



**From: Black Rod (Chairman, Parliamentary Estates Board)**

**To: Management Boards**

**Subject: PARLIAMENTARY FIRE SAFETY COMMITTEE**

**Date: 15 May 2008**

As part of its review of the Automatic Fire Detection/Voice Alarm System Project the Parliamentary Estates Board has been examining the way in which fire safety is overseen in the Palace and in the Estate generally and to see whether improvements could be made.

As a result, we have revised the Terms of Reference and membership for the Parliamentary Fire Safety Committee. A copy is attached. These Terms are considerably more focussed than the short previous set and in our view will help tighten and therefore improve oversight of fire matters throughout the Estate.

The Management Boards are invited to note the revised Terms.

**Black Rod**

## **Parliamentary Fire Safety Committee – terms of reference**

### **Purpose**

1. The purpose of the Parliamentary Fire Safety Committee (FSC) is to confirm that fire safety precautions throughout the Parliamentary Estate (the Estate) conform to the highest professional standards; and by doing so to support the Clerks of both Houses as 'responsible persons' under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
2. The FSC will confirm that fire precautions throughout the Estate conform to the requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 take full account of the recommendations of the report by Sir Alan Bailey entitled 'Fire protection measures for Royal Palaces' (1993), and; incorporate all aspects of current and future fire safety legislation, guidance, and good practice.

### **Activities and Reporting**

3. The FSC will discharge these responsibilities by meeting regularly to: monitor and review current precautions and training; receive and consider regular twice yearly reports from the Fire Safety Manager on the condition of fire precautions throughout the Estate; to make a report with recommendations as appropriate to the Parliamentary Estates Board (PEB) chaired by Black Rod/Director-General, Facilities on a twice yearly basis. The chairman of the PEB will be responsible for drawing to the attention of the Management Boards and 'responsible persons' any relevant matters arising from such reports. Minutes of FSC meetings will be posted on the Parliamentary intranet.

4. In particular, the FSC will:

- Provide assurance to the 'responsible persons' as identified in the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 by receiving twice yearly reports from the Fire Safety Manager about the application throughout the Estate of the Fire Safety Management statement of intent, the Fire safety policy, and the Fire risk management strategy. The reports will include assurance that the terms of all relevant fire safety documents, standards, and processes are being applied throughout the Estate; that these documents, standards, and processes, are fully compliant with the law, are up to date, and have been reviewed at least annually. Where such assurance cannot be given then the Fire Safety Manager will draw this to the Committee's attention immediately.
- Receive a twice yearly report from the Parliamentary Estates Directorate on all fire precautions projects undertaken since the previous FSC meeting to ensure that work is being progressed to programme and completed on time; and to review fire safety projects in the forthcoming annual works programmes to confirm that correct priorities are being addressed.

- Receive and consider reports from the Fire Safety Manager on fire incidents involving Estate premises; and endorse or make recommendations for remedial or enforcement action where appropriate.
- Enquire into and make recommendations to the 'responsible persons' and the Management Boards of the Houses, through the chairman of the PEB, of such shortcomings in current fire precautions and provisions on the Estate under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 as it may consider expedient.
- Consider, agree and review at least annually the 10 year Strategic fire safety plan as drawn up by the Fire Safety Manager within the context of the 25 Year Estates strategy, 5 Year rolling plan, and any other relevant House and Estate plans, and to ensure that these documents are fully aligned; and, in particular, that full and prioritised account is taken of fire prevention measures within the Estates strategy and rolling plan.
- To ensure that all fire safety precautions are fully compatible with health and safety measures through appropriate liaison with the Health and Safety Committee (HSC); to advise the HSC as appropriate on fire matters or matters of common interest; and to receive a report from the Fire Safety Manager (sitting on the HSC) on relevant matters of liaison on a quarterly basis at least.
- Consider fire safety training and make recommendations to the PEB as required.
- Make such recommendations as seem to it necessary about the resources required to provide effective management of fire safety and meet the requirements of legislative compliance; and to provide support to the Fire Safety Manager and his staff in upholding and where necessary enforcing the provisions of the Regulatory Reform Order.
- Review these terms of reference, and the performance of the Committee, annually.

### **Meeting frequency**

Twice yearly in January and July; and additionally as required.

### **Membership<sup>1</sup>**

Parliamentary Director of Estates (Chairperson)  
 Chairman of the Health and Safety Committee (HOL)/Director of Facilities (HOL)<sup>2</sup>  
 Black Rod (HOL)

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<sup>1</sup> Where there is no alternate appointed, those unable to attend must arrange a substitute at an appropriate level of seniority

<sup>2</sup> Alternate HOL Deputy Director, HR

Manager/Head Occupational Health & Safety  
Head of Programmes and Planning, PED

**Secretary**

Secretary, PEB

In attendance:

- Fire Safety Manager
- Deputy Fire Safety Manager

In attendance as required:

- Sergeant At Arms
- Chief Superintendent, Metropolitan Police Service
- Head of Catering Services HOL
- Director of Catering & Retail Dept. HOC
- Head of Accommodation Services HOC
- Administration Officer HOL