

Office of the Director General

The General Manager
All Councils

13/13986

Dear Sir/Madam

Isolation of Smoke Detection & Alarm Systems for Theatrical Purposes

I refer to my letter dated 8 May 2013 regarding the isolation of smoke detection and alarm systems for theatrical purposes (copy attached). The Department has received a number of enquiries as to whether such a practice can be approved under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (Act). The purpose of this letter is to clarify my earlier comments on this issue.

As noted in my earlier correspondence, the isolation of required smoke detection and alarm systems for theatrical purposes can pose a significant risk to building occupants.

This practice **cannot** be undertaken **unless** it has been provided for under the terms of a development consent, construction certificate or a fire safety order issued under the Act in relation to the building. In such circumstances, the isolation of smoke detection and alarm systems **must** be in accordance with the requirements of such approval or order so as to ensure the appropriate level of safety for the occupants within the building is maintained.

If the practice is not currently provided for under the terms of an existing approval or order, approval to facilitate the isolation of smoke detection and alarm systems for theatrical purposes in existing buildings may be able to be sought by way of a development application or an application to modify an existing development consent or construction certificate under the Act. This may require reliance upon an alternative solution under the Building Code of Australia. The type of approval or required solution will depend on the specific facts and circumstances.

Interested parties are advised to seek their own professional advice to determine whether the isolation of smoke detection and alarm systems within a relevant building for theatrical purposes is currently provided for under the terms of an existing approval or order or, if not, the necessary action required to permit such practice for that building.

It is also noted that the orders provisions under section 121B of the Act provide councils with a statutory enforcement mechanism to take action where fire safety issues associated with the use of a building have been identified.

Should you have any further enquiries about this matter, I have arranged for Michael Said, of the Department of Planning and Infrastructure to assist you. He can be contacted on telephone number 02 8575 4014.

Yours sincerely


Sam Haddad
Director General

26/9/2013.

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