

Lift Owner News

Subject: Lift door passenger protection devices

Background - new lifts

For many years, the standards for new lifts have specified maximum allowed values for the closing force and impact from automatic power operated doors which are used on most lifts, and also required a simple device such as a single beam to open the doors if there was an obstruction e.g. from a person between the doors.

Since 2003, BS EN 81-70 the lift standard for accessibility including those with disability has recognised that these devices should be supplemented by a full height non-contact detector between the doors and the use of a timer to delay closing of the doors to provide better protection for persons with disability.

Since 1 September 2017, the fitting of full height non-contact detectors has been required for all new passenger lifts conforming to BS EN 81-20.

What about existing lifts?



Passenger protection devices fitted to existing lifts should be maintained - various regulations prohibit a reduction in safety level of an existing lift.

Lift Owners and their maintenance contractors have for many years recognised the benefit of fitting full height non-contact detectors to doors to improve the safety of existing lifts as recommended by BS EN 81-80. These devices have been fitted so widely that many lift users now expect all lifts to have these fitted.

The Lift Owner is responsible for assessing the safety of their lift and should make improvements where needed. We would point out that contact with the doors is possibly the most common incident on lifts for users and that full height non-contact detectors can be readily fitted to help address this risk; and the chances of legal action arising from an accident. We strongly recommend that lift owners have such detectors fitted as a minimum.



Some points to be aware of

Most full height non-contact detectors "look" between the doors and cannot see users approaching the doors although more advanced detectors are available which can do this.

Users should not try to enter the lift car between closing doors or rely on any detector fitted to re-open the doors. An impact from closing doors might result.

In particular, we have heard of wheelchair and mobility scooter users doing this and impacting on closed doors with very dangerous consequences - see a separate [Lift Owner News on the use of mobility scooters and powered wheelchairs with lifts](#).

Lift contractors fitting full height non-contact detectors should note [LEIA – Dangers of door edges opening landing door](#) on our website.