

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Reducing Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS)**

#### **Responding to Automatic Fire Alarms (AFAs) in Non-Domestic Premises**

##### **Why is SFRS introducing this change?**

Reducing UFAS incidents is a priority of the Scottish Government. Despite efforts of SFRS and partners, reducing this type of false alarm continues to be a challenge and has an unnecessary impact on our service, our partners, the business sector and local communities.

The challenges placed on the SFRS through the changing risk profile in communities, the Covid-19 pandemic, and the future vision of the Service, requires us to manage the demand of these by finding innovative ways to build capacity and improve flexibility in our response.

This change also brings SFRS in line with the position of many other UK Fire and Rescue Services.

##### **When does the change come into operation?**

We have delayed implementation by 12-months in response to the feedback we received during the consultation and now plan to implement the change from April 2023.

##### **Is this a change of legislation?**

No, it isn't a change of legislation, it is a change in response. Historically, the Service responded to all AFA system actuations. However, there is no legal responsibility for us to respond to these systems to establish if there is a fire. It is the legal responsibility of duty holders to take appropriate action in the event of an AFA activation, including the safe evacuation of persons within, investigate the cause of the alarm and to notify us of any fire. This should be informed from an appropriate Fire Risk Assessment as required by Part 3 of the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005.

##### **Will the change in response affect domestic households?**

No, the change only relates to non-domestic premises. It will not affect the way SFRS responds to alarms activating in a domestic setting or linked through a domestic telecare provider. We are only changing how we respond to false alarms in workplaces (non-domestic premises) that have fire safety responsibilities under the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005.

##### **Will this change affect our insurance policy?**

You should contact your insurance company to discuss this, but note that the SFRS will always attend a confirmed fire, or signs of fire.

##### **As a dutyholder, or someone affected by the change, what happens now?**

The SFRS will be making the change through a carefully planned and managed approach. SFRS have made a commitment to work with Dutyholders and others who may be directly affected, to provide advice and guidance on their responsibilities for limiting false alarms from their AFA systems and you can find more information about this [here](#). An extensive communication strategy involving working with those affected by the change, to prepare them for implementation is under development and will commence early 2022.