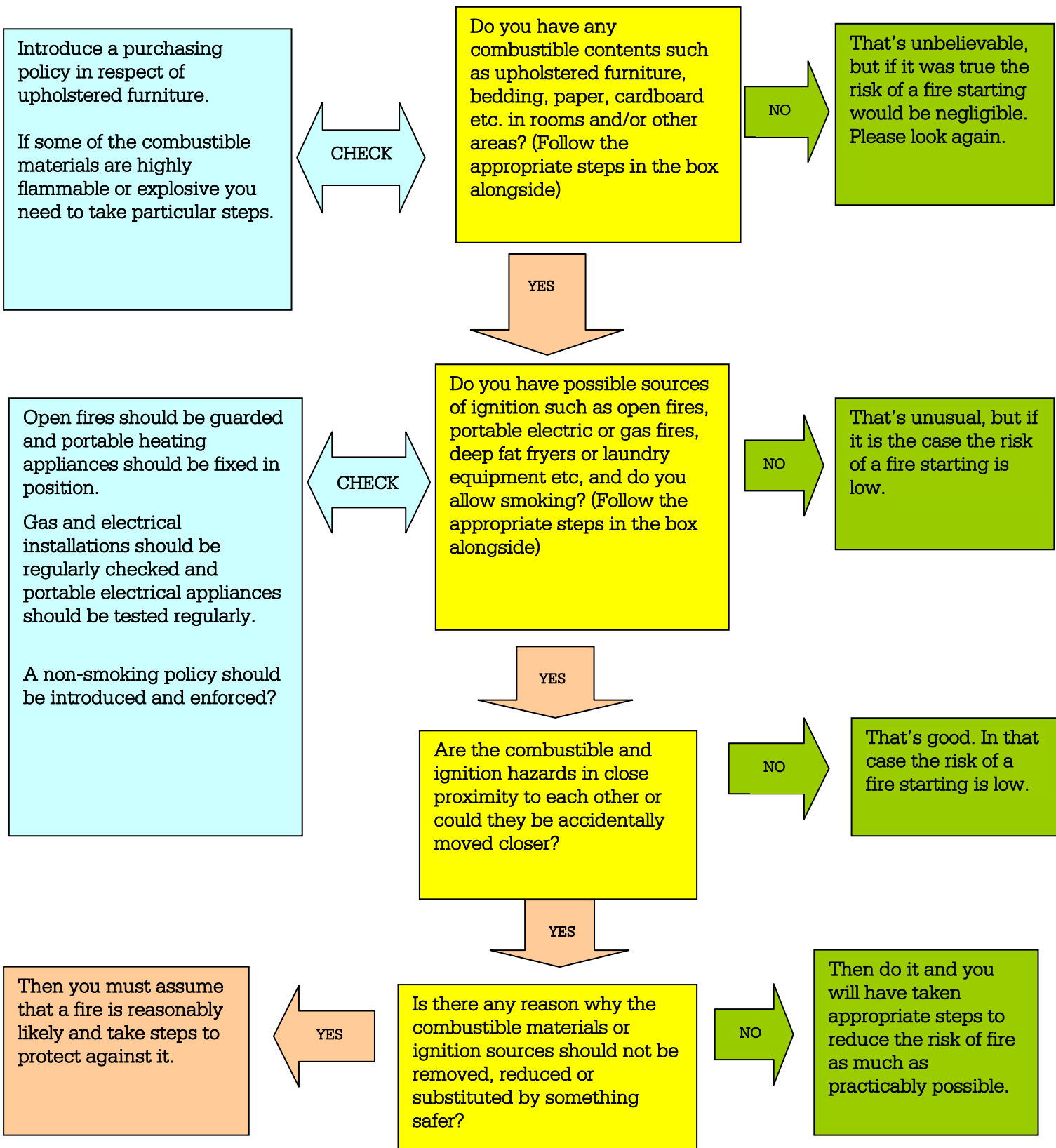


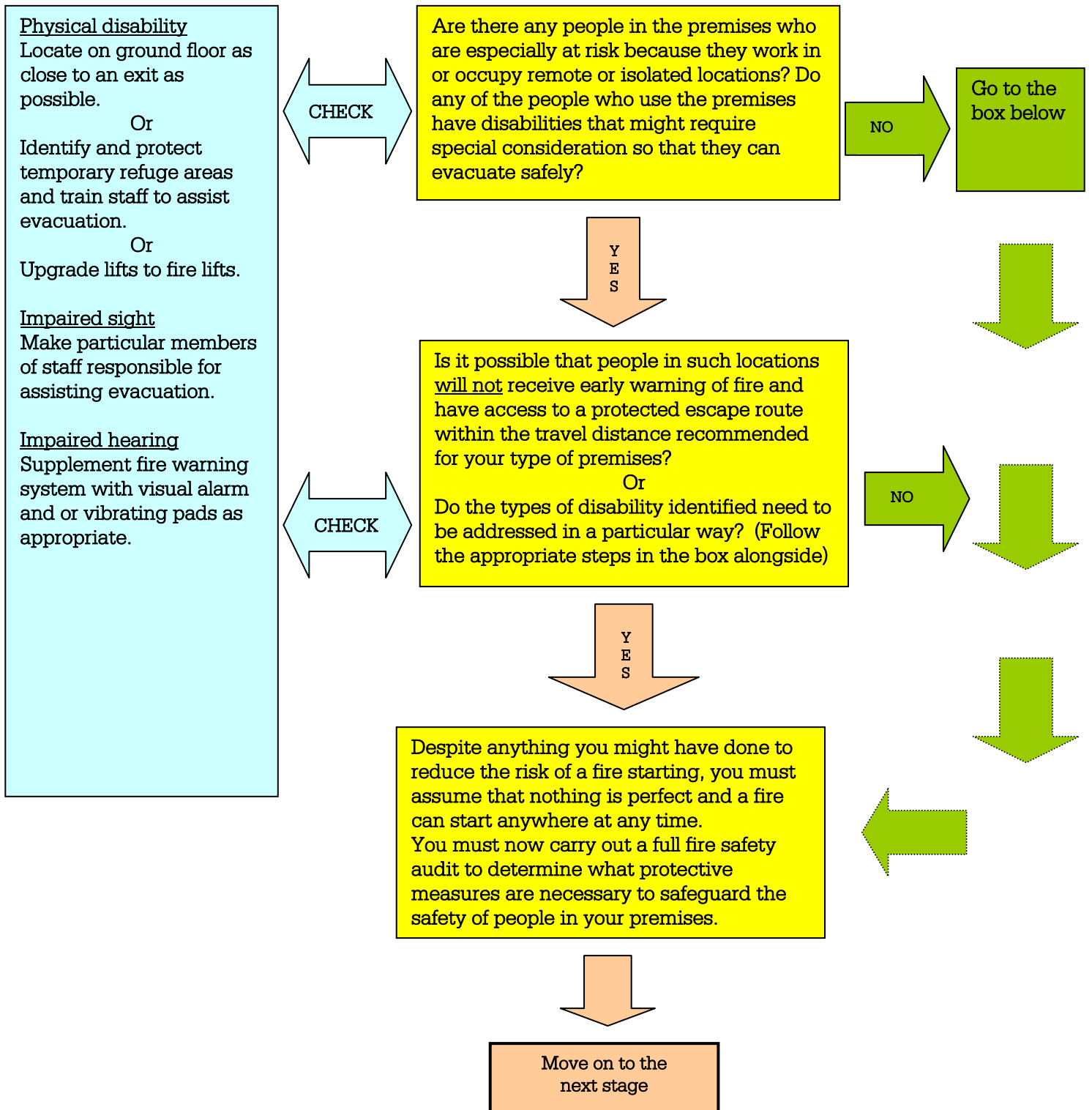
Guide to Fire Safety Audit Process

Identifying the hazards



Guide to Fire Safety Audit Process

Assessing the likely impact of fire on people within or in close proximity to your premises



Guide to Fire Safety Audit Process

The Fire Safety Audit

The fire warning system

Audibility

Make sure the fire warning system can be clearly heard in all parts of the premises including bedrooms when people are asleep.

Indication

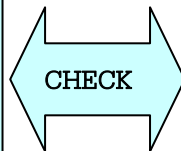
Make sure there are properly indicated operating points near each final exit from the building and along escape routes.

Automatic fire detection

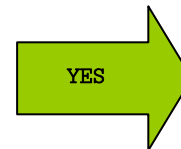
Where people sleep on the premises and in some other circumstances, automatic fire detectors will be necessary.

Testing & maintenance

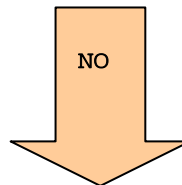
Ensure that warning systems are regularly tested, serviced and maintained. They should be tested by staff on a weekly basis using different operating points in rotation and checked and serviced by a competent engineer at least once per year or as recommended by the manufacturer.



Is there an effective fire warning system installed incorporating fire detectors where appropriate?



Go on to means of escape



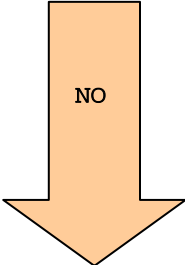
If you decide you need more than a shouted warning contact a supplier or competent engineer.

Means of Escape

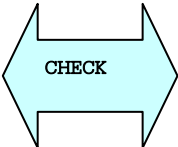
Were your premises built less than 15 years ago?



That's good. It's quite likely that they were built in accordance with the Building Regulations 1991 or 2001 and already have most, if not all of the necessary structural and design safety features.



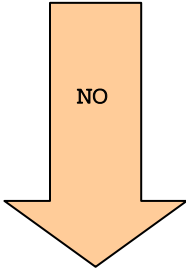
Travel distance
Travel distance varies according to the speed at which people are likely to be able to move. This is affected mainly by age, physical and mental ability, population density, staircases and self-closing doors.



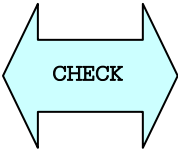
Do you think that if the fire alarm sounded, the people who work and/or visit your premises would be able to reach a final exit or protected staircase within about 1 minute.



Great! That means travel distances should be within acceptable limits and escape routes are clear, unobstructed and accessible.



Structural & design features
Good means of escape arrangements enable people to reach a place of relative safety or even open air quickly and without suffering the worst effects of fire. This is achieved by limiting the distance people have to travel to safety and making sure that where necessary, structural features such as fire resisting walls and doors are provided to contain the fire.



It may be that your premises lack some or many of the structural and design features required to ensure good fire separation and safe escape. Carry on to "Structural means of escape" below.

Structural means of escape

Beginning on the top floor, is there more than one staircase leading down to the floor(s) below?

YES

Are you satisfied that a single fire could not affect more than one staircase?

YES

Is the staircase adequately separated from each other and risk rooms/ areas on all floors below the top floor?

YES

Provided the various stages of your escape routes are not too long there should be no need for any structural alterations. Carry on to "Stages of evacuation/escape". Arrangements for evacuation/escape are separated into stages and this is explained in more detail below.

You might wish to consider obtaining the services of a competent fire risk assessor at this point. Having satisfied yourself that you can achieve two door separation carry on to "Stages of evacuation/escape". Arrangements for evacuation/escape are separated into stages and this is explained in more detail below.

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Where there are two staircases they must be separated from each other by at least one and preferably two fire resisting walls or partitions containing self-closing fire doors.

Single staircases require two door separation, which normally consists of self-closing, fire doors to rooms and into a fire resisting staircase enclosure.

CHECK

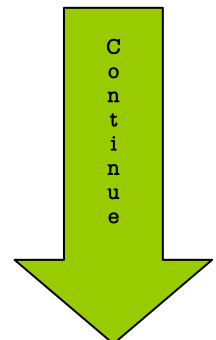
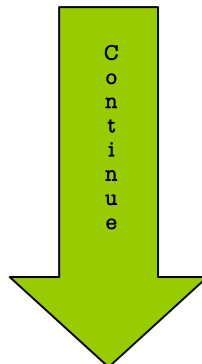
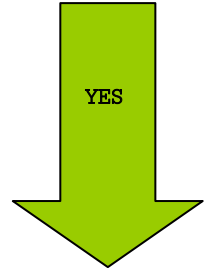
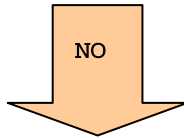
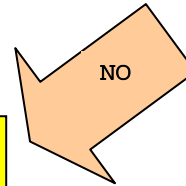
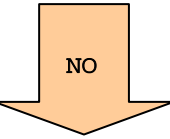
CHECK

Two door separation can be achieved as described above, or by creating a fire resisting lobby inside the room(s) where enclosure of the staircase is difficult. Walls between rooms and the corridor or forming part of the staircase enclosure should be checked to ensure that they are fire resisting and do not contain holes or areas of plain glazing. Doors to cupboards situated on escape routes should be fire resisting and kept locked shut. All fire doors should be indicated with an appropriate notice.

NO

NO

NO

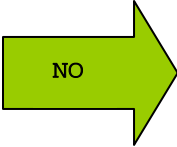
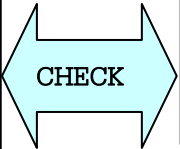


The stages of evacuation/escape

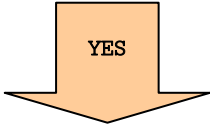
Escape routes are usually separated into 3 or 4 stages according to circumstances and the size of the building. Where at the beginning of any stage escape is possible in one direction only, this is known as a cul-de-sac or dead-end condition.

Stage 1 of the escape route deals with travel within the room occupied when the warning of fire is given. Every room and area must be assessed for adequate, properly indicated exits and safe layout. If fire hazards exist between working positions and exits a simple re-arrangement may be all that is necessary to overcome the problem.

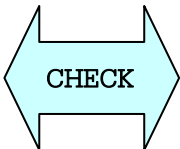
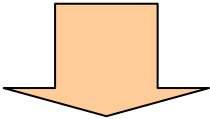
Stage 1
 Could a fire start in any position in the room and spread so quickly that it would prevent anyone escaping?



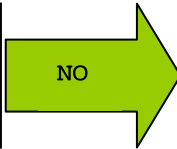
If you've checked the notes opposite and you're sure, move onto the next stage



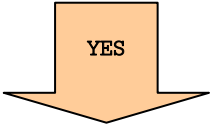
Stage 1
 Re-arrange the room or consider an additional exit.
 Move onto the next stage.



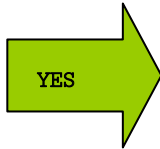
Stage 2
 Is stage 2 a dead-end condition?



If people have a choice of escape routes and can travel away from the fire as they evacuate there is probably no need for doors to rooms and/or cupboards to be fire doors



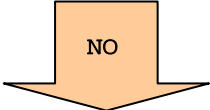
Stage 2
 Assuming that doors to rooms and/or cupboards along the route will be replaced with fire doors where necessary, can people escaping reach a final exit or door into a protected staircase within about 1 minute?



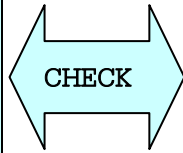
If people can reach a final exit or door into a fire resisting staircase enclosure (Place of relative safety) within about 1 minute of leaving the room or area they were in when the alarm sounded they should be fairly safe. Move onto the next stage



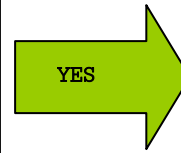
Stage 2
 Stage 2 of the escape route involves travel within corridors to a protected staircase (place of relative safety) or a final exit. A final exit is normally viewed as a place of ultimate safety provided those escaping can move right away from the building. Escape routes terminating in an enclosed yard or space are not acceptable unless they are sufficiently large to enable people to retreat a distance at least equal to the height of the building. Where stage 2 is a dead-end condition any doors to rooms or cupboards opening onto it need to be half-hour fire resisting and effectively self closing or kept locked when not in use.



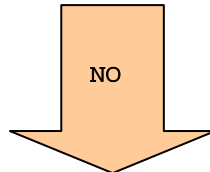
Stage 2
If the escape route is too long or the occupants cannot move quickly enough to reach a final exit or protected staircase within about 1 minute, the route can be divided into shorter sections by providing fire doors across the corridor. Alternatively, it is possible to extend the time in which it is safe to travel by introducing a smoke control system into the escape route, or providing active fire fighting equipment such as sprinklers in the higher risk rooms or areas.



Stage 2
Can escape routes be shortened or the time available extended during which people will not be adversely affected by smoke and hot, toxic gases?

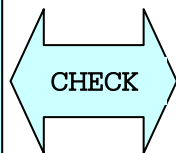


Having decided what steps you need to take to make stage 2 of the escape route acceptable move onto the next stage.

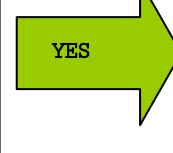


Stage 2
Seek advice from a competent Fire Risk Assessor.

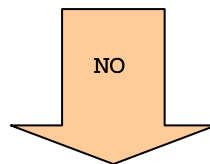
Stage 3
Stage 3 of the escape route can consist of travel in the open air away from a final exit door, or travel within a protected staircase to a final exit door, usually at ground level. Provided that in either case the route is clear of obstruction, in good repair, the final exit door is properly indicated, leads to an open area outside the building and can be easily opened without the need for a key, stage 3 of the escape route should be satisfactory.



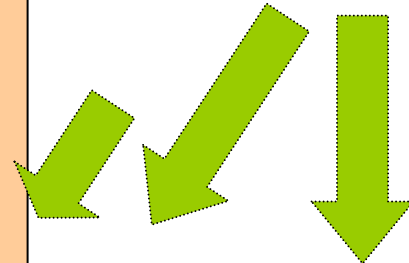
Stage 3
Is the final exit or the protected staircase adequate for the number of people who may need to use them and are they accessible, unobstructed and safe to use?



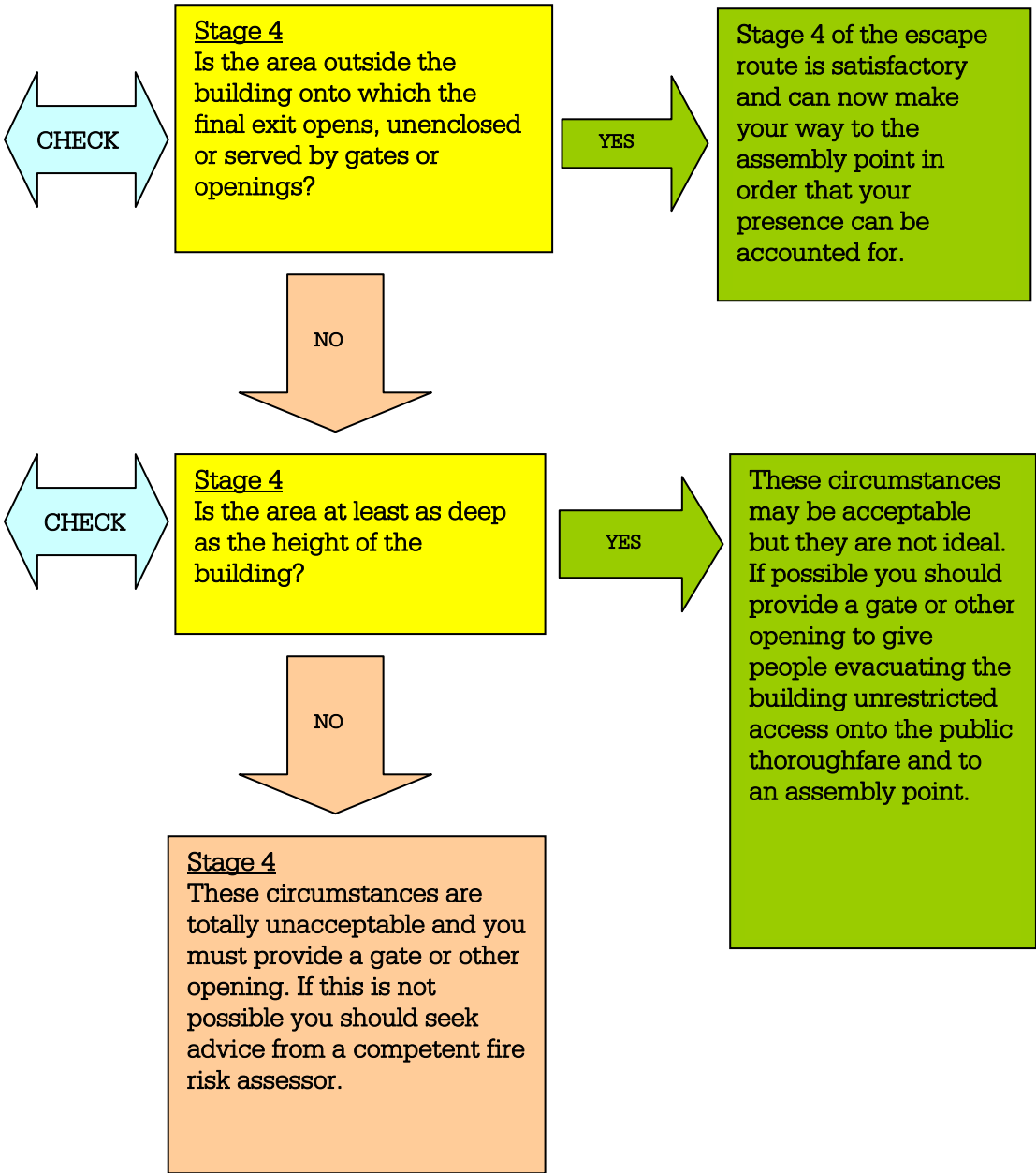
You have satisfied stage 3 of the escape route and can now move on to the next stage.



Stage 3
If having read the notes opposite you feel that the final exit or the protected staircase is inadequate for the number of people who may need to use them and cannot be made acceptable by minor repair, alteration or clearing any obstructions you should seek the advice of a competent Fire Risk Assessor.



Stage 4
Preferably, stage 4 of the escape route consists of unrestricted travel in the open air away from a final exit door. Occasionally, stage 4 will consist of travelling across an enclosed area to get as far away from the building as possible within those confines. This is not an ideal situation and is only reluctantly acceptable where the distance from the exit door to the perimeter of the enclosed area is at least equal to the height of the building itself. Where a site is landlocked it is sometimes possible to obtain a "way leave" across a neighbour's land. Where this is not possible and the enclosure is too small to offer acceptable separation distance from the building an internal solution may be necessary and this should be discussed with a competent fire risk assessor.



Record of significant findings of Fire Risk Assessment

Risk assessment for

Risk assessment undertaken by

Company address:

Completed by:

Date:

Signature:

Floor(s) or area(s) assessed

Use(s) of room(s) or area(s)

Step 1 – Identify fire hazards

Sources of ignition

Sources of fuel

Sources of oxygen

Step 2 – Identify people at risk

Step 3 – Evaluate, remove, reduce or protect against risk

1. Evaluate the risk of a fire occurring:
2. Evaluate the risk to people from a fire starting in the premises:
3. Remove and reduce the hazards that may cause a fire:
4. Remove and reduce the risks to people from a fire:

Assessment review

Assessment review date:

Completed by:

Signature:

Review outcome: (where substantial changes have taken place a new record sheet should be used)

FIRE SAFETY RISK ASSESSMENT

1 Identify fire hazards

Identify:

Sources of ignition

Sources of fuel

Sources of oxygen

2 Identify people at risk

Identify:

People in and around the premises

People especially at risk

3 Evaluate, remove, reduce and protect from risk

Evaluate the risk of a fire occurring

Evaluate the risk to people from fire

Remove or reduce fire hazards

Remove or reduce the risks to people

- Detection and warning
- Firefighting
- Escape routes
- Lighting
- Signs and notices
- Maintenance

4 Record, plan, inform, instruct and train

Record significant findings and action taken

Prepare an emergency plan

Inform and instruct relevant people; co-operate and co-ordinate with others

Provide training

5 Review

Keep assessment under review

Revise where necessary

Remember to keep your fire risk assessment under review

Definitions

Responsible Person

- (a) This is the employer, if the workplace is to any extent under their control; or where this is not the case,
- (b) the person who has control of the premises (as occupier or otherwise) in connection with the carrying on by them of a trade, business or other undertaking (for profit or not) e.g. an agent or trustee ; or
- (c) The owner of the premises where they are not in the control of an employer, agent or trustee, (e.g. premises in multiple occupation).

Competent Person

A person is to be regarded as competent where they have sufficient training and experience or knowledge and other qualities, to enable them to properly assist the responsible person in undertaking a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks to which relevant persons are exposed, and in taking preventive and protective measures in connection with the provision of general fire precautions.

Relevant Persons

The definition of “Relevant Persons” in the Fire Safety Order includes any person who is or may be lawfully on the premises and any person who may be in the immediate vicinity of the premises who is at risk from a fire in or on them.

Competent Fire Risk Assessor

The best way of checking an Assessors competence is by contacting institutions such as the Institution of Fire Engineers or the Institution of Fire Safety Managers. They keep a record/register of peoples experience, knowledge and qualifications. Always ask for proof of insurance.

www.ife.org.uk

www.ifsm.org.uk