

The Verifier and Applicant for Building Warrant may decide to refer a case to the SBSA for a Ministerial View on compliance with Building Regulations.

Issue:
Use of concealed sprinkler heads

Verifier:
Highland Council

The View of Scottish Ministers

The following is a summary of a Ministerial view which has been issued under Section 12 of the Building (Scotland) Act 2003. The intention is to promote consistency of compliance with the building regulations in Scotland. It should be recognised that the following view is project specific and has been anonymised. The view is not legally binding and ultimately if a warrant is refused by a verifier, the right of appeal is to the Sheriff Court.

Functional Standard(s)

Standard 2.15 Automatic life safety fire suppression systems

Every *building* must be *designed* and *constructed* in such a way that in the event of an outbreak of fire within the *building*, fire and smoke will be inhibited from spreading through the *building* by the operation of an automatic life safety fire suppression system'

Technical Context

In this case, the applicant and verifier cited the guidance issued by Scottish Ministers contained in the Domestic Technical Handbook [Clause 2.15.2]. The relevant guidance given in this clause states '*Components of the system should be as specified and tested in accordance with DD 252: 2002. Sprinkler heads should be 'quick response type' with a response time index (RTI) of 50 (m.s)^{1/2} and a conductivity factor (c) of not more than 1 (m/s)². Concealed or recessed pattern sprinkler heads should only be used with the approval of the verifier.*'

View of Scottish Ministers

The intention of this part of clause 2.15.2 is that the thermal sensitivities of the sprinklers are such that they detect the fire and operate at an early stage. Standard 2.15 of the Technical Handbooks aims to ensure fire and smoke will be inhibited from spreading through the building by the operation of an automatic life safety fire suppression system. There is no doubt that the effective use of concealed sprinkler heads will inhibit the spread of fire and smoke through the building.

Having carefully considered all the information submitted in this case, it is the view of Scottish Ministers that the proposals do meet the requirements of Standard 2.15 subject to the following:

- The temperature rating of the sprinkler head should be 68 °C in accordance with clause 5.3.1.1 of BS 9251: 2005;
- The drawings show the use of concealed sprinkler heads. There is a risk that these could be covered at some future time by redecoration. Therefore it would be prudent for the verifier to consider imposing a continuing requirement to ensure that they retain the capacity to operate effectively throughout the life of the building.

Further Information

Contact the SBSA Procedural Team at views@sbsa.gsi.gov.uk for further information on the Views System.