CFOA Protocol for the Reduction of False Alarms & Unwanted Fire Signals

Chief Fire Officers' Association

In partnership with:

- Fire Industry Association
- British Security Industry Association
- Telecare Services Association
- Fire & Security Association
- National Security Inspectorate
- Security Systems and Alarms Inspection Board (UK)

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Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA)

The Chief Fire Officers Association CFOA is a professional membership association and a registered charity that has been representing the fire service in their aspirations to protect the communities they serve for more than 60 years. We are not a trade union; we are the professional voice of the sector.

We provide independent and expert advice to government on fire prevention, protection and intervention issues as well as a wide range of community safety and rescue matters.

Our membership is made up from a strong, diverse blend of both uniformed and non-uniformed senior officers.

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Document History

Title	Publication Date	Comments	Status
Reducing False Alarms – Reduction through Partnership, the report of a thematic inspection by HM Fire Services Inspectorate	Mar 2001	Driver for CFOA Protocol	N/A
CFOA Model Agreement between Fire and Rescue Authorities and Users of Remotely Monitored Fire Alarm Systems (Model Agreement for RMFAS)	Sep 2004	Original Protocol	Superseded
CACFOA Policy on FRSs: Response to Remotely Monitored Systems	Jan 2005	Implementation Guidance	Superseded
CFOA Policy for the Reduction of False Alarms and Unwanted Fire Signals	Sep 2008	Title change. Fully revised to account for change in approach	Superseded
CFOA Protocol for the Reduction of False Alarms and Unwanted Fire Signals	Sep 2010	Addition of Appendix B - Code of Practice – Fire Alarm Monitoring Organisations (FAMO) Code of Practice, including associated protocol update and minor corrections.	Current

IMPORTANT LEGAL NOTICE

CFOA has co-ordinated the preparation of this Protocol but your attention is drawn to the exclusions of CFOA's liability in Section 24.

Table of Contents

Table of Figures

1   Foreword
Chief Fire Officers' Association (CFOA)

In producing this protocol, we have established a carefully considered holistic approach to both improve premises fire safety and protect valuable fire and rescue service resources. Whilst the increase in installations of automated fire alarm and fire detection systems is welcomed, the rise in false alarms is not. Alarm systems are often less effective than design intended, putting people at risk, and placing an increasing burden on the resources of fire and rescue services (FRSs).

Excellent guidance currently exists for the design, installation and maintenance of fire alarm systems for example BS5839. However, we recognise the need to introduce a holistic approach capable of addressing all of the various influencing elements from the design through to the response. In this protocol, we have established a difference between managing the significant fire safety concerns of false alarms and the abuse of valuable public sector resources when FRSs are continually being asked to attend false alarms.

We welcome the support shown by the industry for this protocol, which is designed to provide enough flexibility to allow adoption by all FRSs. In applying the practices outlined in this protocol, we are confident that there will be:

- improvements in the design and installation of fire alarm systems;

- improved consistency in approach across FRSs;

- significant reductions in FRSs attendance of false alarms – protecting valuable resources;

- improved industry awareness leading to better servicing, maintenance and guidance;

- improved compliance with fire safety legislation; and

- significant improvements in protecting persons from fire through improved fire safety measures.

We believe that the approach contained in this document:

- is underpinned by the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (FSO);

- supports the Integrated Risk Management Plans/Risk Reduction Plans being implemented by UK FRSs and;

- represents best practice.

This protocol provides a framework for a partnership between:

- the responsible person of the protected premises;

- fire alarm monitoring organisations (FAMOs);

- the fire alarm service provider and

- the fire and rescue authority.

It ensures that the obligations, responsibilities and actions of all the parties are clear and can be well understood.

We recognise the advantages to all relevant parties of consistent standards. In order to achieve this we strongly recommend that all FRSs adopt and implement this protocol in its entirety as a part of their Integrated Risk Management Plans / Risk Reduction Plans and Regulatory Fire Safety Strategy.

We believe this protocol to reduce activations from automatic fire alarms (AFAs) is an example to all in the fire world as to what can be achieved when the relevant experts come together to produce a solution to a problem. This protocol will make a great contribution to fire safety in England and Wales as it will reduce the complacency of the public when an alarm sounds and it will reduce the number of unnecessary calls to which the fire and rescue services respond.

We commend this protocol to all concerned and look forward to seeing it successfully implemented by local FRSs to the benefit of public life safety and property protection.

Iain Cox
CFOA Director Prevention & Protection

More information on CFOA can be found at www.cfoa.org.uk .

2   Foreword - Industry & Partners

Support from the Fire Industry Association (FIA)

The FIA is pleased to have been involved with the drafting of the protocol for the Reduction of False Alarms and Unwanted Fire Signals. Much expertise and hard work has gone in to the formulation of the protocol and the Fire Industry Association and its members look forward to working with all of the fire rescue services in England and Wales in its successful implementation.

More information on FIA can be found at
www.fia.uk.com

Martin Harvey - FIA Chair

Support from the British Securities Industry Association (BSIA)

Over many years the BSIA has been working with the fire and rescue service to reduce the number of Unwanted Fire Signals (UwFS) that are generated from remotely monitored fire alarm systems. The new CFOA protocol underlines this positive partnership approach and is strongly endorsed by the BSIA as a means of improving fire safety in premises whilst reducing the amount of UwFS call outs the fire and rescue service receives.

More information on BSIA can be found at
www.bsia.co.uk

Alex Carmichael
Director of Membership and Technical
Support Services

Support from the Telecare Services Association (TSA)

The TSA is the representative body for the Telecare Industry in the UK and aims to promote and support the Telecare industry and highlight the benefits of Telecare for service users.

TSA is committed to working in partnership with CFOA to reduce the number of UwFS across the Telecare industry and welcomes the opportunity to further this commitment to ensure the role of Telecare service providers is embedded within the CFOA Protocol.

More information on TSA can be found at
www.telecare.org.uk

Marian Preece
TSA Operations Manager

Support from the Fire & Security Association (FSA)

The Fire and Security Association (FSA), an operating division of the Electrical Contractors' Association and working in partnership with SELECT, is pleased to have been given the opportunity to work and consult with the fire service and key industry partners in the drafting of this protocol. The FSA strongly advocates the use of competent persons, verified by Third Party Certification schemes, and believes that this protocol will be instrumental in not only reducing the number of false and unwanted fire signals but also in raising the standard of installation activity. We applaud the fire service for implementing this protocol.

For further information on the FSA visit:
www.fireandsecurityassociation.co.uk

Stefan Hay
Head of the Fire and Security Association.

Support from the National Security Inspectorate (NSI) and the Security Systems and Alarms Inspectorate Board (SSAIB)

The NSI and SSAIB are the two leading third party certification bodies that operate in the fire and security industry. We fervently believe that independent third party certification of both the installers of fire detection and alarms, as well as the Fire Alarm Monitoring Organisations, is crucial if the risk to the public is to be reduced.

Both our organisations are committed to work with CFOA in developing policy, ensuring that the interests of the public are best served. It is only by working in partnership with all interested parties that we will collectively reduce false alarms, thereby ensuring that the fire and rescue service is ready and available to respond when it is really needed.

More information on NSI and SSAIB may be found at:
www.nsi.org.uk
www.ssaib.co.uk

Andrew White
Chief Exec NSI

Geoff Tate
Chief Exec SSAIB

3   Background

Over many years the FRSs have been working with partners to reduce the number of UwFS that are generated from premises protected by fire detection and fire alarm systems. The number of automatic fire detection and fire alarm systems (AFAS) installed is increasing and there is concern about the corresponding increase in UwFS from some of these systems.

A report on the measures taken and action required to reduce the number of false alarms from AFASs in England and Wales was published by the Home Office in March 2001. This report, entitled *"Reducing False Alarms - Reduction through Partnership, the report of a thematic inspection by HM Fire Services Inspectorate"* (HMFI), identified many issues that require action.

With the assistance of the Fire Industry Association (FIA) and the British Security Industry Association (BSIA) we developed the "Model Agreement between Fire and Rescue Authorities and Users of Remotely Monitored Fire Alarm Systems (Model Agreement for RMFAS)" (published September 2004), to address the recommendations included in the HMFI thematic report. It attempted to clarify the relationship between those responsible for the protected premises, the fire alarm service provider, the Alarm Receiving Centres (ARCs) and the FRSs.

In 2006, we considered it necessary to revise the Model Agreement for a number of reasons, including:

- the introduction of the FSO 2005;
- the limited adoption of the Model Agreement by FRSs; and
- concerns expressed by the fire industry relating to the difficulties of working with inconsistent approaches to the UwFS problem by FRSs.

One of the key changes in the revised policy (published September 2008), allowed for all fire detection and fire alarm systems to be addressed by the policy instead of only alarms received from ARCs. This change sought to avoid discrimination against ARCs when UwFS from them only partly contributed to the overall problem.

For consistency, the policy adopted terminology and guidance from the FSO. In addition, the assignment of a Unique Registration Number (URN) was seen to be a barrier to the adoption of the policy due to the IT and administrative systems required to be put in place to make it work. The focus of policy was altered to ensure that URNs are not vital to implementation but remained as a useful management tool. It is recommended that URN management systems should reflect the design protocols of the Regional Control Centre project (FiReControl).

The public consultation, prior to the policy publication in September 2008, received a considerable response from the following groups:

- FRSs UwFS reduction practitioners;
- Telecare Service Providers;
- Third party certification organisations;
- The ARC industry;
- Institution of Fire Engineers;
- FIA;
- Fire Protection Association;
- BSIA; and
- TSA.

Many of the concerns expressed focussed on third party certification and the problems associated with the inconsistency in FRSs approaches to tackling the UwFS issues. This included requests for clarification on the administration charge for registration, concern about various 'call challenge' policies being adopted by FRSs and the variety of contracts between FRSs and ARCs. The consultation process also identified different practices employed by Telecare Service Providers and other ARCs, which required further investigation.

Since September 2008, consultation continued with stakeholders and protocol practitioners in the development of a FAMO Code of Practice (CoP) that has been added as Appendix B - Code of Practice to this 2010 revision.

This latest update to the "policy" also recognises that we have no remit to enforce "national policy" to all FRSs therefore this new version will be referred to as a "CFOA protocol".

4   Introduction

The protocol outlined in this document has been developed in co-operation with stakeholders representing the fire alarm industry and FRSs in order to reduce the occurrence of false alarms from automatic fire detection and AFASs and to manage the appropriate FRSs response to UwFS.

This protocol applies to all premises identified and regulated under the FSO which are or will be installed with automatic fire detection and AFASs.

There are two distinct elements which this protocol seeks to address:

- false alarms which may contribute to fire safety issues; and
- UwFS which impact on the FRSs resources.

If we succeed in reducing false alarms, UwFS will also reduce. However the reduction of UwFS to FRSs does not necessarily reduce false alarms and therefore may leave fire safety issues unaddressed.

The protocol also seeks to address the issue of a relatively small number of premises generating a large number of false alarms and UwFS. However it recognises that a large proportion of the total false alarms come from premises producing just one or two false alarms per year. These are not, generally, poorly performing AFASs.

The protocol recognises that there is no single solution to the UwFS issue. It recognises that a holistic approach is required to encourage and ensure the cultural change required from FRSs, the Fire Industry, the business community and the general public in order to promote a sustained reduction in the number of UwFS to FRSs.

It is essential that a consistent national approach to reducing false alarms and UwFS is developed.

This can be achieved through the uniform adoption and implementation of this protocol. Co-operation and understanding cannot be expected from companies operating across various regions in the UK when each FRS operates a different policy. The move towards Regional Control Centres also makes a consistent approach vital for FRSs and industry.

CFOA recognise the differences between Telecare Service Providers (TSPs) and traditional security based ARCs. However CFOA regards that any organisation considering monitoring fire alarms has a responsibility to promote best practice in the management of those fire alarm systems it monitors. This protocol provides clear guidance to Fire Alarm Monitoring Organisations (FAMOs) in their responsibilities towards false alarm and UwFS issues.

FAMOs signing up to the CoP (Appendix B - Code of Practice) will promote the best practices outlined in this protocol and provide the consistent approach that will be a welcome improvement in this area of alarm operation.

This document provides clear guidance from CFOA to standardise the approach to be adopted by FRSs.

Uniform implementation will encourage our fire industry partners to work with us in the development and review of the FAMO elements of the protocol.

This protocol provides a clear and structured strategy that will, where adopted, lead to sustained reductions in false alarms and UwFS and provides a consistent framework for all FRSs, the Fire Industry and Business to operate within.

"It is essential that a consistent national approach to reducing false alarms and unwanted fire signals is developed."

5   The Aims Of This Protocol

- To provide a uniform process for those parties involved in managing the reduction of false alarms and UwFS.

- To reduce the number of false alarms generated by fire detection and AFAS.

- To reduce the numbers of UwFS sent to FRSs.

- To provide the most appropriate response by FRSs to calls arising from AFAS actuation.

6   Impact Of False Alarms

- Disruption of business (downtime and time wasted, loss of business, theft).

- Erode user's confidence in the value and reliability of AFAS and discourage people from taking these systems seriously.

7   Impact Of Unwanted Fire Signals

- Diverting essential services from emergencies (putting life and property at risk).

- Cost to business of retained fire fighters being released.

- Unnecessary risk to crew & public whilst responding (accidents).

- Disruption to arson reduction, community safety & fire safety activities (education, smoke detectors, etc).

- Disruption to training of operational personnel.

- Impact on the environment of unnecessary appliance movements (noise and air pollution).

- Drain on public finances.

8   Summary Of Protocol Requirements

8.1   The main protocol requirements are listed below:

- The Responsible Person, as defined under the FSO, has overall responsibility for the performance of the fire detection and AFAS;

- Prevention of false alarms;

- Prevention of false alarms becoming UwFS;

- AFA signal filtering;

- FRSs response to an UwFS; and

- Agreed working practices between FRSs and FAMOs.

8.2   This will be achieved by:

- The uniform adoption of this protocol by FRSs;

- Promoting the use of competent persons in the design, installation, commissioning and maintenance of systems. CFOA recommend that FRSs require the use of third party certification schemes. Certification through United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS) (or equivalent) provides valuable reassurances and assists in the making of informed decisions as to the competency of the service provider;

- Promoting the appropriate management of AFASs by Responsible Persons;

- Working in partnership with FAMOs to improve false alarm filtering;

- Promoting the adoption of AFA call filtering through FRS control on the 999 system;

- Implementing the appropriate FRS response (including pre-determined attendance (PDA) response, AFA response, full emergency response or a follow-up response (community fire safety and/or fire safety regulation response) to resolve UwFS issues); and

- Monitoring the performance of AFAS.

9   Protocol Operation

This protocol recognises that key to the effective performance of AFASs is the correct design, installation, commissioning, acceptance and maintenance process. If the protocols described in [1]BS5839 are followed a false alarm issue is unlikely to occur.

It is important that the design takes into account the fire strategy, fire risk assessment, the practical use of the building by its occupants and the potential for false alarms to be generated at the earliest possible stage.

This protocol also recognises that even well designed and well managed systems will on occasion produce false alarms and has therefore identified areas where false alarms may be filtered to prevent them becoming UwFS to the FRSs. Filtering is the process of gathering information to ensure the most efficient, effective, economic and ethical response to an alarm activation is made.

It is important to recognise the different ways in which the AFA signal is relayed to the FRSs. Each relay method has its own distinctive features and each requires a separate approach in order to safely and effectively reduce the number of UwFS passed to the FRSs.

9.1   Fire Alarm Monitoring Organisations (FAMO)

FAMOs monitor two basic types of fire alarm systems:

Building Fire Alarm Monitoring (see Glossary)

- Provide the important function of property protection from fire in buildings outside normal working hours or when unoccupied.

- Provide an important 'back-up' function to fire alarm management in occupied premises. E.g.: Where Time Related Systems are employed.

- They receive the alarm signal automatically without any verbal contact with the premises occupier.

- They are remote from the premises where the alarm signal has originated.

Individual Domestic Premises Fire Alarm Monitoring (social or non-social) (See Glossary)

- Provide the important function of monitoring some of the most vulnerable groups in our society.

- They receive the alarm signal automatically with or without verbal contact with the premises occupier.

- They are remote from the premises where the alarm has originated.

CFOA considers that the end user of any monitored AFAS, domestic or commercial, communal or personal, has the right to expect a reasonable standard level of service.

9.2   999/112 Control Rooms

- Provide the important function of deciding on the level of response required for an incident based on effective information gathering.

- They receive the alarm signal direct from the premises through an employee or occupant or through a third party but always having verbal contact to gather information.

- They are remote from the premises where the alarm has originated.

With the above points in mind, it is clear that the ideal place to prevent false alarms from being transmitted to FRSs as UwFS is on-site. (This process is a form of filtering, referred to in this protocol as 'filtering measures on-site' and should be carried out using a risk-based approach and safe working practices - refer to Section 11). This is where the most accurate information can be gained to ascertain the cause of the alarm activation and the FRS to be alerted to a confirmed fire at the earliest opportunity through the 999 system. Wherever possible this is the preferred method of AFA signal filtering.

There are important distinctions between services provided by different types of fire alarm monitoring organisations.

Where FAMOs monitor a building alarm, they may receive no other information except that the alarm system has activated. They can either:

- Telephone the premises to confirm the cause of the activation (this may delay the call to the FRS in the event of fire and is unrealistic during non-operational or unoccupied hours of the protected premises).

- Pass the signal to the FRS. (See Section 12 – Filtering of Fire Alarm Signals by FAMOs).

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[1] All references to British Standards or equivalent documents within this protocol require referencing the current version applicable

Protocol Operation - *continued*

FAMOs monitoring individual domestic fire alarms may or may not receive verbal confirmation of the cause of the alarm activation. If they do have verbal contact they should make efforts to gather information in order to filter calls to remove the likelihood of passing an UwFS to the FRS or confirm a fire in order that the FRS can provide the most effective response. Guidance on Telecare AFA signal filtering is available from the TSA code of practice. (http://www.telecare.org.uk/)

999/112 control room operators will receive verbal contact and should make efforts to gather information in order to filter calls which do not require a FRS response. It is recommended that control operators do not call filter signals from FAMOs; as these should already have been filtered. (FAMOs are remote from the premises so they are unlikely to be able to provide accurate information about the cause of the alarm).

It is important to recognise that ARCs play a key role in property protection from fire outside normal operational hours and in premises with sleeping risk. They are also an important back-up to many on-site filtering measure processes already in place in case the on-site procedures fail to operate correctly. For example where a delayed call to the FRSs is part of the emergency plan for the premises the immediate call to an ARC due to 'double knock', manual call point activation, heat detection or time-out could be regarded as essential.

It is currently recognised however that ARCs are being used by premises to summon emergency fire response from the FRSs when the building is occupied and filtering measures on-site could have taken place. This is an unacceptable misuse of FRSs and public resources.

Suggested options for call filtering by FRSs control staff are contained in Section 13 - Call Filtering by FRSs Control Operators.

The default for all call filtering should be: if in doubt a FRS response should be made.

Wherever AFA signal filtering occurs it is vital that relevant information is gathered and a monitoring process is in place to assess the effectiveness of the AFAS management at the premises (in accordance with the recommendations in BS5839) and also the effectiveness of the FAMOs and 999 call filtering processes.

9.3   Installation

A fire alarm and fire detection system is unlikely to be reliable or effective if it has not been designed, installed, commissioned and maintained by trained and competent person(s). Many fire alarm and fire detection systems are complex and exacting installations and the end user should ensure that the company they employ to carry out the design, installation, commissioning and maintenance of their fire alarm system can demonstrate competency (either through 3rd party certification or other means) to undertake the work to the relevant standards including BS5839 and BS7671.

The following relevant extract from the installation commentary of BS5839 emphasises a known area where false alarms could be reduced by the proper application of the standard:

> *"Even though identification of design shortcomings is not generally the responsibility of an installer, good practice would dictate that, if the installer is aware of such shortcomings, particularly those arising from features of the building that might not have been known to the designer, they be drawn to the attention of the designer, user or purchaser."* (BS5839-1:2002+A2:2008. Section 4 Installation, 36.1, paragraph 7)

Inevitably there are still going to be a large number of UwFS which are attended by the FRSs and a large number of false alarms which do not involve an emergency FRS response but does demonstrate potential for inadequate fire safety management at the premises. This protocol recommends that FRSs should make use of the FSO in the first place on any occasion that false alarms have a detrimental impact on the fire safety of any relevant person in order to bring about improvement in fire safety management including a reduction in false alarms.

Where action under the FSO is not relevant it may be necessary to review the FRS response to a premises in accordance with the registration process and three levels of response described in Section 15 - FRSs Attendance Levels.

There may be occasions when a community fire safety response or a combination of responses may be more effective.

In order to ensure that all stakeholders are given a reasonable period to adjust their policies and working practices, an implementation schedule has been included as Annex C – Implementation Schedule.

The protocol can be summarised in the following flow chart which shows where AFA signal filtering can be applied to help reduce the numbers of false alarms becoming UwFS. It also shows how the FRSs will respond to any UwFS:

Figure 1 - Summary of Protocol Operation
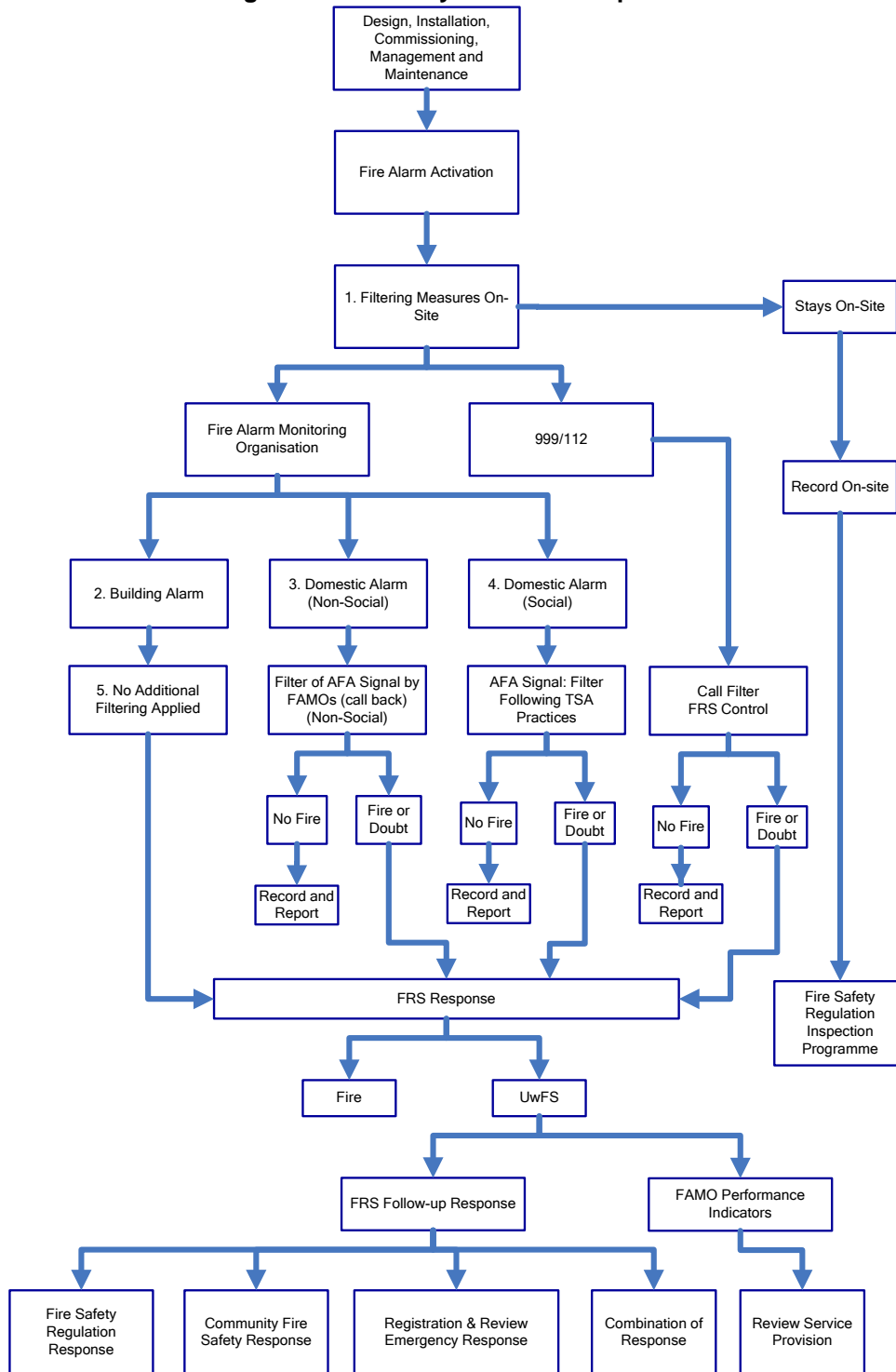
Key

1. Refer to Section 11 - Filtering Measures On-Site.

2. 3. & 4. Refer to Glossary

5. FAMO to establish some method of filtering has been introduced in accordance with the FAMO CoP. Only where pre-arranged, this may involve FAMO call back.

Note:
This flowchart is divided into 2 separate flowcharts under Annex A and B; to illustrate the individual processes relevant to building and individual alarm monitoring and FRSs operators, with each step in the flowchart supported by text.

10 The Responsible Person & False Alarms

The person designated as being responsible for the effective management of the AFAS has their responsibilities outlined in BS5839-1 Section 3: *Limitation of false alarms.* This protocol encourages all persons involved in AFAS management to make themselves aware of the commentary and recommendations of the aforementioned British Standard.

BS5839 -1 Section 3 covers the responsibility for the limitation of false alarms for all parties involved in the specification, design, installation, commissioning, management at operational level and maintenance of the AFAS. Where alternative equivalent AFAS standards have been used the above standard may still provide invaluable guidance.

Responsible Persons should be aware of all aspects of the fire alarm and fire alarm monitoring system. It's become clear to CFOA that Responsible Persons are often unaware of the limitations and possibilities of monitored systems e.g. the time delay relating to quality of communicators and number of lines available from the building, detector options, etc.

11 Filtering Measures On-Site

There are many circumstances in which it may be appropriate to apply methods of filtering false alarms to prevent continual evacuation of people or summoning of the FRS. These methods range from automatically altering the detector type or sensitivity at different times of day to various forms of time related or staff alarm systems. Filtering measures are outlined in BS5839-1:2002 section 3 Limitation of false alarms 35.2.7.

Implementation of filtering measures on-site, as outlined above, should only be introduced where it has been risk assessed in line with the requirements of the FSO and relevant Government Guidance.

12 Filtering Of Fire Alarm Signals By Fire Alarm Monitoring Organisations

CFOA has identified the FAMOs as a group which can provide significant influence in the management of fire alarms in premises. However, it is also accepted that it is ultimately the Responsible Person for the premises who is responsible for fire alarm performance; not ARCs. Annex D – Remote Monitoring Relationships, provides an overview of the relationship between FAMOs, Service Providers and End Users. The CoP has been developed to provide a framework to assist FRSs and FAMOs in the promotion of best practice in fire alarm management by the Responsible Person.

In monitoring building fire alarms, FAMOs provide the valuable function of protecting property in the event of fire in buildings outside normal working hours, when unoccupied and as back up to on-site filtering arrangements. FAMOs also provide monitoring services for single private dwellings and vulnerable groups.

The CoP has been created to establish a method of best practice for use by FRSs and FAMOs. It is intended to provide a framework to guide future working between FRSs and FAMOs. The objective of the CoP is to ensure that the roles and responsibilities of the various organisations are effectively translated into practical working arrangements. The aim is to promote the establishment of close and harmonious working relationships between FRSs and FAMOs and develop best practice in the reduction of false alarms and UwFS.

CFOA and the FAMO industry jointly acknowledge the unique, dynamic and often complex environments that we operate within. Both organisations share a common objective to minimise the risk from fire to relevant persons and property. Consequently each undertake to use their respective powers and authority to ensure that adequate progress is made in achieving this objective.

The FAMO role is more than just alarm monitoring, it can be integral to the fire strategy of a premises and can play a vital part in an effective emergency plan. The flexibility in the monitoring services available is often under utilised. This protocol supports the range and flexibility of fire alarm monitoring which should be tailored to each unique premises. The CoP also recognises the limitations of monitoring and managing fire alarm systems.

CFOA and the fire alarm monitoring industry have agreed to work together in partnership to meet the shared objective of, "improving the fire alarm response measures to safeguard all relevant persons and premises throughout England and Wales".

12.1 Third Party Certification

Organisations accredited by the UKAS are able to independently assess companies against the relevant industry standards and codes of practice. Only organisations accredited by UKAS have the credibility to offer independent third party certification of either the installers of fire detection and alarm systems or the FAMOs.

Third party certification bodies are quite distinct from trade associations and are constituted such that no one stakeholder can hold sway. Both the two leading third party certification bodies in the fire industry, the NSI and SSAIB, are committed to promoting high standards in the interest of the public and can be relied on to act truly independently of commercial pressures from the industry.

13   Call Filtering By FRS Control Operators

The purpose of call filtering is to address the large number of UwFS which are generated from systems in smaller premises where the existing culture is to telephone the FRS if the fire alarm system activates even when the cause of the activation is known to be something other than a fire.

It is an opportunity to gather information to assess the level of response required and to influence the change in culture necessary for long term reduction in UwFS.

The following flow chart represents the agreed recommended process for call filtering. CFOA recognises that there are differences in the characteristics of individual FRSs and accepts that FRSs may adopt call filtering procedures which relate to the time of day or occupancy/premises type (risk) in accordance with their Integrated Risk Management Plans (IRMPs). However, this basic call filtering approach should not be altered.

FRSs control operators must be careful not to recommend the investigation of an alarm during an emergency call. If investigation was possible it should have already been carried out as part of their existing procedures before the emergency call was made.

An unplanned investigation at this stage may jeopardise the safety of the investigator. The 'caller' must remain in contact with the control operator at all times. Where the cause of an alarm activation cannot be immediately identified the control operator should mobilise the normal emergency attendance for an AFA.

It should be noted that only calls received through the 999 system which have not previously been filtered through a FAMO should be filtered by control operators.

It is important to note that call filtering is an effective way of achieving a step reduction in the number of UwFS attended. However if it is not carried out in accordance with the guidance above it may delay emergency attendance in the event of fire, increasing the risk of property damage, injury and fatality.

Call filtering should be used in conjunction with the rest of the protocol and not as a separate stand alone method of call reduction.

The Government commissioned a research document 'Costs & Benefits of Alternative Responses to Automatic Fire Alarms - May 2008' (Author: Mott MacDonald) provides evidence in support of the guidance above.

Figure 2 - Call Filtering
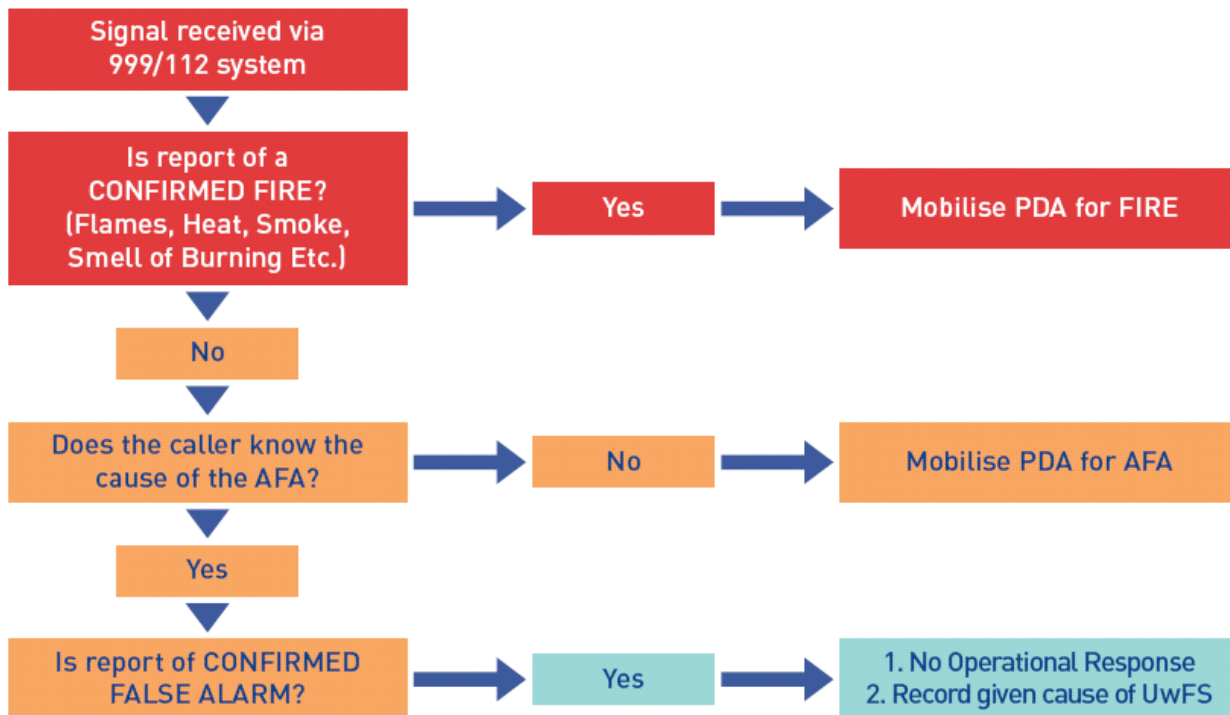
F&RS must be careful not to recommend the investigation of an alarm during an emergency call. If investigation was possible it should have already been carried out as part of their existing procedures before the emergency call was made. An unplanned investigation at this stage may jeopardise the safety of the investigator

14 Regulatory Fire Safety Intervention

FRSs have a statutory duty to enforce fire safety legislation and where appropriate should respond with regulatory fire safety intervention under the FSO where poor performance of the AFAS is detrimental to the safety of occupants.

15 Fire & Rescue Service Attendance Levels

If adjusting FRSs standard response attendance to premises due to the level of UwFS, the process must be applied in accordance with the guidance in this section and section 16.

FRSs will mobilise the appropriate level of response to AFAs dependant upon the known risk and in accordance with their Integrated Risk Management Plans/risk reduction plans.

Confirmed fires will attract a full or enhanced emergency response, dependant upon the information received.

The FRS, having taken account of the above considerations and a risk assessment, will determine the response based on the reliability of the AFAS performance. FRSs should determine in advance an appropriate level of authority to decide the level of response. Three principles of response options are as follows:

i) **Attendance Level One** is an immediate emergency response, resulting in an initial attendance based on a risk assessment of the fire fighting requirements that will be not less than one fire appliance.

ii) **Attendance Level Two** in the absence of a confirmation call via the 999 system; the FRSs will make an attendance, based on a risk assessment of the fire fighting requirements. The attendance may be made under non-emergency conditions, thereby maintaining the availability of the resources for confirmed emergencies and protecting the public from the risk that arises from fire engines responding under emergency conditions.

iii) **Attendance Level Three** no emergency response, until a confirmation of fire is received from the premises via the 999 system or from some other acceptable source. Such confirmation will result in a full or enhanced emergency response, dependant on the information received.

Any changes to the attendance level by the FRSs will be communicated in advance to the persons responsible for the protected premises and time will be allowed for them to take appropriate remedial action in accordance with section 16 - Performance Levels and the Rehabilitation Process.

16 Performance Levels and the Rehabilitation Process

Whilst it is almost universally recognised that false alarms cannot be totally eradicated, there is a need to reduce them to much lower levels than are presently being experienced.

It is also recognised that the greater the number of fire detectors installed; the greater the likelihood of a false alarm occurring. This is taken into account when analysing the performance of an alarm system particularly from a fire safety perspective concerning the provision of an effective means of warning against fire. However, this level of performance is no longer acceptable as a measurement of the number of UwFS passed to FRSs.

The graph in Figure 3 - Performance Levels for UwFS from AFAS below represents the levels of UwFS which can be used to assess FRSs attendance levels of One, Two and Three as detailed in section 15.

It does not represent an **allowable** number of UwFS relative to the number of detector heads. The number of UwFS should always be kept to a minimum irrespective of where the boundaries between performance levels lie.

Figure 3 - Performance Levels for UwFS from AFAS
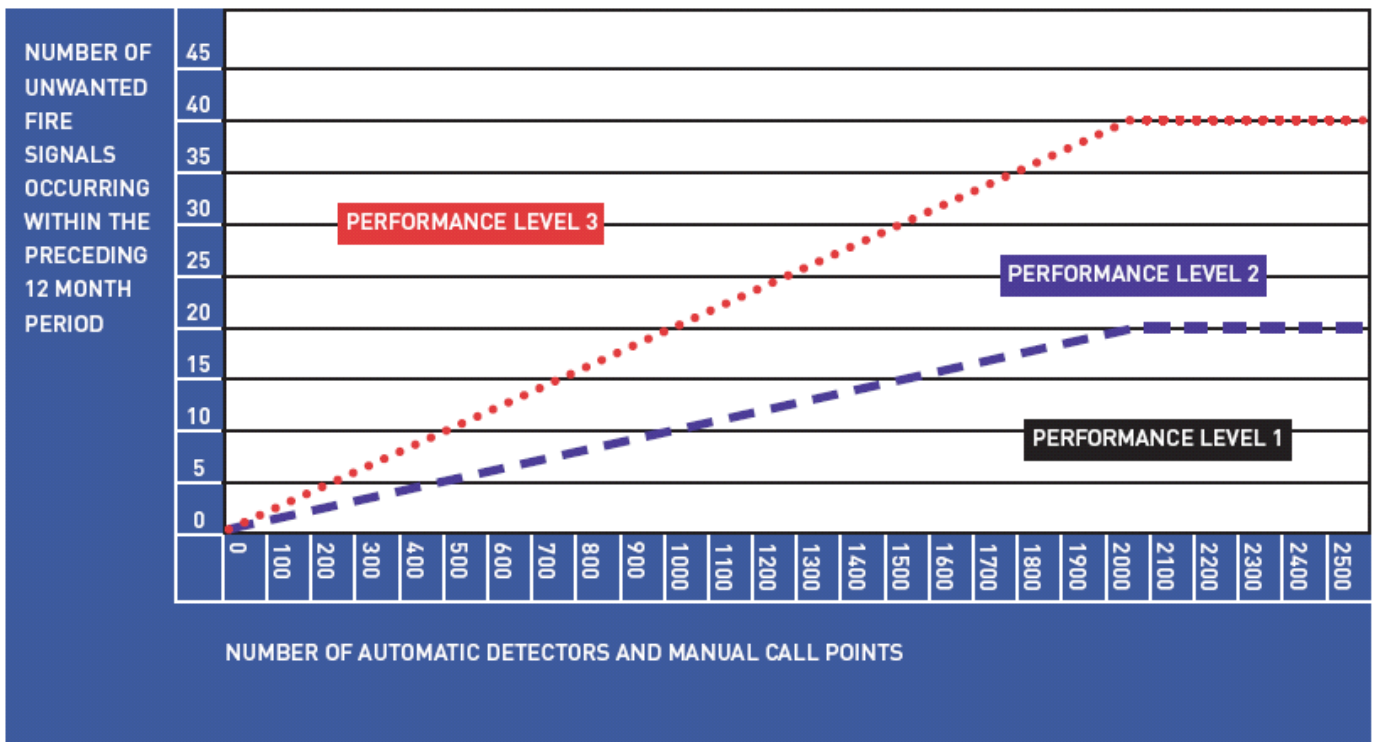
16.1   Actions and Time Scales Associated With the Rehabilitation of Problematic AFAS

The levels of performance outlined in the graph (Figure 3 - Performance Levels for UwFS from AFAS) will be considered in determining the potential response of the FRS, in accordance with the principles and considerations outlined in section 15 - Fire & Rescue Service Attendance Levels.

A flow chart of the process is shown below:

Figure 4 - Response Levels and Rehabilitation Process
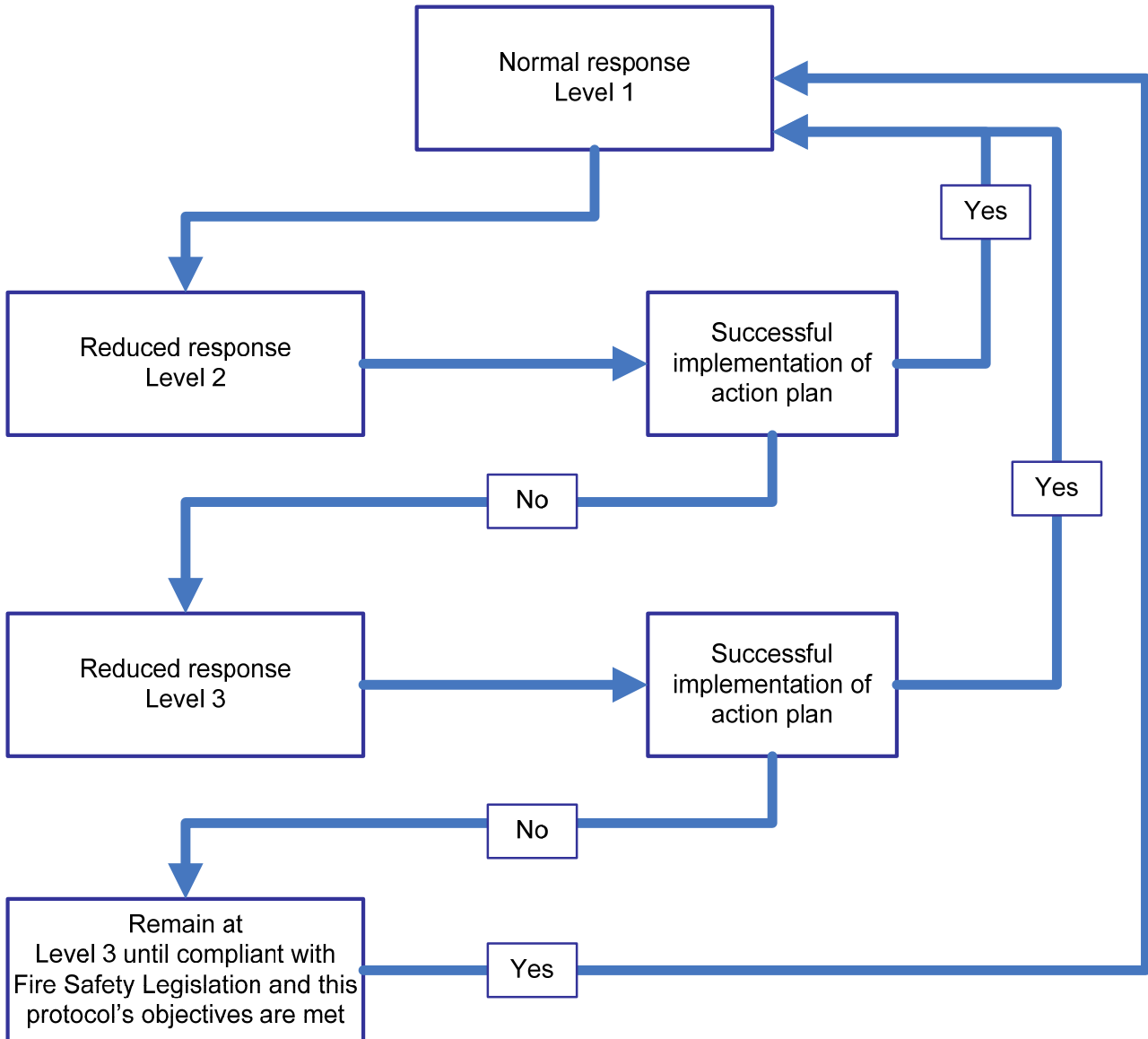
16.2 Where the AFAS crosses the thresholds outlined in Figure 3 - Performance Levels for UwFS from AFAS that indicate unacceptable performance, those responsible for the system must take immediate remedial action.

i) Notwithstanding the response provided by FRSs, the level of performance of the AFAS will continue to be reviewed during any periods where remedial action is being taken.

ii) Notwithstanding the performance level thresholds, the Responsible Person has a duty to mitigate all instances of false alarm activations (BS5839-1:2002 - section 32.1).

16.3 Actions to be taken when the performance of an AFAS moves from attendance level one to attendance level two.

The FRSs will:

i) FRSs will establish in advance the appropriate level at which changes in response are determined.

ii) Advise the protected premises they have exceeded the acceptable performance level threshold.

iii) Consider whether to revise the attendance level in accordance with sections 15 and 16.

iv) Advise the protected premises in advance of any changes and remind them to alert their insurance company to any changes in FRSs attendance levels.

v) Continue to review the performance of the AFAS.

vi) Require sight of the revised fire risk assessment/ emergency plan for the premises.

vii) Consider the use of regulatory enforcement powers.

The responsible person, (in conjunction with the competent person/maintainer and the FRS as necessary) will:

viii) Provide an agreed written action plan for the reduction of UwFS to the FRSs.

ix) Advise their insurance company in the event of any change to attendance levels by the FRSs.

x) Revise the fire risk assessment and emergency plan for the premises to take account of any changes in response by the FRSs.

xi) Review the fire safety management arrangements.

xii) Ensure appropriate maintenance is undertaken on the AFAS.

xiii) Revise and implement suitable fire safety management arrangements.

The Responsible Person, together with the maintainer of the AFAS will take the recommended actions to address an unacceptable rate of false alarm activations as outlined in BS5839-1.

16.4 Time scale for return to level one performance

If within the three months following completion of the actions in 16.3, the performance of the AFAS returns to within the limits set for performance level one:

i) The FRSs will restore level one attendance.

ii) The protected premises will advise their insurance company, revise any fire safety management arrangements. Including the risk assessment/ emergency plan and maintain the improvement.

If the above time scale is not met, the premises will remain at the reduced attendance level determined by the FRSs for a further three months before the attendance level is reviewed again.

16.5 Actions to be taken when a fire detection and fire alarm system moves from performance level two to performance level three.

The FRSs will:

i) Advise the protected premises they have exceeded the acceptable performance level threshold.

ii) Consider whether to further revise the attendance level in accordance with sections 15 and 16.

iii) Advise the protected premises in advance of any changes and remind them to alert their insurance company to the changes in fire service attendance levels.

iv) Require sight of the revised fire risk assessment/ emergency plan for the premises.

v) Consider the use of its regulatory enforcement powers.

vi) Continue to review the performance of the AFAS.

The responsible person will put in place an action plan that will include:

i) All the actions described under paragraph 16.3 relating to the Responsible Person (from viii to end), and:

ii) Demonstrate their competence as a responsible person, as described in BS5839-1.

iii) Arrange for the maintainer to undertake the actions required in BS5839-1:2002, clause 46.4.4.

The Responsible Person, together with the maintainer of the AFAS will take the recommended actions to address an unacceptable rate of false alarm activations as outlined in BS5839-1.

16.6   Time scale for return to level one performance.

If within three months following completion of the above actions the performance of the fire detection and fire alarm system returns to within the limits set for performance level one:

i) The FRSs will restore level one attendance and continue to review performance.

ii) The Responsible Person for the protected premises will advise their insurance company, revise any fire safety management arrangements and maintain the improvement.

If the above time scale is not met, the premises will remain at the reduced attendance level determined by the FRSs for a further three months before the attendance level is reviewed again.

17   Protocol Registration

Monitoring of AFAS performance by FRSs may be supported by a registration process. This process may be used where a change is made in attendance levels and may also be used to progressively register AFAS with FRSs to provide a database of existing systems and their performance.

FRSs may consider that the information gained through the FSO audit procedure will be sufficient to not require additional registration. However, it will be necessary that the number of detector heads in a system is recorded to be able to determine the levels of response.

With the implementation of Regional Control Centres and the various FRSs requiring different IT solutions to similar demands, FRSs may determine whether it is appropriate for them to issue URNs as part of the registration process. FRSs will have flexibility in the extent to which registration is applied so that resources can be targeted at the highest risk. FRSs may charge a fee for the registration process. This should be in line with guidance in the Fire & Rescue Services Act 2004 and subsequent Statutory Instruments relating to charging.

The steps required to register an AFAS for each stakeholder in the process are detailed in the following flow charts and notes in section 18 Registration Guidance:

18   Registration Guidance and Processes

The following pages detail the registration guidance for both Fire and Rescue Services and the Responsible Person

Figure 5 - Registration Guidance - Fire and Rescue Service

UwFS

Maintainers, installers

18.1 Receipt of information about non-registered premises with AFAs

Responsible person

Fire safety inspection

18.2 Internal registration

18.3 Send documentation to the responsible person

18.4 Return of Documentation

18.5 No reply, Fire Safety follow up

18.6 If documentation is returned incomplete

18.7 Process documentation and issue URN if applicable

18.8 Monitor

18.8 Set response level and implement rehabilitation process

18.1 Receipt of information about non-registered premises with AFAS.

Notification of the AFAS can be by any method but it is normally envisaged to be one of the following:
- UwFS;
- The Responsible Person;
- The Maintainer/installer company; and
- Fire Safety Inspection;

18.2 Internal registration

Each individual FRSs will carry out the necessary internal registration using their internal processes together with the forms and letters provided within the toolbox available from the CFOA web site (See section 19 & section 21).

18.3 Send documentation to responsible person

The FRSs will send the application pack to the premises addressed to the Responsible Person (where known) or to the Company Secretary by recorded delivery.

The pack will include:
- An instructive letter requesting registration; and
- The application form

18.4 Return of documentation

On receipt of returned documentation the FRSs will check the details on the forms.

18.5 Documentation not returned (No Response)

If no response or the application pack is returned not delivered, the FRSs will attempt to contact the Responsible Person and arrange for the return of the registration documents, sending a new pack if necessary, by recorded delivery. If verbal contact cannot be established, a new documentation pack and letter should be sent to the Company Secretary of the organisation by recorded delivery.

18.6 Documentation returned incorrect or incomplete.

The FRSs will attempt to contact the Responsible Person and obtain the missing data verbally if appropriate. If not possible, the FRSs will return the forms marked for amendment, or if new forms are required, send a new documentation pack to the identified person with covering letter highlighting the specific issues with the forms.

18.7 Process documentation and issue URN
(where applicable)

If all details are correct then the FRSs will register the AFAS. (The standard letter may be adjusted to suit FRSs not issuing a URN). Where a URN is issued the notification should be sent to the responsible person, the maintenance company and, where applicable, the FAMO.

FAMOs will provide written communication providing confirmation of the correct address for the AFAS.

Once issued the URN is to be quoted in all communications concerning the AFAS.

18.8 Fire and Rescue Service Monitoring

The FRSs will monitor the number of UwFS and determine the level of intervention (from education through to enforcement) and emergency response appropriate to the premises, based on the performance of the AFAS in accordance with sections 15 and 16.

Figure 6 - Registration Guidance - Responsible Person

```
┌─────────────────────────────┐
│ 18.9 Receive documentation  │
│     package from FRS        │
└─────────────────────────────┘
              │
              ▼
┌─────────────────────────────┐
│ 18.9 Audit system and complete│
│ documentation in conjunction with│
│          maintainer         │
└─────────────────────────────┘
              │
              ▼
┌─────────────────────────────┐
│ 18.10 Return documentation to│
│ FRS complete with administration│
│          charge             │
│      (where applicable)     │
└─────────────────────────────┘
              │
              ▼
┌─────────────────────────────┐
│ 18.11 If correct receive    │
│ registration and URN (where │
│          issued)            │
└─────────────────────────────┘
              │
              ▼
┌─────────────────────────────┐
│ 18.12 Notify FRS of any major│
│     changes to system       │
└─────────────────────────────┘
```
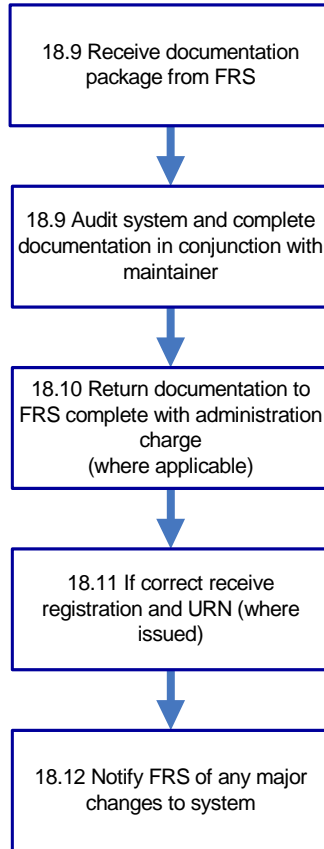
18.9 Receive pack from FRSs and completion of the documentation & application form

On receipt of the registration pack the Responsible Person, in conjunction with the maintenance company, will audit the performance of their AFAS and its management.

The Responsible Person, with the maintenance company will provide written information about the AFAS which shall be submitted to the FRSs within 28 days.

18.10 Return forms

It is the responsibility of the Responsible Person to ensure that the completed application pack, together with the administration charge if applicable, is returned to the FRSs.

The Responsible Person may choose to do this via the competent person e.g. maintenance organisation.

18.11 Receive registration and URN

The Responsible Person, maintenance organisation and where applicable the FAMO, will receive confirmation from the FRS of registration, including URN (if issued by the relevant FRS). Where the alarm is not transmitted via a FAMO, the URN (whenever possible) should be readily available to the person making the 999 call from the registered premises.

18.12 Registration updates

It is the responsibility of the Responsible Person to notify the FRSs of any significant changes to the registration information which should be submitted to the FRSs within 28 days.

Significant changes are defined below:
- Responsible person.
- Competent person.
- Number of detectors (Where the previous number of automatic fire detectors was greater than 100 and has been increased or decreased by at least 5% or where the previous number of automatic fire detectors was less than 100 and has been increased or decreased by at least 5 detectors).
- Maintenance contractor or supplier.

Figure 7 - Registration Guidance - Maintenance Organisation

```
┌─────────────────────────┐
│ 18.13 Promote the CFOA  │
│ Policy Guidance         │
└─────────────────────────┘
            │
            ▼
┌─────────────────────────┐
│ 18.14 Assist in the     │
│ completion of the       │
│ documentation sent to   │
│ the responsible person  │
└─────────────────────────┘
            │
            ▼
┌─────────────────────────┐
│ 18.15 Through partnership│
│ working with their      │
│ customers and the FRS to│
│ eliminate UwFS          │
└─────────────────────────┘
```
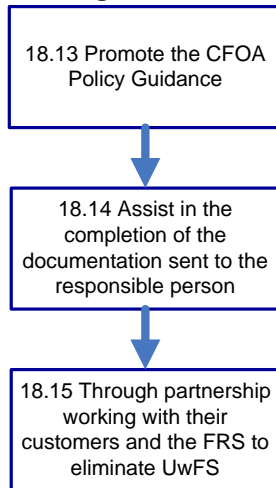
Figure 8 - Registration Guidance – Fire Alarm Monitoring Organisations

```
┌─────────────────────────┐
│ 18.16 FAMO receives     │
│ registration nformation,│
│ including URN if issued │
└─────────────────────────┘
            │
            ▼
┌─────────────────────────┐
│ 18.17 FAMO reviews and  │
│ checks accuracy of      │
│ information supplied    │
└─────────────────────────┘
            │
            ▼
┌─────────────────────────┐
│ 18.17 Inform FRS        │
└─────────────────────────┘
```
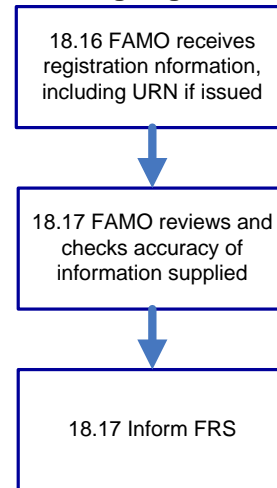
18.13 Promotion of CFO Protocol

In conjunction with FRSs and trade associations, the maintenance organisation and, where applicable, FAMOs, will promote the protocol to end users.

18.14 Complete and return forms

It is recognised by the FRS that the maintenance organisation has a key role in the registration process and may return the completed application pack with payment to the FRS, however it is still the responsibility of the Responsible Person to ensure that the forms and the administration charge (where applicable) is sent to the FRS.

18.15 Eliminate UwFS

The maintenance organisation will work with the Responsible Person to keep the AFAS operating in accordance with BS5839-1 and or BS5839-6, or equivalent standard, in order to eliminate UwFS.

18.16 Receive URN

The FAMO will receive the URN (where applicable) and associated information from the FRS.

18.17 Confirm information

The FAMO will check the information supplied by the FRS and will confirm in writing to the FRS that the details are correct and if not supply amended information.

19 Registration Requirements

For AFAS to be registered, the AFAS shall be designed, installed, commissioned and maintained by persons competent to do so. A definition of "competent persons" is given in the glossary (see section 27). CFOA recommend that FRSs require the use of third party accreditation schemes.

Please refer to section 25 (Certification Schemes for Automatic Fire Detection and Fire Alarm Systems) and section 26 (Certification Schemes for Alarm Receiving Centres & Telecare Service Providers).

20 The Role Of Competent Persons

It is a recommendation of this protocol that the Responsible Person shall nominate a competent person to respond to the premises at all times within 20 minutes of an alarm activation to facilitate entry to the building, resetting of the AFAS and post alarm procedures.

In the event of no sign of fire being apparent, the FRSs will not necessarily await attendance of the competent person before deciding on the action to take.

Whilst the FRSs may silence the alarm sounders when they have gained access to the premises, they will not be responsible for resetting the fire detection and fire alarm system. This will be the responsibility of the attending competent person.

21 CFOA Protocol Forms & Letters

The forms and letters related to this protocol are provided in the toolbox available from the CFOA web site:
Toolbox link: http://www.cfoa.org.uk/10863

21.1 Protocol Access, Revision and Version Control

The protocol will be available to download on the CFOA web site at www.cfoa.org.uk/10275

Should you experience any problems downloading a hard copy, please contact CFOA IT Support via email or on the phone 01827 302374 or by post at:

9-11 Pebble Close
Amington
Tamworth
Staffordshire
B77 4RD

The content of this protocol will be drawn to the attention of users of AFAS, by the installer or maintainer of the fire detection and fire alarm system.

Interested parties may inform CFOA of any issues that may prompt an amendment to this protocol. These should be forwarded to CFOA at the above address. On a regular agreed basis, the Chair of the CFOA Working Group will meet with representatives of the fire industry, independent inspectorate bodies and other representative organisations to review potential updates and amendments. The protocol will be kept under review and modified in the light of experience and improvements in performance and developments in fire alarm technology.

The version of the protocol maintained on the CFOA web site will be the current protocol.

22 Data Protection

The provisions of the Data Protection Act apply to all personal data held by CFOA & FRSs.

23 Advertising and use of FRS or CFOA Identity

Companies selling or promoting AFASs or FAMO services shall not use the CFOA logo or any FRS crest or signage on any documentation or promotional materials without the written permission of the relevant organisation. No company shall make misleading or inaccurate explanations of the CFOA Protocol or FRS response standards on any documentation or public material circulated to customers.

24 CFOA Liability

i) CFOA does not exclude any liability for death or personal injury caused by its negligence or the negligence of its employees.

ii) Subject to paragraph 24 i) and notwithstanding any provision of this protocol, CFOA shall have no liability in respect of this protocol whether in contract, tort (including but not limited to negligence), breach of any statutory duty, under statute, restitution, misrepresentation or otherwise (in each case whether caused by negligence or otherwise) arising out of or in connection with this protocol or its performance.

iii) Subject to paragraph 24 i), CFOA shall have no liability for any loss of profit, loss of sales, loss of business, loss of goodwill or reputation, third party claims or pure economic loss (in each case whether direct or indirect) or for any indirect or consequential loss in connection with this protocol.

iv) Subject to paragraph 24 i), CFOA shall have no liability for any matter that arises from any act or omission arising out of or in connection with this protocol by any body, corporation, undertaking, association or individual user, their employees, agents, customers, sub-contractors or suppliers.

25 Certification Schemes for Automatic Fire Detection and Fire Alarm Systems

CFOA is committed to assisting and supporting users of fire protection products, systems and services to meet their legal responsibilities by encouraging such users to use only third party certificated companies.

Third party certification schemes for fire protection products and related services are an effective means of providing the fullest possible assurances, offering a level of quality, reliability and safety that non-certificated products may lack. This does not mean goods and services that are not third party approved are less reliable, but there is no obvious way in which this can be demonstrated.

Third party quality assurance can provide confidence, both as a means of satisfying you that the goods and services you have purchased are fit for purpose, and as a means of demonstrating that you have complied with the law.

However, to ensure the level of assurance offered by third party certification schemes, you should always check whether the company you employ sub-contracts work to others. If they do, you will want to check that the subcontractors are subject to the same level of checks of quality and competence as the company you are employing.

A list of companies recognised as providing third party certification schemes for fire alarm design, installation, commissioning and maintenance can be obtained through UKAS. These companies will provide information on third party certificated companies approved to the schemes. It is important to ensure companies are certificated for the particular service provided e.g.: a company might be third party certificated for maintenance work, but not third party certificated for design work.

UKAS
21-47 High Street
Feltham
Middlesex
TW13 4UN

www.ukas.com

26 Certification Schemes for Alarm Receiving Centres & Telecare Service Providers

A list of companies recognised as providing third party certification for FAMOs can be obtained through UKAS.

UKAS
21-47 High Street
Feltham
Middlesex
TW13 4UN

www.ukas.com

CFOA strongly recommends that all FAMOs shall be certificated by UKAS accredited, or equivalent, third party certification body to the relevant standard for the types of alarm which they monitor.

27 Glossary

These definitions are applied only for the purpose of this document and should not be used to interpret any other publications.

CoP
Code of Practice

AFA
Automatic fire alarm (AFAs indicates plural form)

AFAS
Automatic fire detection and fire alarm system
(As defined in BS5839-1)

ARC
Alarm Receiving Centre (ARCs indicates plural form)
A continuously manned remote centre to which information concerning the status of one or more alarm systems is reported. (See FAMO) [Source BS5979:2000]

[2]BS5839-1
British Standard Code of Practice for the design, installation, commissioning and maintenance of fire detection and fire alarm systems for buildings. [source BS5839-1:2002]

[2]BS5839-6
British Standard Code of Practice for the design, installation, commissioning and maintenance of fire detection and fire alarm systems for buildings used as dwellings.
[Source BS5839-6:2004]

[2]BS5979
British Standard Code of Practice for remote centres receiving signals from security systems. [Source BS5979:2000]

[2]BS7671
British Standard Code of Practice for requirements for electrical installations – IEE wiring regulations.

Building fire alarm monitoring
This includes all BS5839 part 1 fire alarm systems and all BS5839 part 6 fire alarm systems excluding those covered under the definition of Individual Domestic Premises Fire Alarm Systems (27.17).

CFOA
Chief Fire Officers Association.

Call Back
A type of call filtering process undertaken by FAMOs to prevent UwFS. Where call back is in place, on receipt of a fire alarm signal, a FAMO will call the premises contact, waiting for a maximum of 30 seconds for an answer. If the phone is answered at any time within the 30 seconds, the call filtering process commences. If the phone is not answered within the 30 seconds, the call back process ends and the signal is relayed to the FRSs

Competent Person
Nominated by the responsible person:

A person with enough training and experience or knowledge and other qualities to enable them properly to assist in undertaking the preventative and protective measures.
[Source RRFSO 2005 guidance documents]

FAMO
Fire Alarm Monitoring Organisation (FAMOs indicates plural form)
A combined term developed under this protocol to include all remote fire alarm monitoring organisations e.g.: ARC, TSP, etc.

FRS
Fire and Rescue Service (FRSs indicates plural form).

False Alarm
A fire alarm signal resulting from a cause or causes other than a fire, in which a system has responded, either as designed or as the technology can be reasonably expected to respond to any of the following:

– a fire like phenomenon or environmental influence (e.g. smoke from a nearby bonfire dust or insects, processes that produce smoke or flame or environmental effects that can render certain types of detector unstable, such as rapid air flow;

– accidental damage;

– inappropriate human action (e.g. operation of a system for test or maintenance purposes without prior warning to building occupants and/or an alarm receiving centre;

– equipment false alarms, in which the fire alarm has resulted from a fault in the system.
[source BS5839-1:2002 clause 3.17].

A false alarm becomes an UwFS at the point a FRSs is requested to attend

---

[2] All references to British Standards or equivalent documents within this protocol require referencing the current version applicable.

Filtering

Steps taken to limit a false alarm being transmitted to a FRSs as an UwFS and action taken by the FRSs to determine if an emergency response is necessary. Filtering can be done through: measures introduced on site; FAMOs or FRSs. (Call filtering is the preferred term for call challenging or call verification).

Individual Domestic Premises Fire Alarm Monitoring (social or non-social)

For the purposes of this protocol, this is identified as any single property dwelling used for private living accommodation and not connected to a common parts fire alarm system.

PDA - Pre-determined attendance.

Specific number and type of each appliance, specific equipment required, together with such Junior, Senior and Principal Officers that are required to attend or be notified.

Protected premises.

A premises in the protocol is as defined in the FSO. (See building alarm and individual domestic premises definitions)

Responsible Person.

This is defined in the FSO as:

In this order "responsible person" means –

a) in relation to a workplace, the employer, if the workplace is to any extent under his control;

b) in relation to any premises not falling in paragraph (a) –

　　i) the person who has control of the premises (as occupier or otherwise) in connection with the carry on by him of a trade, business or other undertaking (for profit or not); or

　　ii) the owner, where the person in control of the premises does not have control in connection with the carrying on by that person of trade, business or other undertaking.

FSO

Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

TSP - Telecare Service Provider**.**

Telecare Service Providers were formally known as Social Alarm Providers (SAP). It is a service that enables people, especially older and more vulnerable individuals, to live independently in their own home. It can be as simple as the basic community alarm service, able to respond in an emergency and provide regular contact by telephone. It can include detectors or monitors such as motion or falls and fire and gas that trigger a warning to a response centre staffed 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. (See FAMO).

TSA - Telecare Services Association.

The Telecare Services Association is the representative body for the Telecare industry within the UK.

UKAS - United Kingdom Accreditation Service.

The United Kingdom Accreditation Service is the sole national accreditation body recognised by government to assess, against internationally agreed standards, organisations that provide certification, testing, inspection and calibration services.

URN - Unique Reference Number.

The number, issued by an FRSs, by which an individual protected premises is uniquely recognised.

UwFS - Unwanted Fire Signal.

An UwFS is a false alarm from an automatic fire detection and fire alarm system that has been passed through to the FRS.

Page 26 of 38　　　　　　　**www.cfoa.org.uk**　　　　　　　**July 2010**
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28 Annex A – Protocol Operation Flowchart - AFAs relayed to FRS via FAMO

Figure A 1 - Protocol Steps for AFAs relayed to FRS via FAMO

```
                          A1.1 Design, Installation,
                          Commissioning,
                          Management and
                          Maintenance
                                   |
                          A1.2 Fire Alarm Activtation
                                   |
                          A1.3 Filtering Measures ──────────────────► A1.4 Stays On-
                          On-Site                                      Site
                                   |                                        |
                          A1.5 Fire Alarm Monitoring               A1.4 Record
                          Organisation                             On-site
                                   |                                        |
         ┌─────────────────┼─────────────────┐                             |
   A1.6 Building    A1.7 Domestic Alarm   A1.8 Domestic Alarm               |
   Alarm            (Non-Social)          (Social)                          |
         |                 |                   |                            |
   A1.6 No          A1.7 Filter of AFA    A1.8 AFA Signal: Filter           |
   Additional       Signal by FAMOs       Following TSA Practices          |
   Filtering        (call back)                                            |
   Applied              |                        |                          |
         |        ┌──────┴─────┐          ┌──────┴──────┐                   |
         |   A1.9 No   A1.10 Fire    A1.9 No     A1.10 Fire or              |
         |   Fire      or Doubt      Fire        Doubt                      |
         |      |          |            |            |                      |
         |   A1.9 Record   |         A1.9 Record     |              A1.4 Fire Safety
         |   On–Site       |         On–Site         |              Regulation
         |                 |                         |              Inspection
         |                 |                         |              Programme
         └─────────────┬───┴─────────────────────────┴──────────────────┘
                  A1.11 FRS Response
                       |
              ┌────────┴────────┐
         A1.12 Fire         A1.13 UwFS
                                |
                     ┌──────────┴──────────┐
               A1.15 FRS Follow-up    A1. 14 FAMO Performance
               Response               Indicators
```

- A1.16 Fire Safety Regulation Response
- A1.17 Community Fire Safety Response
- A1.18 Registration & Review Emergency Response
- A1.15 Combination of Response
- A1.14 Review Service Provision

Calls via FAMO - Flowchart Key

A1.1 Design, Installation, Commissioning Management and Maintenance

- Compliance with BS5839-1 (or equivalent standard) with all parts of design, installation, commissioning, acceptance and maintenance should significantly reduce the likelihood of false alarms being generated.

A1.2 The fire alarm activates

- Local management procedures must ensure there is an effective response to the fire alarm activating in accordance with their emergency plan.

A1.3 Filtering measures on-site

- Steps should be taken to limit a false alarm being transmitted to a FRSs as an UwFS. Refer to sections 11 and 12 (filtering).

A1.4 False alarm stays on-site

- Following the incident the cause of the activation should be investigated and measures taken to prevent reoccurrence.
- The event should be recorded in a log book on-site.
- The fire alarm log should be available to FRSs and the Service Provider.

A1.5 Alarm signal relayed to FAMO

- FAMO receives alarm signal and determines if established procedure for the specific call requires call filtering before relaying the call to FRSs.

A1.6 Building alarms

- FAMOs that monitor building alarms should ensure appropriate on-site filtering processes are in place in accordance with the FAMO CoP – See Appendix B - Code of Practice. (Minimum filtering process is FAMO call back).
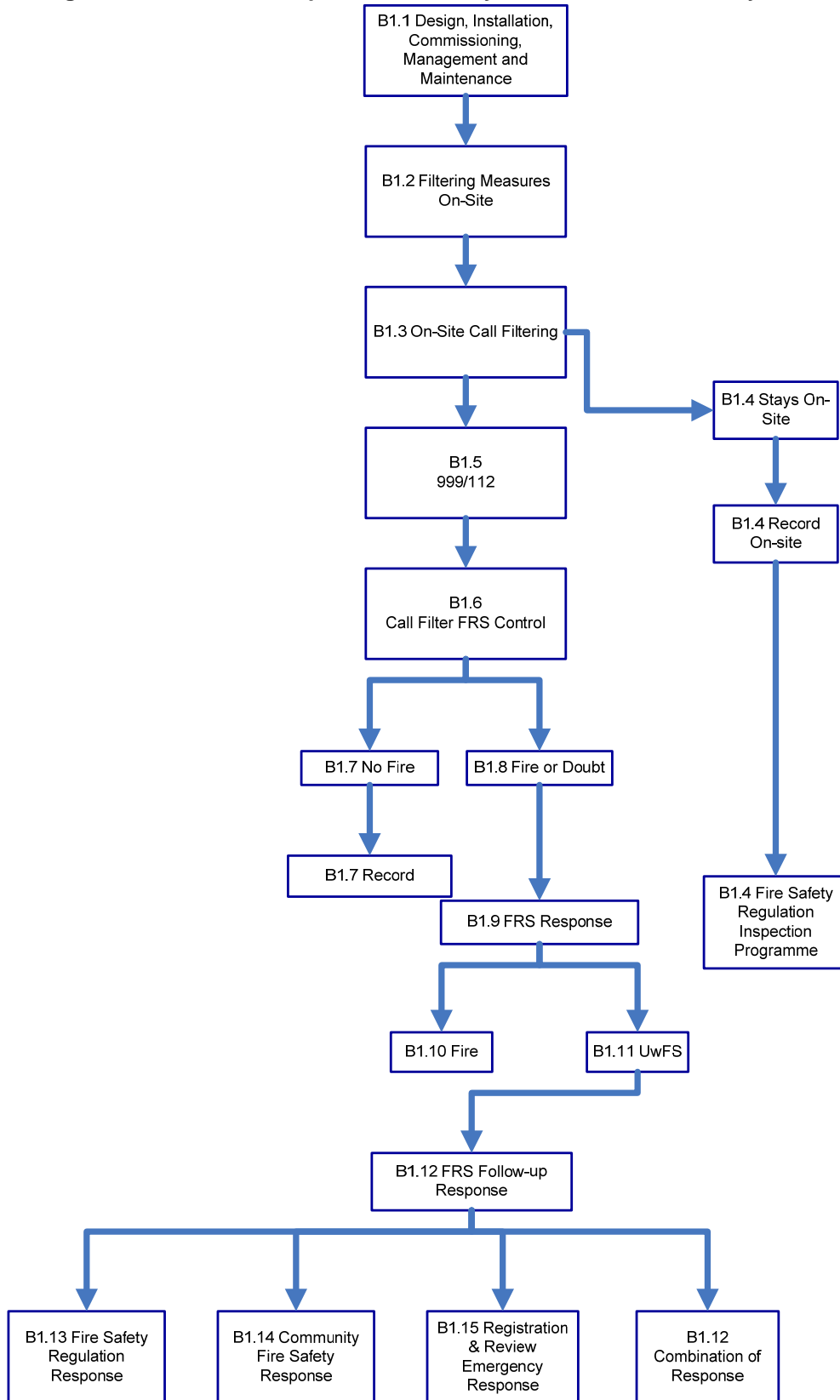
A1.7 **& 1.8** Domestic alarms

- FAMOs that provide domestic monitoring services to individuals (for example vulnerable persons) should make attempts to contact in order to determine the cause of the alarm signal and filter out known false alarms before relaying the call to the FRSs, in accordance with the FAMO CoP – See Appendix B - Code of Practice.

A1.8 *See above A1.7 & 1.8*

A1.9 If confirmed no fire

- Incident recorded by FAMO.
- Report available to FRSs.

A1.10 If fire or any doubt about cause of alarm signal

- FAMO will relay the call to the FRSs in accordance with FAMO CoP - See Appendix B - Code of Practice.

A1.11 FRSs response

- Once the FAMO relays the alarm signal to the FRSs, no further call filtering will take place by Brigade control staff. However, FAMOs must identify themselves when placing an emergency call to FRSs, enabling identification and performance monitoring. Confirmed fires will receive and FRSs fire response. Where a fire is not confirmed, FRSs will send the pre-determined attendance response for an AFA at the premises.

A1.12 If fire

- Where the incident is a fire, standard FRS procedures will be applied.

A1.13 If UwFS

- Following the incident the cause of the activation should be investigated and measures taken to prevent reoccurrence.
- The event should be recorded in a log book on site
- Incident recorded by FRSs.

A1.14 FAMO Performance Indicators

- FAMOs (and FRSs) to monitor levels of UwFS being submitted to FRSs.
- FAMOs also monitor levels of false alarms being submitted to them under A1.9 step.
- FRSs to review service provision with FAMOs.

A1.15 FRSs Follow-Up response

- Having identified the UwFS, FRSs must determine the appropriate reaction using one, or a combination of, the options A1.16 to A1.18.

A1.16 Fire Safety Regulation response

- Enforcement under the Fire Safety Order (ranging from educate and inform to prohibition notice).
- Each FRSs can carry out any relevant regulatory fire safety activities in order to reduce false alarms and UwFS.

A1.17 Community Fire Safety response

- Each FRSs can carry out any relevant community fire safety activities in order to reduce false alarms and UwFS.

A1.18 Registration & Review emergency response

- All premises that generate UwFS should be registered in accordance with the process described in section 17 (Protocol Registration) of this protocol if a change in emergency response is to be considered by FRSs.
- Review level of response which may include Levels 1, 2 & 3 of this protocol (see section 15)

29 Annex B – Protocol Operation Flowchart - AFAS Relayed to the FRS via the 999/112 System

Figure B 1 - Protocol Steps for AFAs relayed to FRS via 999/112 system

```
                    ┌──────────────────────────┐
                    │ B1.1 Design, Installation,│
                    │      Commissioning,       │
                    │    Management and         │
                    │      Maintenance          │
                    └────────────┬─────────────┘
                                 ▼
                    ┌──────────────────────────┐
                    │  B1.2 Filtering Measures  │
                    │          On-Site          │
                    └────────────┬─────────────┘
                                 ▼
                    ┌──────────────────────────┐         ┌──────────────┐
                    │ B1.3 On-Site Call Filtering│───────▶│ B1.4 Stays On-│
                    └────────────┬─────────────┘         │     Site      │
                                 ▼                        └──────┬───────┘
                    ┌──────────────────────────┐                 ▼
                    │           B1.5            │         ┌──────────────┐
                    │         999/112           │         │ B1.4 Record  │
                    └────────────┬─────────────┘         │   On-site    │
                                 ▼                        └──────┬───────┘
                    ┌──────────────────────────┐                 │
                    │           B1.6            │                 │
                    │   Call Filter FRS Control │                 │
                    └──────┬───────────┬───────┘                 │
                           ▼           ▼                          │
                 ┌──────────────┐ ┌──────────────────┐           │
                 │ B1.7 No Fire │ │ B1.8 Fire or Doubt│          │
                 └──────┬───────┘ └────────┬─────────┘           ▼
                        ▼                   │          ┌──────────────────┐
                 ┌──────────────┐           │          │ B1.4 Fire Safety │
                 │ B1.7 Record  │           │          │    Regulation    │
                 └──────────────┘           ▼          │    Inspection    │
                                   ┌──────────────────┐│    Programme     │
                                   │ B1.9 FRS Response │└──────────────────┘
                                   └────┬────────┬────┘
                                        ▼        ▼
                               ┌──────────┐ ┌──────────┐
                               │B1.10 Fire│ │B1.11 UwFS│
                               └────┬─────┘ └────┬─────┘
                                    └──────┬─────┘
                                           ▼
                               ┌──────────────────────┐
                               │ B1.12 FRS Follow-up   │
                               │      Response         │
                               └──────────────────────┘
```

B1.13 Fire Safety Regulation Response	B1.14 Community Fire Safety Response	B1.15 Registration & Review Emergency Response	B1.12 Combination of Response

Calls to FRS via 999/112 - Flowchart Key

B1.1 Design, Installation, Commissioning Management and Maintenance

- As part of the audit process, FRSs should ensure compliance with BS5839-1 (or equivalent standard) with all parts of design, installation, commissioning, acceptance and maintenance. Compliance should significantly reduce the likelihood of false alarms being generated.

B1.2 The fire alarm activates

- Local management procedures must ensure there is an effective response to the fire alarm activating in accordance with their emergency plan.

B1.3 Filtering measures on-site

- Steps should be taken to limit a false alarm being transmitted to a FRSs as an UwFS. For example; use of a staff alarm, for investigation purposes whilst delaying the call to the FRS.

B1.4 False alarm stays on-site

- Following the incident the cause of the activation should be investigated and measures taken to prevent reoccurrence.

- The event should be recorded in log book on-site.

- Fire alarm log should be available to FRSs and Service Provider.

B1.5 Call relayed to FRSs via 999/112

B1.6 Call filtering

- Call filtering carried out by fire control operator (See section 13 - Call Filtering: By FRSs Control Operators).

B1.7 If confirmed no fire

- No FRSs emergency response.

- Incident recorded by FRSs.

B1.8 If fire or any doubt about the cause of the alarm signal

- FRSs determine appropriate emergency response.

B1.9 FRSs response

- FRSs send appropriate response.

B1.10 If Fire

- Standard FRSs procedures.

B1.11 If UwFS

- Following the incident the cause of the activation should be investigated and measures taken to prevent reoccurrence.

- The event should be recorded in log book on site

- Incident recorded by FRSs.

- FRSs UwFS response.

B1.12 FRSs Follow-Up response

- Having identified the UwFS, FRSs must determine the appropriate reaction using one, or a combination of, the options B1.13 to B1.15 below.

B1.13 Fire Safety Regulation response

- Enforcement under the Fire Safety Order (ranging from educate and inform to prohibition notice).

B1.14 Community Fire Safety response

- FRSs should carry out relevant community fire safety activities in order to reduce false alarms and UwFS.

B1.15 Registration & Review emergency response

- All premises that generate UwFS should be registered in accordance with the process described in section 17 (Protocol Registration) of this protocol if a change in emergency response is to be considered by FRSs.

- Review level of response which may include Levels 1, 2 & 3 of this protocol (see section 15).

30   Annex C – Implementation Schedule

This protocol was derived from the original *"Model Agreement between Fire and Rescue Authorities and Users of Remotely Monitored Fire Alarm Systems (Model Agreement for RMFAS)"* which was first published in September 2004. This was revised in January 2005 when it became the *"CFOA Policy on FRSs – Response to Remotely Monitored Fire Alarm Systems"*.

On 1 September 2008 the "CFOA Policy for the Reduction of UwFS and false alarms" was published. It introduced significant changes to further develop the intentions of the original document. It also took account of the code of Practice that was under development at the time of publication to be made available in the subsequent revision of this policy (now a CFOA Protocol).

This revised version of the protocol has been approved for release in September 2010. CFOA recommends that FRSs adopt the protocol operating practices by 1st December 2010. Now that the FAMO Code of Practice is included as an Appendix to the protocol, the following schedule applies:

From 1st December 2010
- FAMOs are to ensure all new monitoring contracts include a filtering requirement in accordance with the protocol.

From 1st December 2010
- From this point forward, FAMOs are to ensure any monitored premises that transmit 3 or more false alarms to the FAMO in any rolling 12 month period are required to sign a new monitoring contract that includes a filtering requirement in accordance with this protocol.

From 1st December 2011
- From this point forward, FAMOs are to ensure any monitored premises that transmit 2 or more false alarms to the FAMO in any rolling 12 month period are required to sign a new monitoring contract that includes a filtering requirement in accordance with this protocol.

31 Annex D – Remote Monitoring Relationships

Fire Alarm Monitoring Organisation / Service Provider / End User

Remote Monitoring Relationships
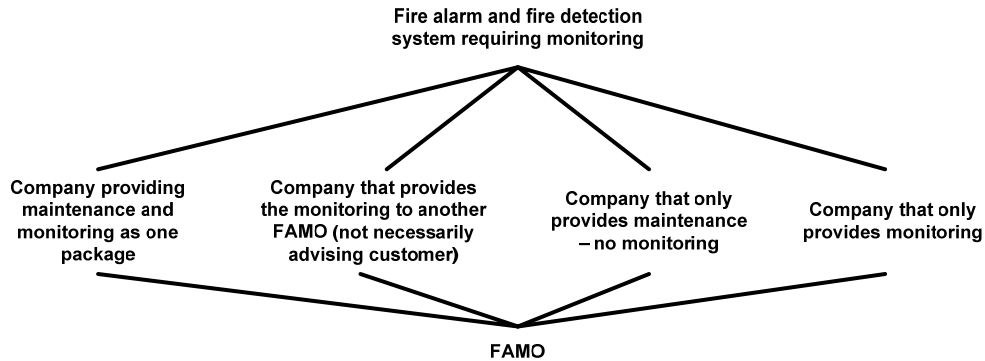
D.1. Remote monitoring organisations (FAMOs) do not often have a contract directly with the premises/Responsible Person. In order to appreciate the responsibilities the various parties have in the process of managing false alarms and UwFS, the diagram above helps explain this aspect of the business model.

D.2. This protocol recognises there are various levels of influence which stakeholders in this relationship can exert on each other. FRSs can directly influence the end user and FAMO. The FAMO can directly influence the service provider and directly or indirectly influence the end user and the end user can directly influence the service provider. The levels of influence also dictate the ability to educate each stakeholder in best practice of fire alarm management.

D.3. **Fire Alarm Monitoring Organisations**
FAMOs have the responsibility for the administration of the connection and monitoring of fire alarm systems.

D.4. The FAMO role is more than just alarm monitoring, it is often integral to the fire strategy of a premises and can play a vital part in an effective emergency plan. The flexibility in the monitoring services available is often under utilised. The CoP supports the range and flexibility of fire alarm monitoring which should be tailored to each unique premises. The CoP also recognises the limitations of monitoring and managing fire alarm systems.

D.5. In monitoring building fire alarms, FAMOs provide the valuable function of protecting property in the event of fire in buildings outside normal working hours, when unoccupied and as back up to on-site filtering arrangements. Serious consideration must be given to the times and levels of monitoring occupied buildings. For example, when a building is fully occupied and/or sufficient staff are available to investigate an alarm activation. It may be unnecessary for the alarm signal to be passed to the FAMO. This may unnecessarily disrupt the business activity and put emergency services at risk during unnecessary emergency response. In this circumstance it would be reasonable for the monitoring company to provide a back-up to any human failure during investigation or if co-incidence detection increased the likelihood of fire.

D.6. Confirmation of the FAMOs compliance with BS 5979 (or equivalent) is achieved through certification by a United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS) 3rd Party Certification body with the scope for monitoring fire alarms. The FAMO is required to undergo a regular inspection programme by a 3rd party certification body to confirm compliance.

D.7. **Service Providers**
A Service Provider may be nominated to maintain the fire alarm system on behalf of the Responsible Person.

D.8. The Service Provider will arrange connection to a FAMO incorporating the requirements of the Responsible Person and the requirements of the FAMO, whilst ensuring the system is correctly maintained.

D.9. **End Users**

The Responsible Person (as defined under the FSO has overall responsibility for the performance of the fire detection and fire alarm system, including the prevention of false alarms and UwFS. Where roles have been assigned to complete the duties associated with the fire alarm system, the Responsible Person must ensure the tasks are undertaken by a Competent Person.

D.10. **FRSs**

FRSs are the statutory enforcing authority for primary fire safety legislation in England and Wales.

D.11. Fire Safety legislation requires the employer (or responsible person) to carry out an assessment of the risk from fire to employees and other people using the premises, and to implement suitable control measures to reduce the risk to an acceptable level. This includes arrangements for summoning the fire brigade.

D.12. CFOA strongly recommends that, FRSs do not place additional filtering or monitoring burdens on FAMOs complying with this CoP.

D.13. FRSs will promote the use of 3rd Party Certification schemes as one way Responsible Persons may use to help demonstrate competency.

32 Appendix A – Automatic Fire Alarm Registration Form

AUTOMATIC FIRE ALARM REGISTRATION FORM	OFFICE USE ONLY URN Number:

1	Reason for Application (please put a cross in the appropriate box)
	(a) [ ] New Registration
	(b) [ ] Amendment to existing registration (circle all that apply)
	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14

Details of Premises

2	Address:	
	Postcode:	County:
	Tel (inc STD):	Organisation E-mail:

Details of Responsible Person

A responsible person is: "Person having control of the building and/or premises whether as occupier or otherwise, or any person delegated by the person having control of the building and/or premises to be responsible for the fire detection and fire alarm system and the fire procedures." [source Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 guidance documents]

3	Title:	Initials:	Surname:
	Job Title:		
	Company Name:		
	Address:		
	Postcode:	County:	
	Tel (inc STD):	E-mail:	

www.cfoa.org.uk   July 2010

4	Details of Competent Person
	A competent person is: A person with enough training and experience or knowledge and other qualities to enable them properly to assist in undertaking the preventive and protective measures. [source Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 guidance documents]

Title:		Initials:		Surname:	
Job Title:					
Organisation Name:					
Address:					
Postcode:			County:		
Tel (inc STD):			E-mail:		

5 — Maintenance

Maintenance	
Maintainer Name:	
Address:	
Contact E-mail:	Telephone:
3rd Party Certification Body:	Certification Number:

6 — Type of Premises (please put a cross against all that apply)

	Type of Premises (please put a cross against all that apply)					
	☐ Hostel		☐ Care homes		☐ Factory or warehouse
	☐ Hotel		☐ Further education		☐ House converted to flat
	☐ Office		☐ Hospitals		☐ Other premises open to the public
	☐ School		☐ Licensed premises		☐ Other sleeping accommodation
	☐ Shop		☐ Other workplace		☐ Purpose built flats > = 4 floors
	☐ CROWN		☐ Public building		
	☐ Other - please give details below:				

7 — Standard to which the System is Designed and/or Installed (please put a cross in the appropriate box)

	Standard to which the System is Designed and/or Installed (please put a cross in the appropriate box)			
	☐ BS 5839 Part 1	☐ BS 5839 Part 6	Other relevant standard - please give details below:	

8	**Installation**		
	Do you have an installation certificate for the automatic fire detection and fire alarm system?		
	☐ Yes	☐ No	
	Do you have a commissioning certificate for the automatic fire detection and fire alarm system?		
	☐ Yes	☐ No	
	Installation Date:		Number of Automatic Fire Detectors:
	Do you have an acceptance certificate for the automatic fire detection and fire alarm system?		
	☐ Yes	☐ No	
	Installer Name:		
	Address:		
	Contact E-mail:		Telephone:
	3rd Party Certification Body:		Certification Number:

9	**Design**		
	Do you have a design certificate for the automatic fire detection and fire alarm system?		
	☐ Yes	☐ No	
	Installer Name:		
	Address:		
	Contact E-mail:		Telephone:
	3rd Party Certification Body:		Certification Number:

10	**Type of signalling method used to alert Fire Rescue Service** (please put a cross in the appropriate box)	
	☐ Direct via 999/112	☐ Indirect via Alarm Receiving Centre
	☐ Indirect via Telecare Service / Social Alarm Care Provider	

11	**Indirect Signalling Service Provider** (where applicable)	
	☐ Via Alarm Receiving Centre	☐ Via Telecare Service / Social Alarm Care Provider
	Service Provider Name:	
	Address:	
	Contact E-mail:	Telephone:
	3rd Party Certification Body:	Certification Number:

12	Additional Fire suppression measures linked to the automatic fire detection and fire alarm system (please put a cross in the appropriate box) E.g.: Fixed Fire Suppression System (including Sprinkler System)			
		Yes (Please provide details below):		No

13	Do you have procedures for False Alarm Reduction? (Please put a cross in the appropriate box)			
		Yes		No

14	Do you have procedures not to call the fire service if an actuation is a confirmed false alarm? (Please put a cross in the appropriate box)			
		Yes		No

Please note that it is important that you complete this form as instructed, if the form is completed incorrectly or it is returned without the Hazard and Site Risk Statement or the administration fee, it will be returned unprocessed.

Data Protection Act 1998:
Personal data supplied on this form may be held on, and/or verified by reference to information already held on computer.

July 2010   **www.cfoa.org.uk Page 37 of 38**

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33   Appendix B - Code of Practice

See attached CoP.