



# Are You Aware? No.78 rev0

**Subject: LFB withdrawn blanket approvals for BS EN 81-72 deviations**

## Background

The National foreword of BS EN 81-72:2015 has the following:

*Concerning the contents of this standard, the usual practice in the UK has implications for the following aspects subject to negotiation:*

- *Assumption h) in the Introduction includes the rescue of persons from within the lift car. Subclause 5.4 of the standard includes requirements both for rescue from outside and for self-rescue from inside the lift car. The usual practice in the UK is for assistance for trapped firefighters to come from outside the lift car.*

BS EN 81-72, subclause 5.4 includes requirements for self-rescue of firefighters from the lift car using steps/ladder, a trap door to the car top, and then to a landing using a ladder.

The London Fire Brigade (LFB) had been prepared to approve deviations from BS EN 81-72 including elements of self-rescue provision. These approvals have been used as the basis of gaining Notified Body approval of deviations from the BS EN 81-72 by the lift installer.

## Latest position

The LFB have advised us that they have reviewed their position regarding the requirements of the self-rescue facility and that their position is that firefighters lifts should be designed and installed in full conformity to BS EN 81-72 including all elements of the self-rescue provision. LFB have withdrawn any previous statements or blanket approvals.

We understand that LFB have withdrawn their *blanket* approvals and that they will be prepared to look at situations on a *case by case* basis. LFB will expect compliance with BS EN 81-72 unless specific agreement has been obtained.

We understand that Notified Bodies are reluctant to approve firefighters lifts deviating from BS EN 81-72 without approval from the fire and rescue services (FRS). A new BS EN 81-72 is expected to be published soon but its technical requirements will be unchanged from BS EN 81-72:2015 (although it might not have the paragraph above from the National foreword).

## Implications

- **Newly designed buildings with a new contract for a new firefighters lift** would reasonably be expected to fully conform to BS EN 81-72 as the required building elements should be included in the design. Obtaining approval for any deviation might therefore be difficult and require a compelling justification in support.
- **Buildings already designed and contract placed for a new firefighters lift** would reasonably be expected to fully conform to BS EN 81-72 unless there are building elements which preclude this. We would expect that LFB may consider a justification in support of a deviation from BS EN 81-72 for a limited time.
- **For existing buildings/existing lifts** the guidance in BS 8899:2016 *Improvement of fire-fighting and evacuation provisions in existing lifts – Code of practice* should be applied.

**Those responsible for the building design and provision of firefighters lifts are advised to review their projects and be guided accordingly.**