
From: Janice Wray <jwray@kctmo.org.uk>
Sent: 12 May 2010 13:53
To: 'spencer.sutcliffe@london-fire.gov.uk'
Cc: Tony Ohara; Robert Black; Lornette Pemberton; Alasdair Manson; Sacha Jevans; 'COLLETTE.O'HARA@london-fire.gov.uk'; Simon Throp; Dave Steppel; Keith Fifield; Tony Ohara; Robert Black; Lornette Pemberton; Alasdair Manson; Sacha Jevans; Simon Throp; Dave Steppel; Keith Fifield
Subject: FW: Fire at Grenfell Tower - Friday 30th April
Attachments: image001.jpg

Spencer

Thank you for your e-mail. I referred most of your queries to my Senior Electrical Engineer and he has responded as follows -

"The remedial works that were agreed for this system prior to this incident include a complete overhaul and clean of all the intake and extract vents and when works are completed the system will be fully operational. The works were not based on the individual leaks identified during the fire.

I cannot comment on the level of smoke seepage at the time of the incident but having visited site yesterday there was little or no evidence of smoke damage on the lobbies other than the sixth floor.

Apart from the fact that there was not a complete seal on all of the vents the system operated as intended and I do not consider that there was a "catastrophic failure". On activation of the fire alarm the extract and intake vents opened on the sixth floor providing natural ventilation for this floor. The mechanical extract was functioning correctly but was not activated at the manual controls in this instance. There is labelling above the fire panel indicating the location of smoke vent controls and instructions on their use inside the cupboard adjacent to the switch.

Upon completion of the overhaul we have arranged for two smoke tests to be carried out, one on natural ventilation mode and one on fan assisted mode."

I can confirm that the works to the vents were completed on schedule last Friday and that a successful smoke test has also been undertaken. However, my colleague has asked for this to be repeated whilst he is in attendance and this is currently being arranged.

I believe that this addresses all of the issues you have raised and would therefore be keen to proceed with the on-site meeting with your operational colleagues soon so that if there are any further concerns these can also be addressed promptly.

Please let me know if you require anything further

Janice

Janice Wray

TMO Health & Safety Advisor

t: [REDACTED]
<<http://www.kctmo.org.uk/>>

w: www.kctmo.org.uk

a: : The Network Hub, 300 Kensal Road, W10 5BE

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From: spencer.sutcliff@london-fire.gov.uk [mailto:spencer.sutcliff@london-fire.gov.uk]

Sent: 06 May 2010 11:49

To: COLLETTE.O'HARA@london-fire.gov.uk; Janice Wray

Cc: Tony Ohara; Robert Black; Lornette Pemberton; Alasdair Manson; Sacha Jevans

Subject: RE: Fire at Grenfell Tower - Friday 30th April

Dear Janice,

Thank you for your response regarding the Fire Safety failings at Grenfell Tower.

I would like to add the additional comments:

- I appreciate your comments regarding the admission of interim measures and endorse your future recommended actions. I recommend that there is an assessment made for each individual Fire Safety maintenance issue to ensure that higher priority areas are dealt with to a strict time-scale.

- Please be aware that if the seals are replaced in the reported areas then the failing may not be completely rectified.

- o Did the reported smoke logging match the reported failings for each floor level?

- o After liaising with our Fire Engineering department, it is surprising that if all systems are in place, defective seals would cause this level of smoke seepage.
- o Consideration should be given to the entire system. E.g.: Did any other floor vents open, did the top vent open correctly, is there sufficient draw in the first place to enable smoke to travel vertically.
- o Due to the catastrophic failure of the system, I would suggest that it would be very difficult to demonstrate compliance without a full Engineers smoke test.

Please feel free to contact me to discuss further.

I appreciate your offer to meet on site with your Engineer and the local station and Collette will help with the co-ordination of that. The key areas for this visit would include the operation of the fans and Fire Lift.

Regards,

Spencer Sutcliff

Team Leader

Kensington and Chelsea Fire Safety

Tel: [REDACTED]

From: OHARA, COLLETTE
Sent: 06 May 2010 09:58
To: SUTCLIFF, SPENCER
Subject: FW: Fire at Grenfell Tower - Friday 30th April
Importance: High

Collette O'Hara

Fire Safety Inspecting Officer

London Fire Brigade

Kensington and Chelsea Borough Team Office: [REDACTED]

Ext [REDACTED]

E: <mailto:Collette.O'Hara@london-fire.gov.uk> Collette.O'Hara@london-fire.gov.uk

From: Janice Wray [mailto:jwray@kctmo.org.uk]
Sent: 05 May 2010 16:48
To: OHARA, COLLETTE
Cc: Tony Ohara; Robert Black; Lornette Pemberton; Alasdair Manson; Sacha Jevans
Subject: Fire at Grenfell Tower - Friday 30th April
Importance: High

Collette

Further to our telephone conversations yesterday about this fire I would advise as follows –

1. It is suspected that the fire on the sixth floor of Grenfell Tower was started deliberately by acquaintances of the resident of flat 64. They allegedly propped bags with recycling (due for collection on Saturday at 8am) against the front door of his flat and set them alight. The communal detection system was triggered and the fire alarm sounded. On hearing the alarm a neighbour came out of her property and used a garden hose to extinguish the fire. The flat entrance door withstood the fire but will be replaced asap.
2. The communal fire detection system is linked to an extraction system and this did operate removing the smoke from the lift lobby. Unfortunately, it appears that there was spillage / leakage of smoke from the extraction system into the lobbies of floors 7, 12, 13, 15, 17, 18, 19 and 20 and this led a number of residents to believe that their lift lobby was smoke logged and they were trapped in their home and as such they telephoned the FB raising their concern .
3. The smoke extraction system is maintained under our fire safety planned preventative maintenance contract with RGE Services. This requires maintenance as per the requirements of the British Standards and as such these vents are subject to quarterly inspection and maintenance. I am advised that the incomplete sealing of a number of the vents had been identified on the most recent inspection visit. The contractors had been asked to submit a quotation for the necessary remedial works to address this problem and this was received on 20th April. I can confirm that a works order was raised the same day for the works to be progressed. Unfortunately, the contractors had some difficulty which they had not foreseen sourcing the required parts and the works were scheduled to start on site yesterday (Tuesday 4th May). As discussed, in retrospect the delay should have caused us to consider what, if any, interim measures were required until repairs were completed and the system was fully operational again. I have spoken to the TMO Senior Engineer and advised that I believe, as a minimum, we should have advised the local Area Housing Team and the local Fire Station Manager of the defect and kept them appraised of progress and completion target for remedial works etc.

4. I can confirm that our engineers and the planned maintenance contractors inspected the system yesterday to identify any damage caused by the fire and none was found. Additionally, the planned remedial works commenced on site yesterday and will take three days to complete. It is therefore, anticipated that the ventilation system will be fully operational again by Friday 7th May.

5. In discussion with the engineers yesterday the issue of the operation of the mechanical fan on the ventilation system came up. I am advised that it is not operated automatically but can be turned on manually by FB personnel or TMO staff once the fire is safely extinguished. I believe that there is signage to advise FB personnel of the existence and operation of this fan, however, our Senior Electrical Engineer will be visiting the block this pm and will investigate what additional signage etc. could be installed to alert operational firefighters to this.

6. The Police arrested an individual yesterday on suspicion of starting the fire maliciously and they were interrogating CCTV footage of the area, however, they have not yet confirmed if this individual is to be charged.

7. You mentioned that there may have been a problem with the lifts at the time of the fire and that specifically they may not have returned to ground level when called by the FB. ILS our lift maintenance contractors tested the fire fighters override switches etc. on both lifts yesterday and confirmed that both were operating perfectly and lifts had both returned to ground when called as required. Therefore, there does not appear to have been a problem but if further information comes to light then I would be grateful if you could please advise.

8. RBKC have confirmed that they collect recycling from outside flat entrance doors at 8am on Saturday mornings. It is our intention to engage with the residents and RBKC to see if an alternative arrangement for recycling can be introduced.

9. Once permission given by Police that cleaning works could be progressed in the lift lobbies this works were initiated. (yesterday afternoon)

10. I believe there would be some value in our Senior Electrical Engineer meeting with some FB officers at Grenfell Tower to better explore how this system operates – perhaps within the next few weeks. Presumably it would be most appropriate for my colleagues to meet with some of the operational staff from the local Fire Station. However, we would be grateful for your view on this and your advice on who we should contact.

I hope this is helpful. Please advise if you require anything further.

Janice

Janice Wray
TMO Health & Safety Advisor
t: [REDACTED]
<<http://www.kctmo.org.uk/>>

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If you wish to contact a member of the team after this date please call our Customer Service Centre on 0800 137 111, or write to the above address.

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