

Job Description: Principal Adviser - Fire (Joint Inspection Team)

Reports to: Principal Fire Engineer
Directorate/team: Joint Inspection Team, Fire Safety (JIT)
Grade: Grade 9

Job Purpose:

To provide the JIT Team with expertise in fire safety (theory, firefighting good practice, and legislation), that will be superior to landlords which may try to argue their unsafe buildings are compliant/ safe and advise at the inspections and give testimony at the enforcement stages.

Core Accountabilities:

1. Provide JIT with expertise in fire engineering and fire safety within a block
2. Provide evidence at Tribunals and Court cases the JIT supports local authorities on, and represent JIT at national policy making meetings
3. Maintain professional knowledge of all relevant legislation, systems, policies and professional best practice.
4. Contribute to the delivery of the team's agreed objectives.
5. Model the LGA's values and work in accordance with health and safety, equal opportunities and environmental policies.
6. Undertake any other duties and responsibilities appropriate to the post.

Specific Accountabilities:

1. Ensure the JIT team stays up-to-date of developments in fire safety good practice relating to residential high-rise buildings.
2. Help train non-fire engineer colleagues in the JIT, such as EHOs, Solicitor(s), and Intelligence Officers, and external staff.
3. Where necessary assist with drafting schedules of work, notices and orders for enforcement under Housing Act 2004, (where the 'host' local authority decides to take such action).
4. To be the lead fire safety expert for on-site inspections, and accompany teams of EHOs, and co-ordinate with building control manager and (where appropriate), 'host' borough staff on HHSRS site visits.

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5. Contribute to HHSRS assessments of blocks, along with other professionals as part of Housing Act 2004 enforcement. The results of this assessment will then be passed to the local authority where the building is, so they can make a decision on any appropriate action.
6. Along with the JIT building controller, take the lead on advising on the scoping of remediation works required to make a block safe.
7. There will also be a requirement to train other JIT members in matters relating to Fire Safety to aid greater understanding, and attend some JIT team meetings, and undertake some training, (all time spent, and course fees paid for by the JIT).
8. Write witness statements, and attend court hearings as a witness.
9. As a key expert for the national JIT team, it will be expected that this post has some autonomy and leads for JIT on national meetings developing the new fire safety regulatory system.
10. Given the unsafe buildings are spread across England, it will be necessary to visit and stay overnight for a few days at a time in the normal course of the working week.

Relevant Contacts:

LGA:

LGA Managers
JIT Team

Local Authorities:

Senior Officers
Sector experts/professional bodies

Other:

CIEH
MHCLG
Building Safety team
Home Office
HSE

Person Specification: Principal Adviser - Fire (Joint Inspection Team)

Qualifications

- Masters degree in fire engineering
- Fellow of the IFE

Knowledge and experience

Demonstrable experience of:

- Prosecutions and expert witness work (prosecution and defence), central and local government.
- Working with partner organisations (Housing, Building Control, Fire Service, HSE, other emergency services, and working in a multi-disciplinary team).
- Sitting on BSi committees that decide the national standards to be set for various fire safety features/systems and working with NFCC to improve FRS response to fire safety in high rise blocks.
- Commercial fire safety work.
- Significant experience of fire safety enforcement, including the process for serving Article 31 notices under Fire Safety Order
- report writing, and national policy development.
- inspecting and identifying fire safety issues in high rise residential buildings, law enforcement, and high-profile accident investigations.
- writing guidance at a sector level, speaking at national events and conferences.
- delivering training course (up to Level 6 qualifications).
- FRS management and leadership.
- Working on developing the new fire safety regulatory system, (post Hackitt), with Home Office and/or MHCLG
 - using HHSRS in residential tower blocks,
 - Preparing cases for Court and attending Court as a witness, (not necessarily Re: tower blocks).
 - Building and maintaining effective relationships and partnerships.
 - Cross discipline working in practical situations to a common goal.

Skills and abilities

- Excellent interpersonal skills, with the ability to influence and negotiate with a wide range of stakeholders effectively.
- Flexible approach to work, with a keenness to adapt to meet changing work requirements.
- Excellent organisational skills, with the ability to prioritise work to meet deadlines, and a concern for order and accuracy.
- Excellent IT skills, including Word, with the ability quickly to learn new packages as required.
- Excellent written skills, with the ability to accurately summarise and convey complex information.
- Able to deliver under pressure, prioritising work against competing demands to meet deadlines.
- Highly developed written and oral communication skills, including the ability to speak confidently in public and to present complex ideas in a clear and comprehensible way.
- A positive, “can do” attitude.

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