



Technical Fire Safety

Technical Bulletin No: 009

Subject	Caravan Fire Safety Enforcement
Date	04/04/2007
Originator	Vicky Smith
Review Date	04/04/2010

I have undertaken a legal review of the application of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 for Caravans and Caravan Parks. The following is an extract from a report produced for Area Manager CRR.

- 'Caravan' means any structure designed or adapted for human habitation which is capable of being moved from one place to another (whether by being towed or by being transported on a motor vehicle or trailer) and any motor vehicle so designed or adapted (not railway stock or tents)
- 'Mobile Home' has the same meaning as 'caravan'. Motor vehicles are not included unless they are designed for human habitation or have been physically altered for that purpose
- There is a distinction between caravans used for permanent residential mobile Home Sites ("Residential Caravans") and caravans used on holiday caravan sites (Holiday Caravans). The application of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (FSO) is dependent on the designation of whether it's a Residential or Holiday Caravan.
- The FSO amends the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 to include the provisions of the FSO (where it applies) in

conjunction with the existing conditions. The FSO applies to the land of holiday caravans sites.

- The sleeping accommodation fire safety guide references caravan holiday parks. The standard referenced in the guides is the Model Standards and BS 5576 and circular 14/89. The Model Standards deal with the site and shared fire safety provisions they do not refer to the standard of caravans.
- The standard of fire safety construction for holiday caravans is BS EN 1647: 2004. The standard for residential caravans is BS 3632: 2005. The main distinction between the two standards is non fire safety related and it relates to insulation for occupation during the winter months.
- A Holiday Caravan will not become a Residential Caravan though time of occupation. They are two separate entities and can not be interchanged. A site is licensed as a residential site with residential standard caravans or a holiday site with holiday standard caravans.
- Touring Caravans are not considered in this study.

Enforcement of the FSO and Caravans.

- The enforcement of the FSO on residential caravan sites is very similar to housing fire safety in the normal but contentious fashion. Caravan sites need to be licensed by the Local Authority. They can apply for a residential site or a holiday site (both can be applied, but will be separate areas of the site). The Model Standards are referenced as the standard required for a licence. Wiltshire FRS would be able to enforce the standard of fire safety of the FSO on the site, but it is limited to the extent of shared and common facilities.
- The standard of fire safety differs between Residential and Holiday Caravans and sites.
- The fire safety standards for Residential Caravans are more conservative than the Holiday Caravans. The standard of fire safety is set out in Model Standards 1989 (Holiday Caravan Sites and Permanent Residential Mobile Home Sites).

Conclusions

- The application of the FSO is in need of legal determination. If the Model Standards apply and have legal precedents, then caravans will have a prescription based standard which is limited to the site rather than the caravans. The application of 'as far as reasonably practicable' should be possible for the holiday caravan sites, but that will be subject to legal definition if a risk based approach was applied which resulted in the

standard being required higher than the licence conditions and the Model Standards.

- The application of the FSO is subject to the same negotiations as housing. Therefore I would be able to offer my interpretation based on the advice from David Stotesbury *et al* but as this is a contentious subject discussed at a national level it would be prudent to take each case on its own merits.
- It is likely that the most productive and effective method for engaging resident and site owners will be a mixture of community safety and technical fire safety. But while the negotiations are on going with Local Authority it would be likely that Community Safety activities in line with the local authority licensing will be the least controversial

Recommendations from Technical Fire Safety

- The terms:
 - Holiday Caravans
 - Holiday caravan sites
 - Residential Caravans
 - Residential caravan sites

Should be used.

- Due to the on going negotiations between Local Authorities and Fire Authorities any enforcement activity should only be done to address specific risks as they arise.
- If any involvement is required then an audit may be done for holiday caravan sites, but they should be done in close consultation with the Local Authority. Any enforcement should start with an A27 Notice which will be given to David Stotesbury for his comments. For Residential Caravans the audit should be limited to the shared areas only. If the need arises to involve the caravans, than the Local Authority and David Stotesbury will need to be consulted.
- It is recommended that this work is combined with housing and refer to the national lead before any local arrangements are implemented. Swindon Local Authority enjoys a good relationship with their sites and this seems to be evident thought out Wiltshire. It is my recommendation that we allow the Local Authorities to carry on in their present role until we have a clear statement of our intent and clearer understanding of our legal status.

If you have any questions, or comments or if you want a copy of the full report, please contact Vicky Smith via email.