

Proposals for Fire Safety Reform

May 2009



The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety has issued a consultation on proposals for fire safety reform in Northern Ireland.

The Department has proposed that draft Fire Safety Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2009 should replace the existing fire safety provisions contained in Part III of the Fire Services (Northern Ireland) Order 1984 and the Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2001. It is hoped that the change will result in Northern Ireland having one comprehensive and effective piece of fire safety legislation which will cover all non-domestic premises.

The draft regulations are intended to simplify the existing fire safety legislation and reinforce a modern risk-based approach to fire prevention.

The present system of fire certification for non-domestic premises will be replaced by a requirement for those with responsibilities for premises to assess the risk of fire and ensure that fire safety standards are met.

The owners of premises used by voluntary organisations and the common areas of houses in multiple occupation will be required to undertake a risk assessment.

Under the proposed regulations, enforcing authorities will be able to take action directly against those who have failed to comply with their fire safety duties.

The consultation will end on 8 May 2009. For further information please contact Karen Blair (k.blair@cfrlaw.co.uk) or Maria O'Loan (m.o'loan@cfrlaw.co.uk) on (028) 9024 3141.

Please note: The content of this article is for information purposes only and further advice should be sought from a professional advisor before any action is taken.