
Expert Commentary on BS 8899:2016, *Improvement of fire-fighting and evacuation provisions in existing lifts — Code of practice*

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Summary

BSI has a long history of producing standards and codes of practice within the field of lifts with many being used later as the basis for EN standards. Included within these documents are specifications for lifts used by firefighters in the event of emergencies since 1986. However, manufacturers offered solutions to make lifts available to authorised persons for use in fire-fighting many years before the publication of such standards.

This has resulted in the modern day problem faced by fire-fighting professionals – that, when arriving at a building in which there is a fire, they may be faced with a lift which has features for fire-fighting but no clear indication as to what they are (depending on the age and class of the lift). Some of these lifts will have been provided with a complete suite of state of the art features for their use in fighting fires but others may have only very limited functionality.

Due to this possibility of confusion of provisions there have been several incidents in which firefighters have been placed at serious risk. Therefore the aim of this code of practice is to provide a means of identifying those features originally provided and a path by which the lift might be upgraded to give a more effective tool in case of emergencies.

Significant elements introduced by BS 8899:2016

1 Scope

The scope of this code of practice is intended to be as wide ranging as possible with regards to the lifts which might be encountered today for use by firefighters or for evacuation of disabled people. However there are specific types of lifts which are either very rare, such as double deck lifts, or not suitable for fire-fighting and which are therefore excluded even from today's new fire-fighting lifts described in [BS 999](#) and [BS EN 81-72](#).

2 Normative references

Documents listed here are those relevant to the requirements of this code of practice and include the previous BS and EN standards for the provision of lifts used by firefighters, lifts used for evacuation, fire testing of lift landing doors, general design standards for lifts and the documents by which they have been verified as safe before being placed into use. Documents which give more general information but which are not mentioned in the main requirements and standards that have been withdrawn but may still be relevant for existing lifts can be found in the Bibliography at the end of the document.

3 Terms and definitions

The terms and definitions listed are those specific to fire-fighting and which might have been used in various BS standards published in the past but now withdrawn. For definitions general to modern fire-fighting installations and lift design other standards should be referred to as listed.