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From: TFS False Alarm Reduction Strategy
Sent: [Redacted]
To: [Redacted]
Subject: FW: False Alarm Reduction Project: Consultation Paper

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Hi [Redacted]

From and industry perspective, and observation on human behaviours, from my perspective this all about education, where that can happen in many ways.

Education for each of:

The responsible System Owner / Manager to educate persons within facilities on how Smoke and Heat Alarms work.

- Why they alarm under various environmental circumstances.

- What contributing human factors contribute to alarms
- What contamination factors may semi-permanently or permanently affect Detectors causing ongoing alarms
- How change of use to environments will likely affect Detectors
- To understand how proactive maintenance regimes will assist them.
- Understanding where Specific types of Detectors may be inappropriate.

TFS staff who might be providing Client advice:

- Why they alarm under various environmental circumstances.
- What contributing human factors contribute to alarms
- What contamination factors may semi-permanently or permanently affect Detectors causing ongoing alarms
- How change of use to environments will likely affect Detectors
- To understand how proactive maintenance regimes will assist them.
- Understanding where Specific types of Detectors may be inappropriate.

Perhaps a review around legislation where installers are now advised they need Building Surveyor advise / approval to change a detector type from its originally approved design – educated installers used to analyse circumstances and where appropriate advise systems owners where a change was required in their expert opinion. Current regulatory advice to industry arguably means clients are now potentially having unsuitable Detectors remain in areas where they shouldn't due to 'red tape'.

Whilst Systems are designed by licensed designers, this rarely takes place with any consideration for actual use, or discussion with Owners / Occupiers (sometimes this information is not yet decided) and is based on perceived elements, balanced with AS1670 rules.

Perhaps a review of technology advancements, and whether instituting maintenance rules around proactive software analysis of the FDCIE is appropriate. Modern addressable Fire Panels track the 'live' background sensitivity values of analogue Smoke Detectors, where overtime their optical sensors naturally drift towards alarm thresholds – this simply due to dust building up inside the sensing chambers. Technicians have the ability on systems with these functions (many systems these days and forever increasing where Addressable Technology replaces conventional) to understand where Smoke Detectors maybe tracking towards 'pre-alarm' or 'alarm' levels where the settings values between theses 2 can be close.

We still find that that a lack of understanding from Occupants and even Tradespersons generally about the adverse and potentially damaging effects of dust / steam / water exposure, or introduced environment changes like fog juice, or items causing excessive heat is often behind unwanted Alarms. Simple things like water leaks in roofs, and a lack of general building maintenance can also contribute in varying ways.

Fees and Changes for false alarms.

Hefty Brigade fines has always changed behaviour – I worked in Victoria where it well known that the MFB charged massively for False Alarms in Metro City areas. Their management plans for 50 story buildings, and the number of appliances and crews dispatched have always been problematic for the Brigades, both at a cost level, but then further at an operational level where huge resources were sent to the classic burnt toast – where those crews and appliances weren't available for real fire issues.

The first thing I was told when taking up the tools in Melbourne was 'don't ever be the cause of a false alarm, as the Company has to pay the MFB fines – that word was heard and spread every day.

That's my 2 minute rundown on, and sadly all I'll have time for by the 13th – clearly some points here that could be elaborated on.