



Tasmania Fire Service Building Safety Guideline

GENERAL	BUILDING SAFETY
Appendix A - Fire Protection Systems Permit Application Guideline	

1. PURPOSE

The development of this guideline is in pursuance of regulation 8 of the *General Fire Regulations 2021*. It is designed to provide the minimum standards to which permits are issued to any person, contractor and/or company to install, routinely service or repair a fire protection system.

2. INTRODUCTION

Tasmania Fire Service (TFS) regulates the fire protection industry within Tasmania. There have been several significant incidents across Australia where recommendations have been made to improve the professionalism of the fire protection industry. TFS takes its role as a regulator seriously. There are several key responsibilities as a regulator including:

- Ensuring the professionalism and integrity of operators within the fire protection industry;
- Ensuring fire protection systems are installed 'as designed' and within the requirements of the National Construction Code and Australian Standards.
- The inspection or investigation of, and the provision of advice or report on, compliance with the *General Fire Regulations 2021*, *Building Act 2016* and/or the National Construction Code and/or Australian Standards relating to fire safety in the built environment;
- The long-term sustainability of the industry within Tasmania;
- Assist in maintaining a competitive commercial environment within the industry; and
- Develop and mandate minimum training and qualification requirements for the fire protection industry within Tasmania and nationally.

TFS will commit to consulting with industry stakeholders in relation to how the fire protection industry is regulated to uphold the above key responsibilities. In doing so TFS will provide a transparent environment to decision making with the inclusion of key industry members on a Permit Committee that form part of the decision-making process for the provision of permits to fire protection contractors.

The Permit Committee operate under a 'Tasmania Fire Service Permit Committee – Charter', and sign confidentiality agreements prior to undertaking their work. The Permit Committee contains public servants that provide oversight and a fire/emergency service perspective on decision making.

This arrangement is unique to Tasmania and as a regulator, fundamentally, TFS see this as an important factor in ensuring industry involvement and oversight of the decision-making processes.

3. TYPES OF FIRE PROTECTION SYSTEM PERMITS

Any person, contractor and/or company undertaking work on a fire protection system within a specified building in Tasmania is required to have a Fire Protection Systems Permit. Fire protection systems include:

- Automatic fire detection and alarm systems

- Automatic fire sprinkler systems
- Fire extinguishing systems
- Fire hydrant systems
- Smoke detection systems
- Emergency warning and inter-communication systems.

When applying for a fire protection system permit the applicant must use the correct application pro-forma in its current version. The current version of the application pro-forma can be found on the TFS website. If you are experiencing difficulties accessing the correct pro-forma please contact TFS Community Fire Safety on (03) 6166 5544.

4. APPLICATION PROCESS

Applications for the different types of permits must be submitted on individual application forms. You must not apply for both a wet and dry systems permit on the one form. Incomplete applications will not progress through to the scrutiny of the Permit Committee unless they contain all the required and any additional requested information.

Please use the 'Fire Protection Systems Application Process Checklist' to ensure you have included all the required information in the application. Incomplete applications will be returned to the applicant with a request for additional information. Once the additional information is obtained it must be included in the application and resubmitted. There is no requirement to pay an additional application fee if this occurs as part of the original application.

5. APPLICATION DETAILS

5.1 Type of systems – Section 1

Please ensure you identify what type of permit you are applying for by ticking the correct boxes in section. If you are applying for 'Repair' for the respective system, please ensure you fill out the details in **Section 5 – After hours service capability**.

If you tick the 'Other' box, then you must ensure all the information required is completed and contained within the application.

5.2 Permit Applicant Details – Section 2

In this section you must provide the name of the principle applicant being a person. This can either be the business owner/operator, a company Director or similar position. In addition to the principle applicant, the business name must also be included such as a company name. This business name will appear on the ABN certificate.

Please provide your Australian Business Number (ABN).

The business street address must be included. This must be the address the business is registered to on the ABN and this also will show on the Australian Business Register. You may also elect to provide the business postal address to ensure the efficient and effective delivery of surface mail.

To contact the applicant efficiently and effectively we ask that business hours, after hours and mobile phone contact details for the applicant be provided. Additionally, a business email address will allow quick and easy dissemination of correspondence and industry information.

5.3 Application Fee – Section 3

To allow for the application to be processed, an application fee is payable and must accompany the application. This application fee covers the cost to review, scrutinise and make recommendations on the application. Private sector industry representatives sit on a Permit Committee to assist in the decision-making process. These industry representatives may be paid a retainer or allowance to review the application in line with Tasmanian Government guidelines. Additionally, prior to going to the review of the Permit Committee the application is reviewed and scrutinised by public servants to ensure the correct information has been provided. In many instances the time taken to undertake these tasks is considerable. Additionally, TFS use Compliance Officers and Auditors to undertake building safety and fire protection systems audits to ensure compliance within the regulatory framework, this fee contributes to that work.

Once approved, the application is subject to an ‘administration fee’ to process the application including the permit and the subsequent conditions that will be placed on the permit. This can, in many circumstances take considerable time and the conditions imposed from the permit committee must be clearly articulated in the final permit. The ‘administration fee’ contributes to covering this cost borne by the taxpayers.

5.4 Section 4 – Technical Nominee

For specific details and requirements of the Technical Nominee (TN) please refer to Appendix 1. In section 4, the full details of the TN must be provided in full including their name, contact phone details, mobile phone details and business email address.

Occupational Licence – In pursuance of *Section 22A of the Occupational Licensing Act 2005*, it is a requirement that all TNs’ are licensed by the Department of Justice – Consumer, Building and Occupational Services. Specific details of the licensing process are called up in the Directors Determination known as the ‘Occupational Licensing (Building Services Work) Determination 2019’.

The licence must be for the classification ‘Builder – Fire Protection Services’. Other licence classifications will not be accepted.

Information on the occupational licensing system can be obtained from the Consumer, Building and Occupational Services website: <https://www.cbos.tas.gov.au/>

Tasmania Fire Service, **Code of Practice – Fire Protection Systems** - The Tasmania Fire Service “*Code of Practice – Fire Protection Systems*” underpins the TFS permit system and is the principle guiding document for permit holders to install, routinely service, repair and remove Fire Protection Systems.

Compliance with this Code is a key permit condition. It provides permit holders with information on the design, installation, repair, maintenance and removal of FPS’s, the connection and monitoring of the system by the TFS, as well as systems which provide local warning or protection from fire that are not monitored by the TFS. For the purpose of this Code, any system monitored by a monitoring service other than the TFS (e.g. a security company), is deemed to be a local fire protection system.

An understanding of the Code of Practice is important and when ticking the box, the TN acknowledges an understanding of the Code of Practice requirements and will always comply with those when performing the role of the TN. Failure to complete this section will result in the application not progressing any further.

Qualifications of the TN – Reference must be made to Appendix 2 for the qualifications, skills, knowledge and experience required to apply for a role as an TN. It should be noted that these requirements are the minimum standards and that where an applicant declares that they have an equivalent requirement, the onus or burden of proof is on the applicant not TFS or the Permit Committee to prove equivalency.

Note regarding the following Sections 5 and 6 – The following two sections are mandatory if the applicant has applied for a 'repair' component to the Permit.

5.5 Section 5 – After hours service capability

For permit applications for 'install' and 'routinely service' systems it is not mandatory to provide afterhours contact details but rather this is highly recommended especially given that emergencies are dynamic environments and can happen anytime twenty-four hours, seven days a week.

For applications wishing to 'repair' systems (including the reinstatement of fire protection systems) it is mandatory that the applicant provide details around their after-hours capability including access to spare parts. In this section the applicant must clearly detail the contact details for the provision of after-hours repairs including the name, phone contact and/or mobile phone contact and an email address. If these details are generic i.e. are monitored and diverted to different staff from time to time, then this must be clearly detailed in the application. Otherwise all after-hours details must be provided. These details must always be maintained and updated and provided to TFS within 24 hours of any change.

If the after-hours contact details fail in anyway and following investigation the permit holder has been negligent in their responsibility to provide after-hours details this may lead to revocation of the fire protection systems permit.

5.6 Section 6 - Spare parts and repair capability

Where an application is made for a 'repair' permit then the applicant must prove they have the ability to supply and install spare parts after-hours including the capability to reinstate a system to an operational status to protect a building following an incident of any kind. An incident may include a fire or accidental or malicious activity that in some way disables the fire protection system.

The permit applicant must have the capability to repair systems include the following:

- Staff with the technical expertise to undertake the work and be available 24/7, 365 days a year to carry out the work;
- After-hours contact systems that are provided to TFS and are maintained as current by the permit holder;
- Have vehicles that are equipped and suitable for undertaking the repair work; and
- Have vehicles that carry spare parts suitable for reinstating the systems permitted for after-hours and/or have access to spare parts through warehousing or other business premises that are readily accessible after-hours.

Prior to a permit being approved to 'repair', the Permit Committee may elect to inspect the applicant's capability to provide the repairs and after-hours service. A report may be produced following the inspection to provide clarity around the decision-making process. Where an applicant is found unable to provide any of the components of after-hours capability, this component of the application will be denied.

5.7 Section 7 – Technical capability

In section 7, the permit applicant must detail the company/contractor capability to provide the service they are being permitted for. Here, the applicant must provide details on all technicians and staff that will work on the systems being permitted for, including the following:

- TN;
- Trained and qualified Technicians;
- Maintenance staff;
- Apprentices (operating under supervision of a qualified tradesperson)

Reference must be made to Appendix 2 for the minimum requirements for each position. These requirements may be provided in the form of a curriculum vitae for each staff member. Regardless of how the information is presented it must be complete and included in the application for the application to progress.

A curriculum vitae is required to be completed for every employee associated with conducting this work under the permit. Each CV must specifically address:

- Technicians/staff members name
- The position they will perform under the permit
- All licences held relevant to the fire protection industry (include copies)
- All competence (qualifications, knowledge, skills, experience etc.) that is relevant to the work to be undertaken by each person/s;
- Their experience in interpreting Codes and Australian Standards; and
- Details of all previous experience working with fire protection equipment including a list of recent works, and the scope of activity undertaken by the applicant.

Note: All knowledge claims should be supported by Statements of Attainment, Certificates of Attendance or Continuing Professional Development (CPD) certificates. All declared qualifications must include a copy of the certification or statement of attainment that is certified as an original copy by a Commissioner of Declarations.

It is a breach of the *General Fire Regulations 2021* and the Code of Practice for Technicians, tradespeople or any other person to work on a Fire Protection System without being named on the Fire Protection Systems Permit.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) – It is expected that permit holders will undertake CPD in line with the requirements of the occupational license. Other Technicians and employees named on the permit must also undertake CPD annually to ensure they maintain contemporary skills and knowledge and experience in relation to the fire protection industry. Proof of CPD must be provided in the application in the form of certification and other documented evidence.

For more specific information about CPD requirements and parameters for TN's, please refer to '*Part 8: Continuing Professional Development of building services providers*' in the *Occupational Licensing (Building Service Work) Determination 2019*.

More information is available on CPD [HERE](#)

5.8 Section 8 – Statement of Experience

The TN must provide a Statement of Experience as a summary of experience over the last five (5) years of completed works in the fire protection industry. This information must include:

- A list of projects that the TN has worked on;
- Dates;
- Project size and type;
- Number of storeys;
- The role undertaken by the TN; and
- A third parties contact details for verification.

Please use the pro-forma included in the application to collate this information as it is important it is presented in a way where the above information is easily readable. This information must be included in both a new application and re-application.

5.9 Section 9 – Referee Reports

Referee reports form an important part of the application process. It enables the Permit Committee to get an appreciation of the TN's technical experience and expertise along with relevant experience managing customer/stakeholder expectations and business acumen. It is the responsibility of the TN to distribute and collect the referee reports and include in the permit application.

Careful consideration must be given to referees as the Permit Committee may choose to contact them for further information relating to the permit application. The TN must submit three referee reports with the permit application on the pro-forma provided in the application. One referee report must be from a technical expert/professional in the vocation relevant to the permit being applied for. The second referee report can be from a business manager, real estate agent, contractors etc. not related to the fire protection industry that provides the Permit Committee with an understanding of the TN's experiences in managing customer expectations and any relevant business acumen. Confirmation may be sought from the referee in relation to any of the information contained within the referee report.

Three independent referees (not related to the TN) are required to be provided with the application, to validate the competence of the TN. The referee pro-forma should be used to provide this information and the following information must be received:

- Referee name;
- Referee company or employer;
- Referee contact email;
- Referee contact phone number;
- Referees time in the fire protection industry or relevance as a referee (Business Manager etc.);
- Name of the TN; and

- Permit type being applied for.

In addition to the above information, the following questions must be answered in enough detail to provide the Permit Committee with clear guidance on the TN technical competence and expertise in the fire protection industry:

1. Please list a significant project that you have had close involvement in where the Technical Nominee has delivered all or some of the categories of work listed in the permit type, including details regarding the name and address of the premises; the type of system; and the Technical Nominee's role in the project.
2. Please provide testament of the Technical Nominee's competence in the installation, maintenance and/ or repair of fire protection systems OR provide testament of the Technical Nominee's competence and suitability in providing suitable customer/client service and providing suitable business knowledge and fire protection industry related business acumen.

The referee must date and sign the declaration at the end of the referee report.

6. REVIEW RIGHTS AND RIGHTS TO APPEAL

The permit application process along with the Permit Committee Charter and the involvement of both public servants and fire protection industry representatives provides a great deal of transparency in the decision-making process. All meetings and discussions relating to decisions made to fire protection industry permit applicants are documented for future reference. The decision-making process follows clear guidelines to ensure decisions are robust, consistent and fair for the safety, welfare of building occupants, firefighters and those that work in the fire protection industry in Tasmania as well as the long-term sustainability of the industry.

Regardless, decisions will be made from time to time that will and should undergo further scrutiny to ensure the decision-making process is fair and equitable. Therefore, the following is provided as a guide to further review and appeal rights:

6.1 Regulatory appeal through the Magistrates Court - As per Regulation 13, *a person who is aggrieved by a decision of the Chief Officer under this regulation may apply to the Magistrates Court (Administrative Appeals Division) for a review of the decision.* It is strongly advised that a person aggrieved should seek legal advice prior to embarking on an appeal through this process.

6.2 Ombudsman Tasmania – aggrieved applicants can seek administrative review of the Permit Committees decision through the Ombudsman Tasmania. Please refer to the Ombudsman Tasmania web site for further information.

6.3 Review of the decision by the Chief Officer – aggrieved applicants can write formally to the Chief Officer clearly outlining the issues and concerns and seek a formal review of the decision by the Chief Officer. Once received the Chief Officer will undertake a review process and provide a decision back in writing to the aggrieved person within 28 days of receiving the request for review.

7. ASSESSMENTS AND INTERVIEWS

From time to time, the Permit Committee may request an applicant to be challenge tested to provide evidence in the decision-making process. This could involve a member/s of the Permit Committee or an approved Consultant developing criteria that relate directly to the application process that would be expected of a person or persons involved in the application process including the permit applicant, TN and any Technician named on the permit application.

For the purposes of undertaking an assessment, the following is provided as a guide to the type of information that may be included in an assessment/interview:

- An assessment of the understanding of the Code of Practice;
- An assessment of industry experience with reference to referee reports provided and the relevance of comments provided;
- An assessment of respective claims about skills, knowledge and experience in the fire protection industry especially in relation to Australian Standards, in relation to installing, maintaining and repairing fire protection systems;
- The assessment may include building legislation processes;
- Essential services maintenance requirements;
- An assessment of the suitability of an occupational licence;
- An assessment of any continuing professional development and skills maintenance in the fire protection industry;
- Any previous experience as a Technical Nominee; and
- Any previous infringements within the fire protection industry.

Approved by:



Andrew McGuinness
MANAGER, BUILDING SAFETY

(For and on behalf of the Chief Officer)

Appendix 1 - Responsibilities of the Technical Nominee (TN)

The Technical Nominee (TN) is accountable for the installation, repair, maintenance and routine servicing of fire protection systems in line with the permit conditions. The TN is a recognised technical expert in their respective field including qualifications, skills, knowledge and experience. They can operate independently and autonomously and supervise a group of Technicians in their field of expertise. The TN will be able to provide advice and guidance to Technicians on the requirements of fire protection systems.

Accountability extends to the installation of the fire protection system as per the approved design including any deemed to satisfy (DTS) or performance-based solution (PBS) in line with a fire engineering report. They have a demonstrated understanding of the relevant Australian Standards relating to their field of expertise in fire protection systems.

The TN will understand the building and fire related legislation within Tasmania along with an understanding of the fire related requirements of the National Construction Code. Importantly, the TN will have a comprehensive understanding of the Tasmania Fire Service Fire Protection Services Code of Practice. The TN will have strong networks within the fire protection industry including designers, Building Surveyors and other technical experts they can call on for advice and information.

It is not necessarily the role of the TN to undertake the aspects of installation, routine servicing and repairs to fire protection systems however, it is important the TN maintains their skills, knowledge and experience through ongoing professional development in the fire protection industry. It is expected that the TN can clearly identify the fire protection industry related professional development in the application.

The TN must be able to oversee works on a daily basis under the fire systems permit and be able to supervise highly technical aspects of work and supervise general operations from a statewide perspective. Importantly, the role of the TN is to supervise and oversee the operations of authorised technicians included in the Fire Protection Systems permit conditions. Ensuring all works carried out are completed in line with the regulated and standardised requirements.

Appendix 2 – Qualifications, Skills, Knowledge and Experience Requirements

Skills, knowledge and experience must be expressed in the curriculum vitae of the TN and other positions, and experience must be expressed in the '*statement of experience*' pro-forma and must be complete. Incomplete statements will be returned to the applicant.

The minimum requirements to be eligible to undertake the role of a Technical Nominee are:

Dry fire protection system

- Occupational License for 'Builder – Fire Protection Services' – Consumer Building & Occupational Services
- Certificate III in Electrotechnology OR Certificate III in fire protection systems (associated dry fire detection systems or equivalent*) OR
- Must be a licenced telecommunications cabler in accordance with the ACMA (proof must be provided)
- Minimum 5 years' experience in the fire protection industry as a tradesperson (list of completed fire industry related projects)

Wet fire protection systems

- Occupational License for 'Builder – Fire Protection Services' – Consumer Building & Occupational Services
- Certificate III in Sprinkler Fitting (CPC32812 Certificate III in Fire Protection (or equivalent*))
- Minimum 5 years' experience in the fire protection industry as a tradesperson (list of completed fire industry related projects)

Special Hazards, Gaseous suppression, Aerosol installations

- Occupational License for 'Builder – Fire Protection Services' – Consumer Building & Occupational Services
- 5 years' experience in the industry as a tradesperson, Wet or Dry or combination (provide a list of completed fire industry related projects)
- Extinguishing Agent Handling Licence (EAHL) licence requirement where the agent is ozone depleting.
- Product course completions and endorsement and/or completion of CPPFES3042A Install and commission pre-engineered fire-suppression systems (or equivalent*).

Routine servicing of fire protection systems

In certain circumstances, the TN can apply for a limited fire protection system permit to undertake routine servicing of fire protection systems.

Wet fire protection systems and/or Special Hazards, Gaseous suppression, Aerosol, installations:

- CPP30811 Certificate III in Fire Protection Inspection and Testing.

- For Special Hazards, Gaseous suppression, Aerosol installations, consideration may be given to TN's that have a combination of product course completions and endorsement and CPPFES2047A - Inspect and test control and indicating equipment.
- Minimum 5 years' experience in the industry as a tradesperson (provide a list of completed fire industry related projects)

Dry fire protection systems:

- Certificate III in Electrotechnology (or equivalent*) and/or CPPFES2047 Inspect and test control and indicating equipment (or equivalent*) (for monthly testing only in line with AS 1851) and/or CPPFES2029 Conduct functional tests on fire detection, warning and intercommunication devices (or equivalent*) (for routine yearly testing and preventative maintenance procedures).
- Minimum 5 years' experience in the industry as a tradesperson (provide a list of completed projects)

Training and qualifications of Technicians

Technicians and other staff that work under the permit are required to have minimum training and qualifications. This allows appropriate delineation between those carrying out the work with the skills and knowledge together with those undertaking training and those undertaking labouring type roles. There are several categories that are defined below:

Dry fire protection system

- Certificate III in Electrotechnology OR Certificate III in fire protection systems (associated dry fire detection systems or equivalent*) OR
- Must be a licenced telecommunications cabler in accordance with the ACMA (proof must be provided)

Wet fire protection systems

- Certificate III in Sprinkler Fitting (CPC32812 Certificate III in Fire Protection (or equivalent*))

Special Hazards, Gaseous suppression, Aerosol installations

- Extinguishing Agent Handling Licence (EAHL) licence requirement where the agent is ozone depleting
- Product course completions and endorsement and/or completion of CPPFES3042A Install and commission pre-engineered fire-suppression systems (or equivalent*).

Routine servicing of fire protection systems

Where a Technician is employed to only undertake routine servicing of a fire protection system, they must have the following training and qualifications:

- CPP30811 Certificate III in Fire Protection Inspection and Testing.

- For dry systems, a technician may undertake routine servicing with the following qualifications:
 - CPPFES2047 Inspect and test control and indicating equipment (or equivalent*) (for monthly testing only in line with AS 1851)
 - CPPFES2029 Conduct functional tests on fire detection, warning and intercommunication devices (or equivalent*) (for routine yearly testing and preventative maintenance procedures).
- For Special Hazards, Gaseous suppression, Aerosol installations, consideration may be given to Technicians that have a combination of product course completions and endorsement and CPPFES2047A - Inspect and test control and indicating equipment.

Apprentices

Apprentices are an important part of the industry. It is an important role of industry and contractors to ensure ongoing training and mentoring of staff for the sustainability of the fire protection industry into the future.

Apprentices must be named and included in the permit application including copies of their CV/resume and proof of their apprenticeship contractual arrangements. Apprenticeships must be within the scope of the training and qualifications mentioned above for the respective type of work being carried out under the permit i.e. an Apprentice working on dry fire protection systems must be registered and contracted to complete qualifications mentioned in the 'Dry fire protection system' framework or equivalent*.

Apprentices can work under the permit when included in the application however, permit holders must comply with the requirements in the Tasmania Fire Service Fire Protection Systems Code of Practice in relation to the ratio of Apprentices to Technicians.

Persons providing labour assistance roles

Persons providing temporary, casual or full-time labouring type work do not need to be declared as part of the permit application process. However, permit holders must comply with the requirements in the Tasmania Fire Service Fire Protection Systems Code of Practice in relation to the ratio of labour staff to Technicians. The TN is still responsible for the work labouring staff carryout and the limitations placed on their respective scope of work outlined in the Code of Practice. Labouring type staff must work within the limitations of their employment type and not undertake any specialist trade related or specialist work that is undertaken by qualified and experienced Technicians.

Note: All qualifications must be included in the application, including 'Statements of Attainment', certification and any other proof of suitability for the role of an TN.

*The burden of proof on the equivalency of a unit of competence or a qualification remains with the applicant and must come from a registered training organisation (RTO) or similar academic authority in writing.