# GMFRS guidance for Secure Information Boxes

January 2023

## Introduction

From the 23rd January 2023 the Fire Safety (England) Regulations require secure information boxes to be installed and maintained in high-rise residential buildings (HRRB’s). The legal requirement is laid out in Article 4(1) of the Regulations.

This guidance sets out what the responsible person for a high-rise residential building must do to comply with their legal obligation and what additional information GMFRS recommends is included in a secure information box to assist firefighters.

The guidance supplements the [Code of Practice for the Provision of Premises Information Boxes in Residential Buildings](https://www.fia.uk.com/news/fia-and-nfcc-s-new-code-of-practise-on-the-provision-of-premises-information-boxes-pibs-in-residential-buildings.html) which was issued by the National Fire Chiefs Council and Fire Industry Association in December 2020. The code of practice is recommended as good practice by the Home Office. However, since this code of practice was produced the terminology has changed from Premises Information Box to Secure Information Box (SIB).

The code of practice should form the basis of the approach to be taken in installing and maintaining a SIB. However, Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service (GMFRS) have produced the following guidance as a voluntary Greater Manchester standard for responsible persons of HRRB’s in Greater Manchester.

GMFRS consider that the implementation of the recommendations laid out below, in conjunction with the code of practice, will provide an enhanced standard of risk information that can be used by GMFRS when attending incidents and will support a more effective emergency response. This guidance may also be used for blocks of flats which are not high-rise residential buildings on a voluntary basis.

## Secure Information Box Contents

GMFRS recommends the following items are stored within the secure information box:

* **Secure information box inventory** – a document providing a list of the contents
* **Logbook** – a document to record SIB access and the purpose of the access
* **‘Off the run’ notice** – a document to record faults and repairs on fire safety equipment
* **Building management information document** – a document providing up to date contacts and building details
* **Asbestos register** – a document outlining materials in the building containing asbestos
* **Lobby sector folder** - a folder containing keys, plans, external wall information and information regarding firefighting equipment.
* The lobby sector folder should be yellow in colour and marked ‘Lobby Sector’.
* **Fire sector folder** – a folder containing keys, plans, external wall information and information regarding firefighting equipment.
  + The fire sector folder should be red in colour and marked ‘Fire Sector’.
* **GMFRS premises specific information - f**or some buildings GMFRS may request additional information to be included within the SIB. In those cases, GMFRS will contact the responsible person for the premises and send the information via email to be printed and placed in the SIB.

## Lobby and Fire Sector Folders

At a high-rise incident the Incident Commander will sectorise the building in order to co-ordinate activities effectively. The lobby sector and fire sector are key to the tactical approach to resolving an incident. The lobby and fire sector will be defined as separate areas and may be some distance apart. Each area will have an Officer undertaking a command function. It is vital that information is available to the Officer within both sectors and that the area deemed most appropriate for the sector to be created can be accessed. A core set of information will be required in both folders, however the content of each folder and the number of keys is not identical.

As the recommendations include provision of keys, access fobs and / or access codes consideration should be given to the security risk this may present in your building and take steps to ensure the SIB is secure and located appropriately to prevent unwanted access.

## SIB security recommendations

GMFRS does not recommend any specific manufacturer for SIB’s. However, where SIBs are not accessed by Gerda key GMFRS recommends that the SIB is accessed via a lock with a numerical code.

This code should be shared with GMFRS so that it can be added to the operational information system for use in emergencies.

To share your code please send details of the building, SIB and code to [firesafetytechnical@manchesterfire.gov.uk](mailto:firesafetytechnical@manchesterfire.gov.uk)

Further information about the contents of a SIB can be found in **Appendix 1**.

## Appendix 1

### Secure information box inventory

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Detail** | **Requirement** | **Reason** | **Frequency of checks** |
| Contents list of items contained in the SIB | GMFRS recommendation | To enable easy access to relevant information during an incident and for use when checking the SIB contents | Annually or after use |

### Logbook

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Detail** | **Requirement** | **Reason** | **Frequency of checks** |
| A logbook kept in the SIB for the purpose of recording checks and events for example emergency use, updates, maintenance, and operational use | GMFRS recommendation | For information purposes and to audit contents and demonstrate checks have been undertaken | Annually or after use |

### ‘Off the run’ Notice

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Detail** | **Requirement** | **Reason** | **Frequency of checks** |
| A document containing details of any fire-fighting fixed installations not available for use and/or unresolved fire safety issues | GMFRS recommendation | For recording by responsible person and for use by operational crews at incidents | Annually or after use |

### Asbestos register

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Detail** | **Requirement** | **Reason** | **Frequency of checks** |
| At record showing location and type of any asbestos. | GMFRS recommendation | To assist with tactical planning during an incident | Annually or after use |

### Building Management Information Sheet

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Detail** | **Requirement** | **Reason** | **Frequency of checks** |
| Name, address and telephone number of:   * Responsible person in the UK * Other persons with the facility and permission to access the building as required by the Responsible Person (e.g. emergency contact / keyholder) | Legal requirement | To enable the responsible person or the emergency contact to be notified of an incident | Annually or after use |
| Building Details including:   * Name (incl. common names known by) * Full address * Use (overall or if change in use per floor. e.g. Hotel G to 10, 11 to 20 Residential), 21+22 Plant) * Total number of flats, number of flats per floor * Number of floors, including basements * Current evacuation policy * Location of designated assembly points | GMFRS recommendation | To ensure up to date building information is available during an incident | Annually or after use |

### Lobby Sector folder

| **Detail** | **Requirement** | **Reason** | **Frequency of checks** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Keys – clearly labelled as appropriate   * Lift keys * Riser Inlet Key (one per riser) * Access Keys / fobs / door codes (at least enough to access multiple floors) * Service or boiler room * Service cupboard keys * CCTV access keys if available * Fire alarm panel key or codes and brief instructions to interrogate the alarm * Bin room key or access codes * Gate keys or access codes | GMFRS recommendation | To ensure access to all facilities and areas of building as appropriate | Annual, after use and as keys are changed |
| Building Plan   * Single page A3 plan indicating the elements laid out in Article 6(4)(a)-(o) of the Fire Safety (England) Regulations)   Floor plans  A3 plans identifying the location of:   * Location of lifts * Identification of firefighter or evacuation lifts * Location of key firefighting equipment as described in Article 7(a)-(f) of the Fire Safety (England) Regulations) | Legal requirement | To ensure crews have sufficient information to hand in order to formulate tactical plans | Annually, after use or as circumstances change |
| Record of the design of the external wall system, including details of:   * The construction materials of the wall * The level of risk of external fire spread identified by the fire risk assessment | Legal requirement | To ensure crews have sufficient information to hand in order to formulate tactical plans | Annually, after use or as circumstances change |
| * List of Flats (inc. Floor numbers) where occupants have indicated they may need assistance to evacuate in case of an emergency due to mobility, physical health or mental health capacity and **have consented to this information being contained in the SIB**. | GMFRS recommendation | To support effective evacuation of the building if this is required | Annually, after use or as circumstances change |

### Fire Sector Folder

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Detail** | **Requirement** | **Reason** | **Frequency of checks** |
| Keys – clearly labelled as appropriate   * Lift keys * Riser Outlet Keys (ideally 4 but at least 2) * Access Keys / fobs / door codes (at least enough to access multiple floors) * Service room or cupboard keys * Roof access keys | GMFRS recommendation | To ensure access to all facilities and areas of building as appropriate | Annually or after use |
| Building Plan   * Single page A3 plan indicating the elements laid out in Article 6(4)(a)-(o) of the Fire Safety (England) Regulations)   Floor plans  A3 plans identifying the location of:   * Location of lifts * Identification of firefighter or evacuation lifts   Location of key firefighting equipment as described in Article 7(a)-(f) of the Fire Safety (England) Regulations) | Legal requirement | To ensure crews have sufficient information to hand to formulate tactical plans | Annually, after use or as circumstances change |
| Operation instructions for:   * Wet riser / Sprinkler * Ventilation or AOV * Lift type and guidance * Any other fixed installation or guidance. | GMFRS recommendation | To ensure FS personnel can identify fixed installations and operate them should they be required. | Annually or after use |