

**Bolsover District Council**

**Safety Committee**

**7<sup>th</sup> November 2016**

**Riverside Depot Fire Alarm and Emergency Lighting Report**

**Report of the Health and Safety Advisor**

This report is public

**Purpose of the Report**

- To make the Safety Committee aware of Issues relating to fire safety compliance at Riverside Depot.
- To provide an update on the Actions taken address these issues.
- To provide the Safety Committee with sufficient information on the issue to allow them to be able to make recommendations as to any further actions they would like to see put in place.

**1 Report Details**

**1.1 Details of Issues**

The fire compliance issues at Riverside Depot are based around two distinctive areas and these are:

- The Fire Alarm provision
- The Emergency lighting provision.

**FIRE Alarm Provision**

In respect to fire alarm provision the issues are centred around the fire panels. Three fire panels serve the site with the main panel located in the reception foyer and a further two secondary panels located in central control and the garage block.

A couple of weeks ago an issue developed with the main panel causing it to periodically activate a fault buzzer. An engineer attended site and identified that the fault was related to a faulty battery in the panel. The engineer did not have the correct battery with him to replace the faulty battery but was able to attach another battery which resolved the issue but he did remark this was only a temporary fix and would need to be replaced with the correct battery.

Whilst on site the engineer checked the other panels and found the central control panel to be operational but the garage block panel to be totally blank. Further tests revealed that power was entering the panel but no power was flowing out from the

panel. He then re-checked the main panel and commented that he was concerned as the main panel was not showing a fault on the system and said he would put on a follow on job.

Approximately a week after the engineers visit the Health and Safety Adviser contacted Property and Estates Manager to establish the current status of the issue and after consulting the job system the P&E Manager the H&S Adviser that the job had been completed.

After checking with on-site staff it appeared that no individual was aware that a re-visit had been undertaken so the panel was checked and found to be still to be out of order. This information was then relayed to the P&E Manager and timescales for completion were requested. The P&E manager explained that Pro-TEC the fire company employed via the Tomlinson's contract were a difficult company to work with and would not give a completion date.

The fire system is a closed system so can only be worked on by Pro-Tec itself.

The result of the inactive panel in the garage block means that there is no alarm or detection system available for the Garage, Leisure Office, and Garage Meeting Room, Mezzanine storage area or the Travis Perkins store areas of the site.

#### Emergency Lighting Provision

The emergency lighting issues came about due to concerns raised by the Health and Safety Adviser in respect to the annual 3 Hour emergency light discharge test at the Depot. As part of this test the battery power for each emergency light is discharged for a period of 3 hours and on its completion it is not possible to say how much charge is left in the battery.

It is a legal requirements that emergency lights should remain illuminated for a period of 1 hour after activation of the alarm system which cannot be guaranteed following the 3 hour test until the emergency light batteries have had chance to recharge. This process takes a number of hours and during that time the building would not be fully fire compliant for those working within.

The H&S Adviser asked if this test could be conducted out of hours to alleviate the issue however property and estate suggest this was cost prohibitive. Communication continued between the two sections over an extended period with a compromise solution being arrived at.

The compromise solution being that areas where natural light was possible through windows could be test in working hours and other areas would have to be conducted out of hours.

During these discussions monthly flick test were still being conducted which did identify problems with a number of lights or fittings however not remedial work was undertaken to resolve these.

The result of this is that at the current time the cost to replace/ repair the inoperative fittings amount to an approximate cost of £21,000 pounds and poses serious concerns over the current level of emergency lighting available for staff.

## 1.2 Actions Currently Taken

In respect to the fire compliance issues the steps taken are as follows:

- A temporary fire procedure has been adapted for the garage block.
- Air horns have been purchased and strategically placed around the premise for raising the alarm in the event of an emergency.
- Battery operated smoke detector have been installed at strategic location within the Garage block to provide a warning system. (This is not possible in Garage Area)
- Work patterns amended to ensure that all hot works is terminated at least 1 hour 30 minutes before end of shift.
- New end of shift monitoring processes introduced as temporary measure.
- Increased levels of employee vigilance encouraged.
- Remedial work on panel scheduled to take place on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2016.

In respect to Emergency Lighting Issues the steps taken are as follows:

- Remedial work on emergency lighting to commence on Monday 31<sup>st</sup> November 2016.
- Health and Safety team to review all fire escape routes to ensure minimum levels of emergency lighting is being maintained.

## 2 Conclusions and Reasons for Recommendation

It is recommended that the committee consider the information provided and decide whether any further actions are required in light of any discussions which ensue.

## 3 Consultation and Equality Impact

The report is formally reviewed at the Safety Committee when any issues requiring further consultation or that may have an impact on equality related issues will be identified and appropriate measures put in place to address them.

## 4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

Not applicable for this report.

## 5 Implications

### 5.1 Finance and Risk Implications

There are significant financial implications connected with this report due to the fact that the remedial work identified will require significant levels of expenditure however this is necessary to maintain legal compliance.

### 5.2 Legal Implications including Data Protection

The legal implications on the authority are that if the current situation was allowed to continue without the remedial actions being carried out then potentially the authority leaves themselves liable to prosecution.

### 5.3 Human Resources Implications

It is not envisaged that there will be any human resources implications as a result of this report other than the potential up skilling of staff as a result of them attending relevant training.

### 6 Recommendations

It is recommended that the committee consider the information contained within the report and consider whether further actions are warranted.

### 7 Decision Information

<b>Is the decision a Key Decision?</b> (A Key Decision is one which results in income or expenditure to the Council of £50,000 or more or which has a significant impact on two or more District wards)	No
<b>District Wards Affected</b>	
<b>Links to Corporate Plan priorities or Policy Framework</b>	

### 8 Document Information

<b>Appendix No:</b>	<b>Title:</b> No Appendices attached
<b>Background Papers</b> (These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Cabinet (NEDDC) or Executive (BDC) you must provide copies of the background papers)	
Not applicable for this report	
<b>Report Author</b>	<b>Contact Number</b>
Health and Safety Advisor	242403

Report Reference –