

BRITISH WADOKAI KARATE-DO FEDERATION  
**THE REGULATIONS OF**



**THE BRITISH WADOKAI  
KARATE-DO FEDERATION**

Valid until MARCH 2010

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The British Wadokai is a Full-Member of the



English Karate Federation (EKF) National Governing Body



& World Karate Federation

## **FIRE SAFETY AND RISK ASSESSMENT**

This is sound business advice that complies with the Law and recognised policies and procedures.

### **FIRE DRILLS AND TRAINING**

You should carry out a fire drill at least once a year. It is good practice not to announce fire drills so you get a realistic idea of how effective your fire evacuations plans are.

Everyone must participate in the fire drill. You should record the result of each fire drill in your fire log book.

### **TRAINING**

You must provide all employees with instruction and training so that they know what to do in the event of a fire. Everyone must know:

- how to raise the alarm if they discover a fire
- how to contact the fire brigade
- how to use the fire fighting equipment
- how and where to evacuate the building
- where to assemble and who to report to

Many fires can be avoided by taking fire precautions. If a fire does break out, the effects can be minimised by having effective controls and procedures in place.

In England, Scotland and Wales new rules introduced in October 2006 have replaced most existing fire safety legislation. Fire certificates are no longer required, and the emphasis is on preventing fires and reducing risk. These rules come into force in Northern Ireland in 2008.

Anyone who has some control over premises must take reasonable steps to reduce the risk from fire and make sure people can safely escape if there is a fire. The regulations apply to all non-domestic premises.

This guide provides an overview of the new rules and how to comply with them.

### **WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR FIRE SAFETY?**

Although everyone who enters your business premises - employees, customers, contractors or other visitors - should ensure fire safety, there is now a legally-designated "responsible person" who must arrange for a risk assessment, identify any possible fire-risks and deal with them. This measure comes into force in Northern Ireland in 2008.

It will usually be obvious who the responsible person is, although sometimes several people will share the responsibility - for example in shared premises or larger businesses. The responsible person will be someone who has control over premises, or over some areas, departments or systems. For example, it could be:

- the owner or manager of a business
- the owner or managing agent of premises which are shared between a number of businesses
- individuals within a multiple-occupancy building, such as self-employed people or voluntary organisations if they control someone within the premises
- you should establish who the responsible person is within your business or premises. If it is not clear, then your local fire authority will decide who should be responsible.

Where there is more than one person responsible for a premises they are expected to:

- co-operate with the other responsible persons so far as is necessary to comply with the regulations
- co-ordinate with the other responsible persons measures required to comply with the regulations

- share information with each other

## **DUTIES OF THE 'RESPONSIBLE PERSON'**

The "responsible person" is someone who has control, or a degree of control, over premises or fire-prevention systems within premises. If you are the responsible person, you must make sure that everyone who uses your premises can escape if there is a fire. This comes into force in Northern Ireland in 2008.

The people you need to think about include anyone who might be on your premises, including employees, visitors or members of the public. You need to pay particular attention to those who may need special help, such as elderly or disabled people or children.

You must:

- carry out a fire-risk assessment and identify possible dangers and risks
- think about who might be particularly at risk - you may have disabled employees, or people who work with hazardous chemicals
- get rid of the risk from fire, as far as reasonably possible
- put in place fire precautions to deal with any risks that remain
- make sure there is protection if you use or store flammable or explosive materials
- have a plan to deal with emergencies
- record your findings and review them as and when necessary

If you are the responsible person, you must make sure that the fire-risk assessment is carried out. You can appoint some other competent person to do the actual assessment, but you are still responsible in law.

In many premises achieving fire safety is likely to be a matter of common sense providing the responsible person makes enough time available to go through all the necessary steps.

The enforcing authority, which is usually the local fire authority, must be satisfied with your safety measures. If not, they will tell you what you need to do. If they find major problems they can restrict the use of your premises or close them altogether until you deal with the problems they find.

The "responsible person" must manage any fire risk on your premises, and to do this they need to carry out a fire-risk assessment. This comes into force in Northern Ireland in 2008.

The recommended way to carry out a risk assessment is to follow a step-by-step process.

## **IDENTIFY THE HAZARDS**

Hazards include:

- anything that can start a fire, such as naked flames, heaters or commercial processes such as cookers or hot-air dryers
- anything that can burn in a fire, including piles of waste, display materials, textiles or other flammable products
- oxygen sources such as air conditioning, medical products or commercial oxygen supplies which might intensify a fire

## **IDENTIFY PEOPLE AT RISK**

These include:

- people who work close to or with fire hazards
- people who work alone, or in isolated areas such as storerooms
- children or parents with babies
- elderly people
- disabled people

## **EVALUATE, REMOVE OR REDUCE THE RISK**

You should:

- where possible, get rid of the fire hazards you identified - eg remove build-ups of waste - and reduce any hazards you can't remove entirely
- replace highly flammable materials with less flammable ones
- keep anything that can start a fire away from flammable materials
- have a safe-smoking policy for employees or customers who want to smoke in a designated area near your premises (a ban on smoking within enclosed spaces has been in effect in Scotland since 2006, Wales and Northern Ireland since April 2007 and England since July 2007)

Once you've reduced the risk as far as practical, you need to look at any risk that can't be removed and decide what fire safety measures to provide.

## **FIRE SAFETY AND RISK ASSESSMENT**

Building evacuation plans and fire safety equipment.

A fire in your workplace must be detected quickly and a warning given so that people can escape safely.

## **FIRE DETECTION AND WARNING SYSTEM**

You must have an appropriate fire-detection and warning system. Whatever system you have, it must be able to warn all people in the building in all circumstances.

You need to decide which type of fire detector is suitable for your premises. It may be that one type of detector is suitable for one part of your premises and another for the rest. Before installing a fire detection system, you are advised to discuss your proposals with your local fire authority.

## **MEANS OF ESCAPE**

The arrangements to evacuate your premises form an important part of your emergency plan. You should:

- Make sure the escape route is as short as possible.
- Consider how many people are going to be using the escape route.
- Consider the impact if one of the means of escape has been blocked.
- Ensure there is a clear passageway to all escape routes - passageways should be one metre wide. Passageways that are more than 30 metres long, or 45 metres in offices and factories, should be subdivided into equal parts by fire doors.
- Ensure escape routes are kept free of any obstructions, eg they are not used for storing stock.
- Make arrangements for the evacuation of elderly or disabled people. You must also consider other less able-bodied people who may have access to the building, taking into account both physical and mental impairment.
- Inform and train all employees in how to escape the building.
- Install an emergency lighting system.
- Identify all escape routes with appropriate signs.

## **FIRE FIGHTING EQUIPMENT**

It may be appropriate to provide portable multi-purpose fire extinguishers so that people on your premises can tackle a fire in its early stages. These extinguishers should have a guaranteed shelf-life, and there should be one for every 200 square metres of floor space, and at least one on every floor. Depending on your type of business and the outcome of your risk assessment, you may need other specialised fire-fighting equipment.

## **EXTENSIONS AND ALTERATIONS TO BUILDINGS**

If your premises are subject to building work (being built, extended, materially altered or subject to a relevant change of use) you will need to take account of the Building Regulations. These affect how fire safety is designed into the building, as well as other aspects of building design, such as structural stability, access, ventilation, energy efficiency, etc.

You must provide appropriate early warning of fire and appropriate means of escape, adequately resisting the spread of fire within the building and from one building to another and provide reasonable access and facilities for the fire and rescue service. Guidance on what might be needed in a range of common building situations is given in Approved Document B but the final decision rests with the relevant building control body.

As of 6 April 2007 information on what fire safety measures have been provided as part of the building work (eg fire doors, smoke detection, sprinklers) should be passed on to the responsible person to help inform their risk assessment.

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