises lies as specified in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Area Risk Team notification of Performance Level 2 premises.

Two or more UFS within a 24 hour period..
Three or more UFS over a 7 day period.
Four or more UFS over a 3 month period.

Where an alarm's reliability reaches the **Black** threshold, the FARM will visit the premises and carry out a full audit of the fire protection arrangement within the premises under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

During the audit process the FARM will discuss the issues relating to the unreliable AFA and the booklet 'Avoiding Unwanted Fire Signals Generated by Automatic Fire Detection Systems', will be supplied to the Responsible Person. The Responsible Person should then provide to the inspector an agreed written improvement plan for reducing the UwFS within 21 days. Following either receipt of the improvement plan or on failure to produce such a plan, where additional measures are required the use of regulatory enforcement should be considered.

On no account will the inspector specify system design changes, as this is the responsibility of an accredited alarm design engineer.

If continued UwFS are received the alarm status will then be changed to Black - Performance Level 3 and Service Mobilising Control informed.

1.5 ACTION TO BE TAKEN BY THE AREA RISK TEAM

Following notification from the FARM of repeat UwFS as given in Table 1 above, the Area Risk Team will contact the Responsible Person of the premises to make an appointment to discuss the issues in relation to the unreliable system and to give options for resolving the UwFS, (see appendix 4.3).

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PRIMARY INFORMATION

2.1 TYPES OF FALSE ALARMS

False alarms can be divided into two basic types - those that are made with deliberate false intent; False Alarm Deliberate (FAD), and those that are received from an Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA).

False alarms received from AFAs (including domestic systems) can be further split into two sub groups; those that are False Alarm with Good Intent (FAGI), and those caused by faults with the systems that are Unwanted Fire Signals (UFSs).

2.2 FALSE ALARM DELIBERATE INTENT (FAD)

FAD calls are those calls received by the Service which have either been made directly using the '999' system, (and on arrival at the incident it is apparent that there was no fire and no good reason why someone should have called the Service), or are calls activated by an alarm system where a break glass call point has been broken deliberately.

Put simply, FAD's are nuisance calls and there are certain actions which must be taken to minimise the affects of these calls on the Service.

The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 covers the offence of making deliberate false alarm calls to the fire service.

Section 49 of the Act states:-

1. A person commits an offence if he knowingly gives or causes to be given a false alarm of fire to a person acting on behalf of a fire and rescue authority.
2. A person guilty of an offence under subsection (1) is liable on summary conviction;
 - to a fine not exceeding level 4 on the standard scale,
 - to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 51 weeks, or
 - to both.
3. In relation to an offence committed before the commencement of section 281(5) of the Criminal Justice Act 2003 (c. 44), the reference in subsection (2)(b) to 51 weeks is to be read as a reference to 3 months.

2.3 UNWANTED FIRE SIGNALS FROM AFAs

Nationally and locally, the percentage of UwFSs from AFAs as compared to the overall total of emergency calls received is very high.

It is therefore very important to record the cause of any alarm correctly and a distinction must therefore be made between calls from AFA systems which if left unattended would

have resulted in an uncontrolled fire and those calls which were due to equipment fault or fumes/vapour which would not lead to an uncontrolled fire.

Where any fire was extinguished quickly and easily by the occupier without physical damage to property, but if left would have developed into an uncontrolled fire must be classified as AFA - Good Intent and recorded on the IRS System as a Good Intent False Alarm.

Where an uncontrolled fire would not have occurred if intervention was not made, these incidents must be classified as AFA – Due to apparatus. These incidents should be recorded on the IRS as Fire Alarm due to Apparatus.

See Appendix 4.2 – Stop Codes.

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SUPPORT INFORMATION

3.1 LETTER AND STANDARD AGREEMENT TO ALARM RECEIVING CENTRES

Dear Sir/Madam

Model Agreement between Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Authority
and Remotely Monitored Fire Alarm Centres.

As you may be aware the Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA), British Fire Protection Systems Association (BFPSA) and the British Security Industry Association (BSIA) have developed a policy on the Fire and Rescue Services' response to Remotely Monitored Fire Alarm Systems to address the actions required to reduce the number of false alarms from automatic fire detection systems.

Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service have signed up to the main principles of the policy and as such now require your company to contact each of your subscribers within Warwickshire to inform them of the new procedures which have been implemented.

I therefore enclose two copies of our standard model agreement, which must be signed on behalf of your company and one copy returned to the above address.

A full list of your Warwickshire subscribers must also be sent to the Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service, which is to include the following information:-

Full name and address of each monitored building
Contact name, Telephone number and e-mail address

Following receipt of these documents each automatic fire alarm system (AFA) will be contacted with a view to issue a unique reference number (URN), which must be quoted when you call the Fire and Rescue Service. No call will be accepted from Monitoring Centres from Alarms issued with a URN unless it is quoted.

Calls received from AFAs will be monitored by Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service to ensure system reliability. Where reliability falls below that specified in the model agreement you will be notified. Steps should then be taken to reduce the frequency of false signals and a copy of the maintenance certificate forwarded to us for our records. If no action is taken to reduce false signals the AFAs URN may be removed and an attendance made only when the presence of a fire has been confirmed from the premises.

You should remind all of your customers that they have a duty to ensure their fire alarm system operates at an acceptable level of reliability and that it forms part of an overall fire safety strategy which must be included into a fire safety risk assessment of their building.

If a building is unoccupied when you pass a call to us you must arrange for a key holder to attend the building within 20 minutes of the fire alarm actuating. If there is no sign of fire at the building and

a key holder does not respond in this time Warwickshire Fire & Rescue Service will either leave without any further action taking place or will make a forced entry to confirm that no fire is present.

If you require any further advice or explanation of the contents of this letter or Policy do not hesitate to contact the above named Officer.

Yours faithfully

FOR AND ON BEHALF OF
County Fire Officer

WARWICKSHIRE FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

and

«name»

**STANDARD AGREEMENT FOR:
ALARM RECEIVING CENTRES AND TELECARE SERVICE PROVIDERS**

(The 'Agreement')

THIS AGREEMENT is executed as a deed the {{date}}.

BETWEEN: -

(1) WARWICKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL, SHIRE HALL,
WARWICK, CV34 4RR ('the Provider'):

and

(2) «name», «address», ('the Operator'):

together being 'the Parties'.

WHEREAS:-

- (A) The Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA), British Fire Protection Systems Association (BFPSA) and the British Security Industry Association (BSIA) have developed a policy on the Fire and Rescue Services response to Remotely Monitored Fire Alarm Systems to address the actions required to reduce the number of false alarms from automatic fire detection systems.
- (B) Calls received from the Operator will be monitored by the Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service (the 'Service') to ensure system reliability. Where reliability falls below that specified the Operator will be notified. Steps will then have to be taken to mitigate the frequency of false signals and a copy of the maintenance certificate forwarded to the Service for their records.
- (C) The Provider will allow the Operator to use the emergency telephone line on the terms and conditions set out below.

NOW IT IS HEREBY AGREED BY AND BETWEEN THE PARTIES as follows:

- 1. Subject to the guidelines and procedures specified in the Second Schedule, the Provider for a period ('the Term') commencing on the date of this agreement ('Commencement Date') agrees to allow the Operator the use of the provided emergency telephone line ('the Emergency Line') to the control room of the Service. The Emergency Line may only be used to allow the Operator to alert the control room of the Service in the event of a triggered fire alarm at a monitored premises.
- 2. In consideration whereof the Operator hereby agrees as follows:
 - 2.1 To pay the Provider £250 per annum during the Term and proportionately for any fraction of a year during the Term. Payment shall be made thirty (30) days following receipt by the Operator of the Provider's invoice. All sums payable under the Agreement shall be exclusive of Value Added Tax which may be added to the invoice where appropriate.
 - 2.2 Not to permit the use of the emergency line otherwise than by a user approved by the Service.

2.3 To send to the Service:

A full list of the Operator's subscribers, to include:

Full name and address, Contact name, Telephone number and e-mail address of each alarmed building.

Confirmation of the ARC / TSP approval certificate and certificate number.

2.4 Following receipt of these documents where Unwanted Fire Signals (UwFS) are received the AFA user will be contacted with a view to issue a unique reference number (URN) by the Service.

2.5 Where the Service has issued a unique reference number ('URN') to a building. The Operator will quote the relevant URN and full address of the subscriber to the Service when using the Emergency Line.

2.6 Before use of the Emergency Line, the Operator will use best endeavours to contact the responsible person ('RP') for the premises from which the signal has been generated. Where the RP at the premises can confirm there is a fire or a direct indication of fire (i.e. smoke, smell, noise) the Operator will use the Emergency Line to contact the Service stating that a fire has been confirmed.

2.7 Where immediate confirmation of fire cannot be given by the RP the Operator will request that confirmation of fire be sought, and the RP call the Service using the 999 (112) system once the presence of a fire or false alarm signal is known.

2.8 Where the building occupiers cannot be contacted the Operator will contact the designated key holder for the building and request they immediately attend at the building to investigate the cause of the alarm.

2.9 Where the Operator is unable to contact the RP for the premises they may use the Emergency Line to contact the Service. The Service will then either wait for a fire confirmation 999 call from the premises, despatch a single fire engine to investigate the alarm signal or despatch a pre-determine response based on risk assessment principles.

3. The Provider agrees so far as reasonably practical to maintain the Emergency Line in good working order and to remedy any breakdown in it as quickly as reasonably possible **PROVIDED THAT** the Operator shall not be entitled to any proportionate reduction or refund in the monies payable in accordance with Clause 2.1 of the Agreement unless such breakdown shall not have been remedied within a period of thirty days after its occurrence.

4. The Operator shall comply with the Data Protection Act 1998 (including any registration requirements) and shall act only on the instructions of the Provider when processing the Provider's personal data taking all appropriate security measures to protect against any unauthorised or unlawful processing or accidental loss or destruction of such personal data including (without limitation) providing the Provider with all such information as the Provider may reasonably require to satisfy itself that the Operator is complying with these obligations and permitting the Provider to carry out an audit at premises belonging to or under the control of the Operator.

5. A person who is not a party to this Agreement has no rights under the Contracts (Rights of Third Parties) Act 1999 to enforce any terms of this Agreement.

6. The parties agree the Agreement shall terminate:-
 - 6.1 In the event of any breach of the Agreement which is capable of remedy, on the party not in breach given the other party written notice to remedy the breach and if within 30 days the other party shall have failed to remedy the breach to the reasonable satisfaction of the party not in breach, the party not in breach may then terminate the Agreement by giving the other party 28 days notice in writing.
 - 6.2 In the event of any breach of the Agreement which is not capable of remedy, by the party not in breach giving the other party 28 days written notice.
 - 6.3 By either party giving the other not less than three months notice in writing at any time.
7. The Provider may cancel the contract and recover from the Operator the amount of any loss resulting from the cancellation if at any time it becomes known to the Provider that the Operator or any person employed by the Operator or acting on his behalf whether with or without the knowledge of the Operator has
 - 7.1 offered given or agreed to give any inducement or reward to any person or body in relation to the obtaining or execution of the contract or any other contract with the Provider: or
 - 7.2 favoured or discriminated against any person in relation to this or any other contract with the Provider; or
 - 7.3 committed an offence in relation to any contract with the Provider under the Prevention of Corruption Acts 1889 to 1916 or section 117(3) Local Government Act 1972 .
8. Information Sharing and Confidentiality
 - 8.1 When required to do so by the Provider, the Operator shall assist the Provider at no additional charge in meeting its obligations under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or any statutory modification or re-enactment thereof or any related guidelines or codes of practice.
 - 8.2 The Operator shall keep confidential all information belonging to or provided by the Provider in connection with this contract and shall not further use or disclose it to any third party without the express consent of the Provider or except to the extent permitted by law
9. Force majeure

Both parties shall be released from their respective obligations in the event of national emergency war prohibitive governmental regulation or if any other cause beyond the reasonable control of the parties or either of them renders the performance of this Agreement impossible whereupon all money due under this Agreement shall be paid immediately and in particular:

- 9.1 the Operator shall immediately pay to the Provider all arrears of Payments, and
- 9.2 each party shall be liable to pay to the other damages for any breach of this Agreement and all expenses and costs incurred by that party in enforcing its rights under this Agreement.
10. If any provision of this Agreement is declared by any judicial or other competent Authority to be void, voidable, illegal or otherwise unenforceable the remaining provisions of this Agreement shall remain in full force and effect unless the Provider in the Provider's discretion decides that the effect of such declaration is to defeat the original intention of the parties in which event the Provider shall be entitled to terminate this Agreement by 30 days' notice to the Operator.
11. Each party acknowledges that this Agreement contains the whole agreement between the parties and that it has not relied upon any oral or written representation made to it by the other or its employees or agents and has made its own independent investigations into all matters relevant to it.
12. This Agreement supersedes any prior agreement between the parties whether written or oral and any such prior agreements are cancelled as at the Commencement Date but without prejudice to any rights which have already accrued to either of the parties.
13. All notices to be given under this Agreement shall be in writing and shall either be delivered personally or sent by first class or airmail prepaid post or by telex, cable or facsimile transmission. Each notice shall be addressed to the address of the party concerned set out in this Agreement or to such other address as that party shall have previously notified to the sender.
14. This Agreement and all rights under it may only be assigned or transferred by the Provider.
15. This Agreement shall be governed by English law in every particular including formation and interpretation and shall be deemed to have been made in England. Any proceedings arising out of or in connection with this Agreement may be brought in any court of competent jurisdiction in England and Wales.
16. The failure by either party to enforce at any time or for any period any one or more of the terms or conditions of this Agreement shall not be a waiver of them or of the right at any time subsequently to enforce all terms and conditions of this Agreement.
17. The Operator shall not assign or sub-contract any of his rights or duties under this Agreement without the consent in writing of the Provider (such consent not to be unreasonably withheld).
18. The Operator shall notify the Provider in writing immediately if the Operator enters into administration or passes a resolution to wind up or the court makes an administration order or a winding-up order, or the Operator makes a composition or arrangement with its creditors, or an administrative receiver, receiver or manager is appointed by a creditor or by the court, or possession is taken of any of its property under the terms of a floating charge.

AS WITNESS the hands of the parties the day and year first above written

Signed for and on behalf of the Provider
Authorised Signatory

Date

Signed for and on behalf of the Operator
Authorised Signatory

Date

3.2 **BIBLIOGRAPHY:**

1. HM Fire Service Inspectorate 'Reduction through Partnership Reducing False Alarms'. A Thematic Inspection of Unwanted Fire Signals from Automatic Fire Detection Systems - March 2001.
2. CFA Policy for the Reduction of False Alarms and Unwanted Fire Signals - September 2008.

3.3 **GLOSSARY:**

AFA:
Automatic Fire Alarm

ARC:
Alarm Receiving Centre

Call Filtering:
The steps taken by the Service Control team to ascertain from the caller what level of response is required from the Fire and Rescue Service

CFOA:
Chief Fire Officers Association

False Alarm:
A fire signal resulting from a cause/s other than a fire. A False Alarm becomes an Unwanted Fire Signal at the point a Fire and Rescue Service is requested to attend

FARM:
Fire Alarm Reduction Manager

Fire Alarm Log Book:

Book to record maintenance of alarm system and cause of any alarm signals

Fire Protection Manager:

Fire Officer responsible for ensuring all relevant premises receive a full audit of fire protection arrangements

Form FPG40d:

Form to be completed by Incident Commander onsite following attendance at a Unwanted Fire Signal

FRS:

Fire and Rescue Service

Incident Commander:

Fire Officer in charge of an incident and responsible for completing Form FPG 40d

PDA:

Pre-Determined Attendance

The number of appliances that will attend an incident based upon a risk assessment of the premises

Performance Level:

The levels which determine the response of the Fire and Rescue Service to alarms from registered premises based upon reliability in relation to false alarms

PID:

Performance Information Department.

Responsible Person:

Defined in the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 as:

- a) In relation to a workplace, the employer, if the workplace is to any extent under his control;
- b) in relation to any premises not falling in paragraph a) –
 - I. the person who has control of the premises (as an occupier or otherwise) in connection with the carrying on by him of a trade, business or other undertaking (for profit or not); or
 - II. the owner, where the person in control of the premises does not have control in connection with the carrying on by that person of trade, business or other undertaking.

Service Control:

The team of Fire Personnel who manage calls to request assistance from the Fire and Rescue Service.

Stop Code:

The numeric code which is recorded by Service Control following an incident.

TSP:

Telecare Service Provider

A service which provides people, especially elderly and vulnerable individuals to live independently in their own homes. Services can be as simple as the basic community alarm service, able to respond in an emergency and provide regular contact by telephone. It can include detectors which monitor motion, falls, fire and gas, which trigger a warning to a response centre staffed 24 hours a day.

UFS:

Unwanted Fire Signal

A false alarm from an automatic fire alarm which has been passed through to the Fire and Rescue Service for assistance.

URN:

Unique Reference Number.

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APPENDIX

4.1

FPG40d (10/10)

**WARWICKSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
UNWANTED FIRE ALARM CALL OUT**

You should be aware that although we attended at this time, if the call had been received between 7am and 8pm NO ATTENDANCE would have been made unless the cause of the alarm had been investigated and confirmation of a real fire emergency given.

Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service have attended your premises in response to the operation of an Automatic Fire Alarm. As no fire has been found, the incident will be recorded as an Unwanted Automatic Fire Alarm Activation.

This form should be filed within your Fire Alarm System Logbook for the information of your alarm maintenance engineer together with an entry by you indicating the most probable cause of the false alarm.

REQUIRED ACTION

You must ensure you have a pre-arranged emergency evacuation plan for your building. This plan must include a safe and tested procedure for investigating the cause of any alarm, and summoning assistance from the Fire and Rescue Service using the 999 telephone system if a fire is discovered.

If your alarm system is connected to an Alarm Receiving Centre remember to contact them before testing your fire alarm system. When the building is occupied the use of an immediate automatic call to an Alarm Receiving Centre should not be used.

Where the building is unoccupied, you must consider how you intend to safely investigate any alarm as no fire engine will be sent between 7am and 8pm unless there is verbal confirmation that there is a fire. Outside of these hours a non-emergency attendance will be made however if a key holder is not present when we arrive the cause of any alarm will not be investigated fully as we will be unable to gain access to your building. As such your building may be left without an active fire alarm system if a fault has occurred.

You should investigate the cause of all false alarms and, if it is found to have been caused by normal working practices they should be reviewed and changed if appropriate. If the alarm system is at fault, you should arrange for your fire alarm maintenance engineer to examine the system and carry out any necessary corrective action. The engineer should issue a certificate of compliance.

A well-conducted fire risk assessment should expose any risk of false alarms, allowing you to take preventative measures (visit our website at www.warwickshire.gov.uk/fireandrescue for advice). As part of ongoing risk management, it is crucial that you advise your service/maintenance company if you change the use of or procedures within the protected building, to ensure the system design remains valid. If building work is being undertaken, end users should be responsible for ensuring measures are put in place to prevent false alarms. This may require contact with your service alarm engineer for further advice.

False calls received by the Fire and Rescue Service seriously deplete our resources and increase the risk to fire fighters and the public. Your co-operation is required.

If you or your fire alarm maintenance company cannot prevent further false alarms from taking place, you should contact our Fire Alarm Support Team on **01926 410800**, who will be able to give you further advice on how to prevent or mitigate the effects of false alarms.

Name of Incident Commander: _____ Date: _____

4.2

STOP CODES

Fire Alarm due to Apparatus

<u>Human</u> 60 Accidentally / careless set off 61 Testing / Working on system 62 Smoking 63 Cooking / burnt toast fumes (where food did not catch fire) 64* Malicious AFA break glass activation Code 64 is to be recorded on the IRS as Malicious false alarm by phone.	<u>Contaminants</u> 70 Thrips / Insects 71 Steam 72 Chemical/Aerosol 73 Dust 74 Smoke cloak
<u>System</u> 65 Poor maintenance 66 Faulty 67 Damaged 68 Incorrect positioning 69 Unsuitable equipment	<u>External factors</u> 75 Power surge 76 Storm 77 Water supplies – For sprinklers only 78 Unknown
79 False Alarm Good Intent. Use code 79 for all incidents where the AFA raised the alarm but where the cause was good intent as listed below. These incidents should be recorded on the IRS as Good Intent False Alarms <u>not</u> Fire Alarm due to Apparatus.	For domestic premises add a 'D' to the end of the Stop code. Where confirmation of an unwanted fire signal (false alarm) is received <u>before</u> booking in attendance, an IRS report does not have to be completed, add an 'S' to the end of the Stop code.

False Alarm Good Intent – For AFA Code 79

<u>Smell of burning</u> Overheating light/fitting (No fire) Overheating appliance (No fire) Fire elsewhere (not in location)	<u>Smoke/Condensation</u> Controlled burning Air conditioning Steam Smoking chimney
<u>Burnt toast/food</u> Toaster/Toast Other cooking (Where food caught fire but no other damage was caused. If other damage was caused this must be recorded as a FIRE).	<u>Reflected light / Sun light</u> <u>Other</u>

4.3 Guidance and information for Area Risk Teams.

When notified by the FARM of an unreliable fire alarm system the history of the alarmed premises should be viewed on the Tocsin Fire Alarm Management Database and the Responsible Person for the alarm contacted with the view to making a visit to the premises.

To ensure a consistency in approach when visiting premises the following areas should be covered.

- Is the alarm system checked and maintained by a qualified (third party accredited) fire alarm engineer at least once a year?
- Where UFASs are generated is the cause of the alarm investigated and a record of the false alarm and its cause recorded in the Fire Alarm Logbook?
- Where unacceptable levels of UFSs are generated has the fire alarm engineer been tasked to investigate the cause of the alarms and if necessary redesign the AFA to take into consideration the processes involved that are causing the false alarms to occur?
- If the 999 emergency system is used, does the Responsible Person for the premises have a procedure in place for checking to confirm if there is a fire **before** calling the fire service?
- Do staff members know the procedures to follow when the fire alarm is activated and is the alarm's URN known and quoted to the Service when called?

If the alarm system is connected automatically to an ARC;

- Does the ARC call the premises in normal working hours following notification of an alarm to confirm if a fire is present before calling the Service?
- During normal working hours when the premises are occupied, the company should consider going 'off line' to the ARC and using the 999 system instead or placing a time delay (three to four minutes) in the automatic call to the ARC to allow the alarm to be investigated before the Service is called.
- The use of a 'double knock' system should be considered whereby the signal to the ARC is generated only following the activation of two smoke detectors or a single heat detector or break glass point?
- Where a delay is used before contacting the Service the activation of the local alarm sounders should not be delayed and evacuation of the premises should always be initiated immediately.

The effective performance of automatic fire detection and fire alarm systems is set out in British Standard 5839:2002 which includes the correct design, installation, commissioning, acceptance and maintenance processes. An easy use guide on reducing false alarms can be downloaded from the Warwickshire Fire & Rescue web page. (Follow links in Business Advice section).

Where recommendations are made a written record shall be placed on the premises alarm record in the Tocsin management information system by the Area Risk Team.