



## INTRODUCTION

This note applies to all premises and places other than domestic premises occupied as a single private dwelling.

The time taken to negotiate a closed door can be critical in escaping from fire. Doors on escape routes (both within and from a building) should therefore be readily open-able whenever they may need to be used for that purpose.

## DOOR FASTENINGS

Doors on escape routes should only be fitted with a simple fastening, which can be readily operated from the side approached by persons escaping from fire. The operation of the fastening should be without the use of a key and without having to manipulate more than one mechanism, ie, 'single action'. The physical capabilities of the persons who may need to operate the fastening should be fully taken into account.

If mortise deadlocks are fitted to doors on escape routes, it is a management responsibility to ensure that all such doors are unlocked and made immediately available for use before the premises are occupied.

## SPECIAL MECHANICAL FASTENINGS

Where a special form of mechanical fastening is used, a notice providing clear, simple instructions as to its use should be prominently displayed.

It will also be necessary for persons who may have to use the door to understand the method of operation. Normally this type of fastening is not suitable for areas used by members of the public.

## ELECTRICALLY OPERATED FASTENINGS

Electrically operated fastenings should be readily operable at all material times and should fail safe in the open position.

Further advice should be sought from your local fire safety district office if you propose to fit such a mechanism.

## 'PANIC' LATCHES AND BOLTS

Where a door:

(a) may be used at the time of a fire by more than 50 persons, or

(b) is an exit from an area in which fire may develop very rapidly,

and has to be kept fastened while persons are in the building, it should be fastened only by pressure release devices such as panic latches, panic bolts or pressure pads which ensure that the door can be easily and immediately opened by persons within. Panic bolts and panic latches should comply with the relevant British Standard.

## FURTHER ADVICE

Further advice is available from our website. You should notify the Fire Authority of any proposal to fit a locking device to a door, which is required for means of escape in case of fire.