

How the EBPD could influence fire safety and what measures should be taken

## **Euralarm urges to use holistic approach of fire safety when renovating buildings**

**November 2018 – Following the new Energy Performance of Building Directive (EPBD) many renovations of existing buildings are to be expected in the coming years. These renovations must lead to buildings that are more energy efficient than they are today. This will require the installation of Building Automation systems for commercial buildings above 290 kW installed power. Although each country needs to develop its own renovation plan to tackle the expected renovations, one thing is certain: with automation systems being introduced into the buildings more attention should be paid to fire safety. Euralarm advises to follow a holistic approach to achieve and maintain fire safety.**

### **EU building sector**

The building sector in the EU is the largest single energy consumer in Europe, absorbing 40% of final energy, and about 75% of buildings are energy inefficient. This offers a huge potential for efficiency gains. By accelerating the rate of building renovation towards more energy efficient systems and by strengthening the energy performance of new buildings a large step could be made towards a more energy efficient and greener Europe.

The Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD)<sup>1</sup> provides guidelines for this. It is one of the initiatives to build a resilient Energy Union within the EU with a forward-looking climate change policy. Therefore, the EU should lead the clean energy transition cutting CO<sub>2</sub> emissions at least 40% by 2030. The implementation of the EPBD must be completed by 2025 to contribute to this target date – including the renovation plan. The energy transition will be a driver for modernising the EU's economy and delivering on jobs and growth for all European citizens.

### **Building renovations are a chance**

Depending on the member state, only 0.4-1.2% of the building stock is renovated each year. These figures allow a lot of room for improvement; not only in energy efficiency but also in economic growth. Construction activities that include renovation work and retrofits add almost twice as much value as the construction of new buildings. SME's contribute to more than 70% of the value added in the EU building sector. Building corporations as well as project developers are main drivers for renovating existing building since their economy of scale makes it financially more interesting to invest in renovations.

---

<sup>1</sup> [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.L\\_.2018.156.01.0075.01.ENG](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.L_.2018.156.01.0075.01.ENG)

## **Higher fire loads can occur in modern(ised) buildings**

Because of the 2018 edition of the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD), Member States shall encourage the renovation of buildings and promote the energy performance of commercial buildings; new and existing. While investing more in renovations, governments and authorities as well as building owners need to pay attention to the implications on the fire safety of buildings, according to Euralarm, because renovations can introduce significant changes in fire safety requirements.

With the growing number of electronic and electrical devices in buildings, (e.g. energy storage as part of the energy efficiency measures), the increase of fire loads of buildings will continue and must be considered in the overall fire safety concept and infrastructure. According to Euralarm, regular fire safety reviews by certified professionals are today even more crucial and should be sufficiently prioritized by private and public building owners and operators.

## **Euralarm's holistic approach: safety and security included in renovation plans**

This should be part of a holistic approach towards achieving and maintaining fire safety in both renovated and new buildings.

First of all, the building structure and its contents must be considered as to how they contribute to the overall fire load as well as how they can hinder and restrain a fire event. Considering the building and its contents as a system allows authorities, fire safety engineers and building owners to oversee the impact of changes on the fire safety. It would then also enable the responsible persons, i.e. authorities or building owners, to optimize or fully maximize the use of technical means to provide early detection and evacuation of the building. The early detection and warning could be coupled with systems for extinguishing fires, managing smoke and heat as well as guidance systems to bring occupants into safety.

An organisational plan should be made with an overall view on the building including infrastructure, its intended use and occupancy, and systems in place for detection and management of fires. This plan should identify what is to be done in the event of a fire and who is responsible to initiate and execute which measures.

The introduction of a holistic approach towards fire safety requires qualified people and companies who can define the fire safety concept. The required level of qualification not only counts for the definition phase but also for the design, installation, commission and maintenance phase. Following this approach should lead to systems that are in line with the EN 16763 Services Standard for Fire Safety Systems and Security Systems.

## **About Euralarm**

Euralarm represents the fire and security Industry, providing leadership and expertise for Industry, market, policy makers and standards bodies. Our Members make society safer and secure through systems and services for fire detection, intrusion detection, access control, video monitoring, alarm transmission and alarm receiving centres. Founded in 1970, Euralarm represents over 5000 companies within the fire safety and security industry valued at 67 billion Euros. Euralarm Members are national associations and individual companies from across Europe.

### More information:

Press office Euralarm

E. [pressoffice@euralarm.org](mailto:pressoffice@euralarm.org)