FREE PRACTICAL RESOURCE

The Fire Safety Inspection Guide

Practical fire safety checks, informed by 10,741 enforcement notices.

An Article is a numbered provision of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

Premises / area: _____ Reviewer: _____ Date: _____

Most frequently cited Articles from the enforcement notices

The table shows the five most frequently cited Articles among the 15 analysed. Percentages use the 5,920 notices with a recorded Article code, not all 10,741 notices. A notice may cite several Articles.

Article and duty	Share of coded records	Start with these checks
Article 14 Emergency routes and exits	77.7% 4,600 / 5,920	Walk the escape routes. Check exits, route protection, signs and escape lighting.
Article 8 General fire precautions	74.6% 4,419 / 5,920	Check the overall precautions against the people, activities and premises. This is a broad duty, not a fire-door defect code.
Article 9 Risk assessment	63.1% 3,733 / 5,920	Check that the recorded assessment is suitable, complete and kept up to date.
Article 13 Firefighting and detection	58.2% 3,447 / 5,920	Check suitable firefighting, detection and warning arrangements.
Article 17 Maintenance	54.3% 3,214 / 5,920	Check maintenance, defect control and evidence that precautions remain effective.

Read the figures in context. These findings describe the analysed register entries, not the likelihood of a fire or enforcement at your premises. Missing Article codes do not prove compliance. See page 8 for sources, coverage and data limitations.

Before you start

- ☐ Identify the responsible person and anyone else with control of the premises. Duties can be shared; appointing a consultant does not transfer them. Articles 3 and 5.
- ☐ Confirm which parts of the premises and which people fall within scope. For blocks of flats, consider structure, external walls, common parts and doors between flats and common parts. Articles 2, 6 and 7.
- ☐ Use the relevant premises guidance. Record what you checked, the evidence seen, gaps, owners and due dates. A tick is not a compliance certificate.

Tick on screen or paper. Add actions on page 7; save your copy. Tick only after checking the evidence. Record a reason for any item that does not apply. This guide supports preparation; it does not replace a suitable fire risk assessment, competent advice or the law. Scotland and Northern Ireland have different regimes.

ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT

Start with the foundations

Evidence to review means suggested records, observations and discussions that support your findings. Check records against conditions on site, not paperwork alone.

General precautions and prevention

Article 8 · Article 10

- [ ] Check the precautions needed to protect employees and other relevant people, taking account of the premises and its activities.
- [ ] Avoid risks where possible, address risks at source and favour effective collective protection over reliance on individual action.
- [ ] Check housekeeping, ignition sources, combustible storage and the effect of changes to use or occupancy.

Evidence to review: Fire strategy, inspection records and prevention measures. Article 10 refers to Schedule 1, Part 3.

A suitable risk assessment

Article 9

- [ ] Keep a full record of the assessment and reviews, including findings, planned precautions and groups especially at risk.
- [ ] Review regularly and when there is reason to doubt validity or a significant change. Include dangerous substances and young persons where relevant.
- [ ] Check that actions reflect the actual premises and people, rather than a generic template.

Evidence to review: Current assessment, review history and action register. Use suitable expertise; an old report alone is not evidence that conditions remain safe.

Fire safety arrangements

Article 11

- [ ] Record how precautions are planned, organised, controlled, monitored and reviewed.
- [ ] Give checks, defect handling and actions clear owners, with cover when they are absent.
- [ ] Make sure the recorded arrangements are followed in practice and match the size and nature of the undertaking.

Evidence to review: Management arrangements, named responsibilities, check schedules and closed actions.

Dangerous substances

Article 12 · Article 16

- [ ] Where present, identify dangerous substances and assess fire and explosion risks, including the matters in Schedule 1, Part 1.
- [ ] Eliminate or reduce risks, control ignition and releases, and put appropriate protective measures in place.
- [ ] Check the additional accident and emergency arrangements required by Article 16, including information, warnings and response arrangements where applicable.

Evidence to review: Substance inventory, assessment, control measures and emergency information. Consider other applicable law, including the Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations 2002 (DSEAR).

ESCAPE, WARNING AND MAINTENANCE

Check precautions and emergency arrangements

Follow the escape arrangements through the building. Check that the systems and protection they depend on are available and maintained.

Detection and firefighting

Article 13

- [ ] Check that appropriate warning, detection and firefighting equipment is provided where necessary for the risks and people present.
- [ ] Confirm suitable arrangements for contacting the emergency services and nominating appropriately trained people where required.
- [ ] Check that non-automatic firefighting equipment is easily accessible, simple to use and indicated by signs. Report faults and act on them.

Evidence to review: System design information, nominated-person records and routine checks. Testing and upkeep are also covered by Article 17.

Escape routes and exits

Article 14

- [ ] Keep necessary escape routes and exits clear and sufficient for the people using the premises.
- [ ] Check that emergency exits can be opened easily and immediately where necessary; review security arrangements that could obstruct escape.
- [ ] Check the required signs, emergency lighting and route protection against the assessment and evacuation strategy.

Evidence to review: Route checks, occupancy assumptions, lighting records and defect actions. Apply the requirements to the premises concerned.

Emergency procedures and danger areas

Article 15

- [ ] Check emergency procedures and drills, with enough competent people nominated to carry out evacuation procedures, including assistance where needed.
- [ ] Explain hazards and protective steps to people at risk. Restrict access to danger areas to people who have received adequate safety instruction.
- [ ] Check that people can stop work and reach safety immediately. Prevent return while serious and imminent danger remains, subject to Article 15(2)(c).

Evidence to review: Emergency plan, drills, roles and arrangements for people needing support.

Maintenance and firefighter protection

Article 17 · Article 38

- [ ] Keep relevant premises features, equipment and protective devices in an efficient state, in efficient working order and in good repair through suitable maintenance.
- [ ] Include fire doors and other passive protection where relevant. Refer defects and penetrations for competent assessment.
- [ ] Maintain measures provided for the use or protection of firefighters. Check applicable equipment and any faults that affect its availability.

Evidence to review: Servicing and repair records, fire-door checks and firefighter-facility records. Article 38 has a distinct firefighter-protection purpose.

PEOPLE AND SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES

Make the arrangements work

Speak to the people expected to use the procedures, not just the people who wrote them.

Competent safety assistance

Article 18

- [ ] Arrange competent help with preventive and protective measures where required, with adequate time and resources.
- [ ] Check the competence and responsibilities of those appointed, and give them relevant risk information.
- [ ] Where competent employees are available, consider Article 18(8), which gives them preference over external assistance.

Evidence to review: Appointments, competence evidence, resources and information provided. Article 18 has limited exceptions in paragraphs (6) and (7).

Information for staff and contractors

Article 19 · Article 20

- [ ] Give employees understandable information on risks, precautions, emergency procedures and the relevant nominated people.
- [ ] Provide the additional information required for children and dangerous substances where applicable.
- [ ] Give outside employers and people working on the premises relevant risk information and instructions, including evacuation contacts.

Evidence to review: Induction, contractor briefings and information records. Article 19 applies to responsible persons who are employers.

Training and employee duties

Article 21 · Article 23

- [ ] Provide suitable employee training on starting work and when new or increased risks arise; repeat it as appropriate and adapt it to changes.
- [ ] Ensure training takes place during working hours and includes the precautions and procedures people need.
- [ ] Explain employees' duties to take reasonable care, co-operate and report serious danger or shortcomings to the appropriate person.

Evidence to review: Training and drill records, role-specific instruction and a working reporting route.

Shared premises and staff consultation

Article 22 · Article 40 · Article 41

- [ ] Identify other responsible persons, exchange the required contact and responsibility information, and keep the relevant record.
- [ ] Co-ordinate precautions and share risks so that one occupier's arrangements do not undermine another's.
- [ ] Use the applicable employee consultation arrangements and do not charge employees for measures required under the Order.

Evidence to review: Shared-building arrangements, information exchanges and consultation records. Article 41 amends the employee-consultation regulations.

RESIDENTIAL AND SPECIAL PREMISES

Check the duties specific to your building

Residential buildings and special installations need more than a generic checklist.

Information for residents

Article 21A

- [ ] For buildings with two or more sets of domestic premises, give residents understandable information on the relevant risks and precautions.
- [ ] Include the required responsible-person contact details, assessor identity, nominated persons and shared-risk information.

Evidence to review: Information issued to residents and a record of the details required by Article 21A.

Handover and accountable persons

Article 22A · Article 22B

- [ ] When the responsible person changes, pass on relevant fire safety information and retain the required records. Include assessment, review and relevant building information.
- [ ] For premises within Article 22B in England, identify relevant accountable persons so far as reasonably practicable and co-operate with them.

Evidence to review: Handover record and accountable-person liaison. Do not assume English higher-risk-building arrangements apply identically in Wales.

Additional residential regulations

2022 regulations guidance · 2025 regulations guidance

- [ ] In England, check whether the Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 apply, including the relevant resident information, door-check and high-rise-building duties.
- [ ] Check the Fire Safety (Residential Evacuation Plans) (England) Regulations 2025 for buildings in scope. These took effect on 6 April 2026 and have specific assessment, plan and information-sharing requirements.

Evidence to review: Building scope records, resident information, door checks and evacuation planning records. Article 24 is the regulation-making power; these duties come from the separate regulations.

Special installations and statutory notices

Article 37 · Article 29 · Article 30 · Article 31

- [ ] Where relevant, check Article 37 requirements for firefighter switches on the specified high-voltage luminous-tube apparatus.
- [ ] Identify any alterations, enforcement or prohibition notices in force. Record requirements, owners and deadlines; comply with restrictions and seek advice if unclear.

Evidence to review: Installation records and the actual notices. Check current status with the serving authority, not just an old register entry.

Apply the requirements relevant to your premises. Check building thresholds, whether the rules apply in England or Wales, and current guidance.

NOTICES AND ACTION

Turn findings into completed actions

This page explains the main notice types. It does not give legal advice or change the terms or deadlines in a notice.

Understand the notices

Notice type	What it means for the responsible person
Article 29 Alterations notices	The authority identifies serious risk, or the potential for it if changes are made. The notice can require notification before specified changes that may significantly increase risk. Read any additional requirements in the notice.
Article 30 Enforcement notices	The notice identifies failures and requires remedial steps within its stated period. Record what must be done, who will do it and how completion will be evidenced.
Article 31 Prohibition notices	The notice prohibits or restricts the specified use until the matters identified are remedied. It may concern part or all of the premises. Immediate effect depends on the serious-injury risk and the terms of the notice; it is not automatic for every notice.

Do not assume that a challenge suspends a restriction

Article 35: a person served with an alterations, enforcement or prohibition notice, or an Article 37 notice, may appeal to a magistrates' court within 21 days from the day the notice is formally given to them (served). Obtain prompt legal advice about service and the deadline.

An appeal suspends an alterations or enforcement notice until it is decided or withdrawn. An appeal does not suspend a prohibition notice unless the court directs this, and only from that direction.

Article 36: where there is a failure to comply, but the dutyholder and enforcing authority disagree about the measures needed to put it right, both may agree to ask the Secretary of State to determine those measures. This is a technical remedy dispute, not the Article 35 appeal route. A referral does not itself suspend a notice or permit prohibited use.

Keep an action record

Use the fillable action record on page 7. Record gaps, evidence, interim precautions, owners and dates. Check completion before closing an action. Store sensitive records separately.

> **Act on serious concerns now.** Escalate to the responsible person and seek competent help. Do not wait for an inspection. In an emergency, follow the emergency plan and call 999.

A public register is useful background, but an older entry does not prove that a notice is still in force or that a premises is now satisfactory. Check current status and the effect of any notice with the serving authority.

ACTION RECORD

Record findings and follow through

Type in the fields below, save a copy and check that your entries remain after reopening it. Each row has limited space; use a separate controlled record for detailed findings.

Gap / evidence reference	Action and interim control	Owner / due date	Checked / closed

Keep entries brief. Do not include sensitive personal or client-confidential information in this general guide. Completing these checks is not a compliance certificate.

> For urgent concerns, escalate promptly and put appropriate interim precautions in place. Do not leave serious risks waiting for an inspection or a routine review.

ARTICLE GUIDE AND SOURCES

Find the duty behind the check

This is a practical guide to the main duties, not a legal commentary on every provision. The remaining articles largely concern enforcement, procedure, application and legislative powers. Read the full provision and any exceptions before relying on it.

Article	Subject, in brief
1-7	Extent, definitions, responsible person, general precautions, duties, scope and disapplication.
8	General fire precautions.
9	Risk assessment.
10	Principles of prevention; Schedule 1, Part 3.
11	Fire safety arrangements.
12	Dangerous-substance risks.
13	Firefighting and detection.
14	Emergency routes and exits.
15	Serious and imminent danger; danger areas.
16	Dangerous-substance emergency measures.
17	Maintenance.
18	Safety assistance.
19-20	Information for employees and outside undertakings.
21	Training.
21A	Information for residents.
22	Responsible-person co-operation and co-ordination.

Article	Subject, in brief
22A	Information for the incoming responsible person.
22B	Co-operation with accountable persons; check territorial application.
23	Employee duties.
24	Power to make regulations about fire precautions.
25-28	Enforcing authorities, enforcement and inspectors' powers.
29-31	Alterations, enforcement and prohibition notices.
32-34	Offences, defence and burden of proof.
35-36	Appeals and determination of disputes.
37	Firefighter switches for specified luminous-tube apparatus.
38	Maintenance for firefighter protection.
39-41	Civil liability, no employee charges and consultation.
42-44	Licensing and overlapping licence terms or byelaws.
45	Repealed; not a current duty.
46-49	Authority consultation, interaction with other law, service of notices and Crown application.
50-53	Guidance, visiting forces, subordinate provisions and legislative amendments/transitions.

Schedules: Schedule 1 covers dangerous substances, young persons and prevention principles. Schedules 2 and 3 amend other legislation. Schedules 4 and 5 contain repeals and revocations.

Commencement matters: check the current text and territorial notes. Article 9A is not presented here as an in-force duty. Article 9 still requires a suitable and sufficient assessment, and Article 18 covers competent assistance with preventive and protective measures. Newer prospective amendments are not treated as current requirements.

Sources and further guidance

1. Fire Safety Order 2005, revised text and commencement notes
2. NFCC public enforcement register and its limitations
3. London Fire Brigade public notices register
4. GOV.UK fire safety guidance for people with legal duties
5. Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 guidance
6. Residential PEEPs guidance and regulations, England
7. Section 156 changes and assessor-competence commencement

Analysis covers 10,741 notice entries: 9,197 NFCC and 1,544 LFB. The extract is dated 21 November 2026; issue dates end on 30 October 2026. It retains 744 entries flagged as possible duplicates, so the total is not a confirmed unique-notice count. Coding varies by source and is not manually verified notice by notice. Publication and retention affect comparisons. No NFCC or LFB endorsement. Check current status with the serving authority. Links reviewed 22 November 2026.

Need help turning findings into action?
contact@intellisafely.com · Discuss your requirements