



**First Response Group**

Total Security, Risk & Facilities Management

# **Waking Watch**

## **Temporary Simultaneous Evacuation Strategy Guide**

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# Introducing FRG Waking Watch

**FRG are a leading multi-service Security, Fire & FM services provider delivering complete solutions to a wide range of private and public sector clients nationwide.**

As experts in risk management this guide advises the owners and people responsible for purpose-built blocks of flats on the requirements for temporary suspension of a 'stay put' policy and adoption of a simultaneous evacuation strategy.

## **What is the 'stay put' policy?**

A stay put policy states that occupants of the fire origin flat must evacuate and raise the alarm but residents not directly impacted by the fire are safer to stay within their own flat with the doors and windows shut until told otherwise by the Fire Service.



## **Why is stay put used?**

In purpose-built flats the walls, floors, ceilings and doors are designed to give appropriate fire protection forming compartmentation of each individual flat within the block.

This fire separation ensures fire and smoke does not travel throughout the building, keeping residents safe within their flats while allowing clear corridor and stairwell access for Fire and Rescue teams.



## What is simultaneous evacuation?

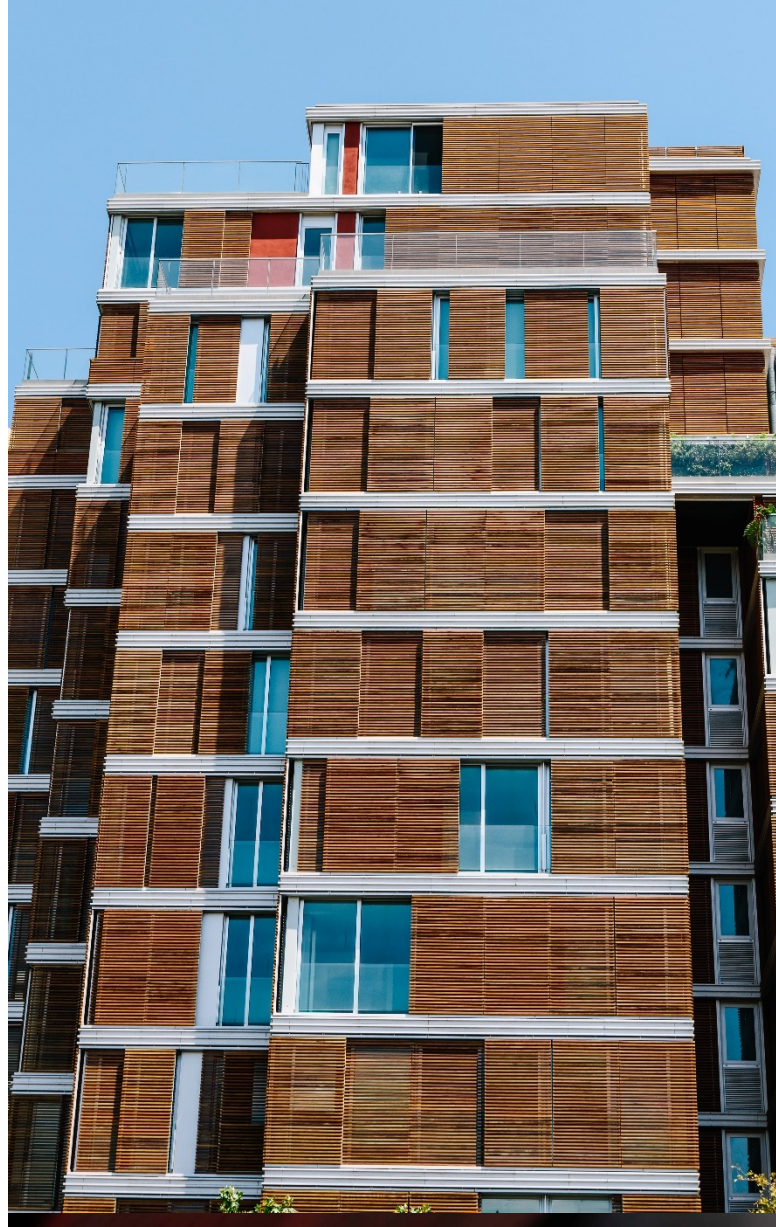
Simultaneous evacuation is a procedure which evacuates all parts of the building at once regardless of the fire's origin.

## When would I need to switch to simultaneous evacuation?

When the stay put policy is no longer considered appropriate owing to significant risk issues jeopardising fire separation such as combustible external facades, as highlighted by high profile incidents such as Grenfell Tower.

Where these risks are found a change to a temporary simultaneous evacuation strategy should be made until the failings have been rectified.

**In a building that was originally designed for a stay put policy a change to simultaneous evacuation should only be temporary.** The NFCC do not consider a permanent change is likely to be appropriate nor should it constitute an alternative to removal of the combustible external wall systems.



## How do I identify if my building is at risk?

A comprehensive risk assessment of the External Wall System must be carried out by a competent person. The findings should be considered alongside the general fire precautions. It should be clear from the competent person that the risk is so significant that a stay put strategy cannot be maintained.

## What should I consider if I need to change to a temporary simultaneous evacuation strategy?

A change to a temporary simultaneous evacuation strategy relies on two key essential principles:

- ✓ Early detection of a fire and warning of occupants.
- ✓ Management of the evacuation.



## What measures should I take when adopting temporary simultaneous evacuation?

The NFCC suggest the following measures as a guide. This is not a comprehensive list or appropriate for all buildings and each property should be individually assessed and a cost benefit analysis should be carried out to determine the best solution.

Resident and leaseholders should be consulted throughout the process and, following the immediate procurement of waking watch if necessary, leaseholders should be involved in the choice of interim measures.



### Early detection

- ✓ A suitable common fire alarm system should be installed throughout the building, with detectors and sounders as necessary to aid early detection, if the measures are to be in place for more than a short term. The common alarm should only be removed when the risks have been removed and the stay put strategy reintroduced.
- ✓ A Waking Watch using trained staff to patrol all floors and the exterior perimeter to detect a fire in the early stages, raise the alarm and carry out the evacuation management, although this should only be used as a short-term interim measure until a suitable common fire alarm system is installed.
- ✓ Flats that do not have their own smoke alarms should have one fitted irrespective of any other fire safety provisions in the building.

### Evacuation strategy

- ✓ To effectively manage evacuation, on-site trained individuals will be required to facilitate a rapid, coordinated evacuation and provide an essential link with Fire and Rescue Services. The level of this provision will depend on a review of the fire risk assessment.
- ✓ Staircase capacity must be considered as to whether it is able to accommodate the expected population of the building. This is not expected to be an issue in most cases.

### Communication

- ✓ It is essential that residents are informed as soon as practicable about the reasons for the change of the evacuation strategy, the purpose of it, and what actions will be taken in the event of a fire. Resident meetings supported with written advice are recommended to communicate and should be supplemented with proactive engagement with residents, giving priority to vulnerable people, to ensure they understand the situation and any subsequent changes that might follow.
- ✓ It is important that, as part of this process, occupants understand the evacuation strategy as well as the evacuation procedures and what action they should take upon leaving the building. Where a waking watch is to be put in place, residents should be made aware of the arrangements, the identities of those involved in the waking watch and who to contact in connection with any issues that arise.
- ✓ The Fire and Rescue services must be informed of a change to temporary simultaneous evacuation strategy so it can visit the premises and update its operational procedure as necessary.



**The fire risk assessment and evacuation plan for the building must be reviewed and updated to reflect the issues identified, the role of the waking watch and evacuation management, and the duration of the temporary mitigation measures in place.**



## How can FRG assist the change from a stay put policy to a temporary simultaneous evacuation?

If you've had an instruction from a fire inspection to implement a change to temporary evacuation strategy, we provide professional and experienced fire protection and risk management services tailored to your premises.



### Site Survey & Risk Assessment

- ✓ Fast, no obligation survey & risk assessments
- ✓ Industry specialists
- ✓ Ensures your premises conform to latest legislation & best practice standards
- ✓ Recommends cost effective and efficient strategies to move to Temporary Simultaneous Evacuation if required

### Fire Protection systems

- ✓ Design, installation, monitoring & maintenance
- ✓ Temporary or permanent systems
- ✓ Compliance to latest fire legislation & standards
- ✓ Innovative technology
- ✓ Wireless systems
- ✓ Integration with CCTV & access control systems



### Waking Watch Personnel Services

- ✓ Walking patrols of residential areas
- ✓ 24/7 monitoring of fire hazards
- ✓ Trained to initiate evacuation protocols and alert emergency services in the event of a fire
- ✓ Fast deployment to premises
- ✓ Bespoke assignment instructions
- ✓ SIA trained, vetted and licensed officers
- ✓ 24/7 mobile support and line worker procedures
- ✓ Certified to NSI Guarding Gold standard & members of the Fire Industry Association (FIA)



### NSI Guarding Gold

#### Dedicated to high standards

NSI Guarding Gold is the most rigorous inspection for businesses operating in the security industry. NSI Guarding Gold is the mark of approval for the elite reflecting our commitment to high standards of service, integrity, technical expertise and professionalism.

# Why FRG?

- ✓ Site survey & risk assessment
- ✓ Tailored solutions
- ✓ Waking Watch services
- ✓ Consistency of service
- ✓ Ensures premises conform to latest fire legislation & best practice
- ✓ Robust lone worker support
- ✓ 24/7 contract management support & helpdesk
- ✓ Bespoke service level agreements
- ✓ Accredited to the highest standards
- ✓ Socially and environmentally responsible
- ✓ Integrity, transparency & innovation at the heart of everything we do



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*First Response Group Limited currently holds SIA Approved Contractor Scheme (ACS) status for the provision of Security Guarding, Key Holding and Public Space CCTV*