

# Built Environment

**BULLETIN**

May 2021 - Issue 06

**In this bulletin:**

- **Building Safety Unit staff changes**
- **Storz coupling guideline**
- **ASE 3118 Rollout**
- **Building Safety forms**
- **Fire Systems Permits update**
- **Mutual Recognition update**
- **After-hours service provision**
- **003 Keys**

## **NEW BUILDING SAFETY STAFF**

It has been a busy start to 2021 with the onboarding of some new building safety staff and changes to other medium and long-term staff in the unit. Particularly in the south, Simon Ward has moved into a different role with TFS and long-term consultant Steve Davison is on leave until September 2021. This has left a big gap in both the units experience and ability to provide a timely service. Fortunately, the remaining staff are working above expectations and providing a great service to the building industry within the statutory timeframes.

Recently we welcomed two new faces to our team:



### **Coordinator Fire Safety Compliance & Audit – Esther Fletcher-Jones**

Esther will be undertaking the role of Coordinator Fire Safety Compliance and Audit. She has a state-wide responsibility and will be located in State HQ in Hobart. Her initial priorities will be developing built environment related policy and business practices to enhance the fire safety of building occupants including firefighters. Esther will have a role in both the built and bushfire environments. Esther's background is in Local Government and as a Building Surveyor with extensive experience in a wide variety of projects, she will provide a high degree of building compliance expertise to TFS.

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### **Senior Fire Safety Engineer – Dmitry Kiselev**

Dmitry will be undertaking the role of Senior Fire Safety Engineer. Dmitry has a state-wide responsibility and will be located in State HQ in Hobart. Dmitry will provide a high degree of technical expertise in the field of fire engineering and enhance our capability in this field within TFS. Dmitry has relocated from south east Queensland where he worked as a practicing Fire Engineer with a private company. He brings with him a broad skill set in this profession that will enhance the safety of firefighters and building occupants.

### **STORZ COUPLING GUIDELINE**

In 2011 the Chief Officer decided, in line with other fire agencies across Australia to change to a generic 65mm Storz coupling for firefighting purposes. At first the quality of the couplings coming into Australia was very high however, of recent times there has been an influx of cheap imitations that are poorly made and potentially subvert firefighter safety and the safety of those that work in the fire protection industry.

Tasmania Fire Service developed a guideline that provided guidance to the suppliers and manufacturers of the couplings on the minimum standards and the testing regime that must be applied to the coupling prior to its approval to be used in Tasmania for firefighting purposes. The guideline is available to be viewed [here](#).

The Chief Officer has approved several couplings for use for firefighting purposes in Tasmania. An approved Storz coupling list is available [here](#).

Those that work in the fire protection industry in Tasmania and are required to supply and fit these couplings to fire safety systems must ensure they are approved for use by the Chief Officer for firefighting purposes. To have couplings tested please contact the Building Safety Unit for advice.

### **AUSTRALIAN STANDARD 2419.4 STORZ COUPLINGS**

In April 2021, Standards Australia released AS2419.4:2021 *Fire hydrant installations Part 4: Storz fittings for firefighting purposes*. This standard will be used to ensure Storz couplings for firefighting purposes are tested appropriately and suitable for the intended use.

To allow suppliers and manufacturers to comply with the standard there will be a period where the existing TFS Storz coupling guideline will remain current and then it is proposed to include reference to the new standard in the NCC September 2022. This is yet to be confirmed and TFS will post further information once it is released. Existing approved couplings will remain on the approved coupling list as they have all passed the testing regime consistent with the new standard.

Only Storz couplings on the TFS approved coupling list can be used for firefighting purposes.

## **INSTALLATION OF FIRE SAFETY SYSTEMS IN NEW AND EXISTING BUILDINGS**

There have been several circumstances recently where fire safety systems in new and refurbished existing buildings have not been installed as per the approved design specifications including any fire engineering report. This has provided challenges for contractors and builders to retrospectively make the system compliant.

The permit holder must ensure they have all the relevant approved documents that relate to the building development and the installation of the fire safety systems (e.g. design drawings, system specifications and fire engineering report). These documents must be available from the building contractor undertaking the works and permit holder must not proceed until they have reviewed and understood the minimum design requirements for the supply and installation of the fire safety systems.

The Building Safety Unit will not provide copies of approved documents or fire engineering reports where the premise has not yet been issued with a Form 48 from the Chief Officer. There are liability issues associated with this and as such all approved documents must be obtained from the building contractor.

## **ASE 3118 ROLLOUT**

The rollout of the new ASE 3118 continues however there has been a reasonably poor uptake on the new device from the private sector. The Tasmania Fire Service acknowledge that the information coming out to private premise occupiers has been poor and we are working to improve this over the next few months.

A project officer will be appointed soon to coordinate the program of works to engage with government and private premise occupiers that require their ASE device be upgraded.

We still need the support of those that work in the fire protection industry to become advocates for this work to occur. We will develop some resources to give to those you deliver services to, that will detail the requirements for changing the new signaling device and why they need to do it as soon as possible.

Please encourage those premise occupiers you talk to, to change over to the new ASE 3118. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Building Safety Unit.

### **ASE 3118 FOB KEYS**

Every ASE 3118 installed with a fire safety system will have its own fob key attached that is registered to that ASE and subsequent premise. Each fob key has a serial number that registers on the network when it is used for each transaction.

Fire systems permit holders can have their own keys issued through DPFEM Communication Systems and Technologies. The keys are registered against the permit holder not the individual technician. Permit holders need to be mindful of this when employees separate from them to ensure that the fobs are retained by the permit holder.

### **SUBMITTING BUILDING SAFETY RELATED FORMS**

Tasmania Fire Service are receiving building safety related forms that are old versions and do not reflect the contemporary information required. Please ensure you use the current version of the form from the TFS website. When we update forms, we load the current version onto the website. A link to the Forms is [here](#).

When submitting multiple forms, please ensure this is done using an email for each form. These forms need to be sent to different business units within TFS and having them on 'their own' emails provide efficiencies in having them distributed to the appropriate business unit and quickly actioned.

### **TREAT YOUR PERMIT LIKE YOUR CAR REGISTRATION!**

Please treat your permit just like your car registration, if it expires you stop driving the vehicle, when your permit expires you stop working.

Tasmania Fire Service will notify all fire systems permit holders of the impending expiry of their permit prior to its expiry but it is the responsibility of the permit holder to renew the permit. TFS require permit renewals a minimum of three months before expiry to assist in audit and assessment processes.

There are no provisions in the General Fire Regulations to extend a permit. Those that do not apply, will have their permits revoked and must not operate in the industry until the permit is approved.

The Chief Officer is currently benchmarking all new and existing fire systems permits applications to ensure compliance with the current standards. Therefore, re-application forms are no longer being accepted. Application must be in full on the current application template available on the TFS website. If you have any questions about this process, please contact the Building Safety Unit.

## PERMIT APPLICATION GUIDELINE

Many permit holders would have referred to the Appendix 'A' information around the requirements when applying for a fire systems permit. Quite simply, the information in the Appendix 'A' is insufficient and provides no real informative value. Tasmania Fire Service has embarked on providing additional information to assist permit applicants to provide quality information to complete their respective applications.

Once TFS have benchmarked all existing permit holders, then a re-application process will be introduced to streamline the process along with clear guidelines on the process.

## MUTUAL RECOGNITION PROCESS

Regarding the Commonwealth Mutual Recognition Legislation information from April's bulletin, there is some additional information below in regard to the progress of the Amendment Bill:

*The details of the national legislative framework were settled with the benefit of public consultation and the Australian Government introduced the Mutual Recognition Amendment Bill 2021 to parliament in March 2021. The bill passed the Senate on 12 May with several technical amendments and will return to the House of Representatives to enable commencement from 1 July 2021, subject to further supporting legislation by the States and Territories.*

*The Treasurer, the Hon Josh Frydenberg MP, and the Assistant Minister to the Prime Minister and Cabinet, the Hon Ben Morton MP, issued a media release on 13 May 2021 concerning the progress of the legislation: [media release](#).*

*Further information on the bill can be found [here](#), including the minister's speech and explanatory memoranda which outline how AMR builds upon the existing mutual recognition arrangements, and the safeguards built into the proposed scheme.*

## 2021-22 BUDGET: SUPPORTING IMPLEMENTATION OF AMR FOR LICENSED WORKERS

*The Australian Government is providing \$11 million over three years, as part of the 2021-22 Deregulation Budget Package, to support the widespread implementation of AMR of occupational registrations. AMR will enable licensed workers to operate across jurisdictions, without having to apply, pay for and wait for a further license to perform the same activities. This will make it easier and faster for skilled workers to take up jobs across borders, including to assist with natural disaster recovery. The funding commitment will assist states and territories to implement AMR, helping to realise the benefits of this reform.*

- *\$2.3 million will be provided for national initiatives, in collaboration with states and territories, to inform consumers, licensees and businesses about the changes in the mutual recognition arrangements, their benefits and consumer and other safeguards built into this scheme. This will include information products tailored to different industries and licensed occupations.*
- *\$7.5 million will be provided over three years under the Business Research and Innovation Initiative (BRII) to pilot new digital information exchange solutions, in partnership with states and territories. This will assist regulators to provide up to date information to workers, businesses and consumers about how the scheme operates and to quickly share information with regulators in other jurisdictions, including when they take disciplinary action against licensed workers.*

*Under BRII, Australian start-ups and small and medium businesses will be able to submit proposals for ideas that will support the implementation and adoption of AMR, in partnership with key government departments and regulatory agencies. Successful applicants will receive grants of up to \$100,000 to develop their ideas and test feasibility over three months. The most successful of these ideas may be eligible for a grant of up to \$1 million to develop a prototype or proof of concept. Innovative Australian businesses will be encouraged to apply when the process is formally underway later in the year. To find out more information about BRII, visit [www.business.gov.au/BRII](http://www.business.gov.au/BRII)*

**Further information** on the project can be found [here](#).

The Tasmanian Government Treasury are still assessing the impacts and TFS are awaiting advice from them on how they propose to implement the changes and how this will impact industry in Tasmania.

### AFTER HOURS SERVICE PROVISION

Permit holders must, where required maintain an after-hours capability with staff that are competent to undertake repairs and remedial works to fire safety systems. It is important that after-hours service is contactable by building occupiers but also by operational firefighters should advice and support be needed during emergencies. Please refer to the provisions in the Code of Practice relating to after-hours service.

## 003 KEY LOCKING SYSTEMS

Tasmania Fire Service have only approved the 003-locking system for use to access fire safety equipment and infrastructure in the built environment. TFS does not approve or endorse the use of any other key or locking system.

TFS carry master keys for the purposes of cutting additional copies. If you require additional 003 keys, please contact the Building Safety Unit.

Sprinkler valves must be secured as per the requirements in AS2118.1: 1999 Section 8. Even sprinkler valves secured within a compound or a locked cage must be strapped and locked/secured as per the requirements in the standard.

Please refer to the Code of Practice for further information and if you have any questions, please call the Building Safety Unit.