

Subject: Recall of lifts in the event of fire

British Standards for the fire safety of buildings recommend that lifts which are not required to operate in the event of fire (so lifts other than for fire service use and evacuation lifts) are recalled and taken out of service. The intention is to avoid passengers being trapped in lift cars and for fire and rescue service personnel to be able to rapidly check this.

There are two British Standards dealing with fire safety in the design of buildings.

1

BS 9991: 2015; *Fire safety in the design, management and use of residential buildings* - Code of practice applies to residential buildings. Clause 7.1 General includes:

Where a fire alarm system covers the common areas and has a suitable electrical output signal, lifts other than fire-fighting and evacuation lifts should be recalled to an exit floor and then taken out of service in accordance with BS EN 81-73. Where there is no suitable fire alarm system, the lift should be recalled from a manual recall device in accordance with BS EN 81-73.

2

BS 9999: 2017: *Fire safety in the design, management and use of buildings - Code of practice* has just been published. BS 9999:2017, clause 10.4.1.1 includes:

Control systems should be designed such that:.... lifts other than fire-fighting lifts and evacuation lifts are provided with suitable electrical signal(s) to recall them to an exit floor and then taken out of service in accordance with BS EN 81-73:2016, 5.3.5b) with car and landing doors open. Where there is no suitable fire alarm system, alternative measures should be put in place where appropriate such as recalling the lift from a manual recall device, e.g. key switch...



BS EN 81-73:2016; *Behaviour of lifts in the event of fire* is for lifts other than lifts used by the fire services and lifts used for evacuation. BS EN 81-73 specifies the operation of the lift to remove it from service including a prohibition sign as on the right.

So if BS 9991 or BS 9999 are applicable and the lift is not to be used by the fire service or for evacuation, then it is recommended that a signal from the fire alarm system is used to recall the lift and remove it from service. Where a fire alarm system signal is not available then a manual recall switch is recommended.

Note: that fire recall operation should not be fitted to lifts intended for fire service use or for evacuation as its intention is to remove the lift from service in the event of fire. BS EN 81-72 has requirements for firefighters lifts and BS 9999 Annex G has recommendations for evacuation lifts.

