Imperial College London
FIRE SERVICES
ROOM 174, SHERFIELD BUILDING

Code of Practice

Revision No: 1
Date: 6th May 2008

Automatic Fire Detection in Academic Buildings, South Kensington Campus

There are several unwanted disruptions in academic buildings attributable to automatic fire detection systems being activated. The causes of these activations are varied, but the result has been complacency regarding fire alarms. It is considered by this department that this is now becoming a serious risk, as some occupants are failing to leave buildings when the fire alarm is activated.

Having assessed the risk, and taking into consideration that ALL alarms will be responded to by the Emergency Response Team, automatic detectors will be put on 'silent sounders'.

This will mean that should a detector head be activated, the building alarm will not sound but the ERT will be alerted via the alarm network and investigate the incident. If there is a fire, a call point will be operated to sound the alarm or the alarm will be activated from the building fire panel. Breaking a call point will immediately sound the alarm.

Malicious call point activation is not considered a problem at the present time and therefore the number of situations where occupants have to evacuate are expected to be dramatically reduced.

It must be emphasised to all personnel, that if a fire is discovered, a call point should be activated in order to start the evacuation procedure.

The process of putting this policy into operation will begin immediately but the time scale for completion is not known. Each building will be informed as and when the alarm system is re-programmed.

Chief Fire Officer