



10 THINGS

The Responsible Person Needs
to Know and Act On
to Stay Out of Jail

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Introduction



Every business has, or should have, a *responsible person* in charge of the fire precautions for their commercial building or school.

Many people are lumbered with the role without fully understanding the *ins* and *outs*.

*'you could be fined
or even end up in
prison'*

As responsible person, it is critical you understand your role and the fire safety regulations pertaining to it.

If you don't it is very unlikely that you will fulfil your responsibility and, if the worst happens, you'll be in trouble.

This means you could be fined or even end up in prison.



Blake's Say

*We've written this because the legislation is incredibly complicated and while this guide is only intended to point you in the right direction, it is still a good **first step**.*

10 Ways To Avoid Jail



Blake's Say

Prosecution is considered when there is failure to comply with the fire safety duties imposed by the Order and that:

"failure has put one or more relevant persons at risk of death or serious injury in case of fire"

(Article 32 (1) of the Regulatory Reform Fire Safety Order 2005).



1 – Fire Risk Assessment

The *responsible person* for any commercial building or school is obliged to carry out a Fire Risk Assessment and review it regularly. It is your legal responsibility to do so. If you fail to conduct this critical task properly, lives are literally put at risk.

If you are unable to do this yourself, you must call in the experts. This means people who are fully trained and conversant with the law, covering areas such as:

- Fire prevention - Fire alarms
- Fire-fighting equipment to tackle small fires
- Emergency lighting to ensure the escape route is easy to follow
- Identify persons at risk
- Eliminate the risk of fire where possible



2 – Deal With Issues

Each commercial building or school is unique so the Fire Risk Assessment will unearth specific issues.

These need to be acted upon! Ignoring the findings of an assessment is negligent and will get you into trouble if the worst should happen.

Fire safety officers will tell you whether your current or proposed safety measures are adequate. You may be issued with an informal notice suggesting improvements OR a formal fire safety notice telling you how to fix specific problems they have identified.



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During an inspection, the Fire Safety Officer may wish to view the following documents:

- ✓ Fire precautions log book
- ✓ Records of staff training and drills

Along with records of testing and maintenance of:

- ✓ **fire alarms**
- ✓ **emergency lighting**
- ✓ **sprinkler systems**
- ✓ **smoke ventilation systems**



3 – Maintain And Test All Equipment

Any equipment you have on your premises is useless in a fire if it doesn't work properly. In certain cases if neglected, equipment can even become dangerous - CO2 fire extinguishers for example.

A competent person must regularly test and maintain all equipment. This includes fire alarms, fire-fighting equipment, emergency lighting and even signage. Signage and written information for emergency services may fade over time – this has to be checked and maintained as required.



4 – Emergency Lighting

Escape routes have to be lit correctly, according to British Standards. An emergency situation can cause panic, this escalates if the power fails and passageways are dark.

Emergency Lighting needs to be sufficient to illuminate the escape route so people can see the way out easily and avoid any obstacles as they leave the building.

An electrician is able to fit the lighting but is **NOT** trained to understand the regulations. You need an expert!



5 – Emergency Plan

Your emergency plan needs to tell your occupants how to avoid specific risks while evacuating your premises in an emergency. .



6 – Workplace Law

A common misconception in schools is that once the children are off the premises everything is covered.

But the Fire Safety regulations concern the workplace so if your school has cleaners or a caretaker working during the hours of darkness or opening up, emergency lighting is categorically required. And it's the same for your commercial building.



Blake's Say

A third party certified BAFE registered company, such as Blake Fire & Security Systems, can assist in proving the responsible person has acted with due diligence in their fire safety requirements.



7 – Keep Records

Records need to be kept concerning deviations from standards, improvements, false alarms, servicing, testing and... it goes on! Everything needs to be documented in the fire safety log book.

8 – Tell The Staff

The responsible person cannot organise the assessment and the resulting work, record it and then forget it. They are obliged to communicate relevant information with staff, such as:

- Identified fire risks
- Fire safety information and instructions e.g. the evacuation plan
- Training
- Drills

9 – Provide Fire Detection And Warning Systems

Obviously, it's critical to have both fire detection and warning systems in place so staff know when to evacuate as soon as possible in case of emergency. The exact requirements depend on the type of building and the type of work undertaken in the premises.

It is the responsible person's duty of care to ensure expert advice is taken and all installation, testing and maintenance is up to the appropriate British Standards. You need use a reputable company for this.

10 – Provide Firefighting Equipment & Training

Fire extinguishers and blankets are required to allow staff to fight small fires. These need to be stored properly, tested, serviced and upgraded as and when required.

Equipment needs to be operational in a fire emergency. And staff must be trained on how to use it. If not you, as *responsible person* will be held to account!



6-step Guide to Compliant Fire Doors

This guide is not a comprehensive outline of the critical role the nominated *responsible person* plays in the Fire Safety of commercial premises and schools in the UK. The government provide help:

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order

65 pages

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2005/1541/contents>

Fire Risk Assessment

147 pages

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/14887/fsra-educational-premises.pdf

This help is not straightforward to use. To ensure you comply fully with the law and stay out of trouble, [get expert help](#).



Blake's Say

The 11th thing... Fire Doors

Stop! Instead of spending hours trawling the internet for clues on what you need to do... make it easy. Download your free 6-step guide!

It's quick and easy to follow. And takes you through everything you need to know to make sure your fire doors are compliant.

Best of all you'll have a plan to ensure everything is in hand. So you're sure your fire doors pass inspection next time. And every time.

COMPLIANT FIRE DOORS

Your simple 6-step guide to compliant Fire Doors

DOWNLOAD YOUR GUIDE ✓