

Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP)

A. Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) for employees and regular visitors

Where staff and regular visitors to a building require a plan, they can be provided with an individual plan through the Risk Assessment Officer. The plan must be tailored to individual need and is likely to give detailed information on safe movement during an escape.

B. Standard plans for occasional visitors

There are a wide range of options for ensuring the safe evacuation of disabled people. These options contain some standard elements, but these can of course be adapted to suit particular organisations. In order to provide suitable means of escape for visitors, a set of standard escape options should be adopted.

A standard plan is used where there are visitors or casual users of the building who may be present infrequently or on only one occasion. The provision of standard PEEPs takes account of the following:

- the disabled person's movements within the building;
- the operational procedures within the building;
- the types of escape that can be made available;
- the building systems, e.g. the fire alarm; and
- the existing egress plan.

Standard evacuation plans are written procedures that can be used as options for disabled people to choose from. They are held at the reception points within the building and are advertised and offered to people as part of the entry/reception procedures.

A disabled person requiring assisted escape is offered options for their assistance and is given suitable instructions.

It is understood by most people that when a fire alarm is activated they must all leave the building by the nearest exit, as quickly as possible, and reach a place of ultimate safety. Management of the building is required to keep escape routes clear and free from obstruction and to ensure that exits are readily available for use on quick-release devices which also offer protection from unwanted or illegal entry. However, everyone using a building for whatever purpose should also take some responsibility for their own safety wherever possible.

This responsibility also applies to disabled people, therefore disabled people can be expected to identify themselves when they are informed of the availability of a choice of evacuation plan and co-operate by giving any information necessary for the safe execution of the plan.

Example - A visitor approaches a group leader, where there has been a clear sign in the hall indicating the provision of a PEEP system. The visitor has a visual impairment and therefore requires information about the escape routes. The building operates a policy of the group leader being responsible for visitors if an escape is necessary. The group leader explains the process for obtaining support. The visually impaired person makes the group leader aware of the need for assistance. Prior to the start of the meeting he/she points out the escape routes and offers to assist if necessary

C. Unknown or uncontrolled visitors

Where there are people within the building who do not pass a reception point or are not controlled, such as in a shopping centre, library or theatre, it is more difficult to gather information prior to the need to escape. In these instances a system of standard PEEPs should also be implemented and advertised.

Training for staff is vital in this case as they will have to provide assistance and advice to disabled users of the building as the incident develops. The plans to enable them to leave safely in the event of an incident will require pre-planning. Staff will need to understand all the options within the matrix (contained in Appendix 1) and be able to communicate these effectively to disabled people at the time of escape. In order to do this, they should receive disability escape etiquette training.

In large, multi-occupancy buildings, it will be essential for each organisation to ensure that suitable training is provided to all their staff. Such a training requirement should form part of their fire safety risk assessment.