

Safety Bulletin



Tampering of Automatic Fire Detection System

Issued to: **All Network Rail line managers, safety professionals and accredited contractors**

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Contact: Aaron Neal - Head of S&SD (Telecoms Services)



Overview

Whilst carrying out an asbestos survey at a Network Rail managed building, a contractor discovered an automatic fire detector that had been tampered with. This is a breach of fire regulations.

The fire detector was located in the ceiling space of the male toilets between two sets of ducting.

A rubber glove was placed over the smoke detector, preventing potential smoke in the event of a fire from activating the audible fire alarm. The incident was reported to senior management with a Close Call being raised. The glove was then removed, when safe to do so, to retain the full working order of the fire system and safety of the occupants.

Discussion points

If a smoke detector is covered, it prevents the automatic detection of a potential fire. This could result in a number of increased risks including:

- Preventing fire detection at an early stage and would rely on human intervention.
- Slower than expected evacuation of premises.
- Prevents the indication and location of the fire zone for responsible persons and emergency services.

Further points for discussion:

- Why do you have fire detectors?
- How do you report fire detectors that look to not be working or tampered with?

What do you need to do?

- Ensure all automatic fire detectors are checked and inspected on a six monthly basis by the PRFS and record findings in the Fire Safety Log Book - [NR/L3/FIR/109/F008](#)
- Any works completed which could affect an automatic fire detection system should have an approved method statement in agreement with the appropriate asset engineer. On completion of works, all contractors must verify and assure all systems are restored to their original status.