

Indoor Pyrotechnic Displays

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Sponsor: Dangerous Goods

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1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to provide consistent advice with regards to the managing of risks associated with indoor pyrotechnic displays.

2. SCOPE

The execution and conduct of indoor pyrotechnic events are subject to the Dangerous Goods (Explosives) Regulations 2011. The administrator of this legislation is WorkSafe Victoria.

This guideline does not form any part of the regulatory requirements. The advice in this guideline is provided to the pyro technicians and other associated parties in good faith to enable them to manage the risks associated with indoor pyrotechnic displays.

In the interest of both life safety and property protection, this guideline complements the regulatory requirements.

3. POSITION

WorkSafe requires that all licensed pyro technicians provide written notification at least seven days in advance of all events, both indoor and outdoor, to the relevant fire service, Fire Rescue Victoria (FRV) or Country Fire Authority (CFA), and the relevant local council.

While FRV is not a reporting authority for the use of pyrotechnics, *the Metropolitan Fire Brigades Act 1958 (the MFB Act 1958)* enables fire officers to inspect all sites and venues to ensure that the regulations in relation to the following are being complied with:

- the storage of explosives
- the storage of radioactive substances
- the storage of inflammable liquids or substances
- the prevention of fire or the protection of life or property in the case of fire.

Given the devastating incidents which have occurred in entertainment/public venues overseas, FRV has concerns regarding the level of advice and guidance available for operators in relation to the indoor use of pyrotechnics before an audience within the state of Victoria.

FRV provides the following points of guidance to enhance the level of fire safety within venues where the use of pyrotechnics may be permitted:

- prior to any indoor pyrotechnic event, the pyro technician and venue owner/occupier need to ensure that the venue has adequate emergency exits for the safe evacuation of persons in the case of an emergency
- the suitability of the venue conducting the pyrotechnic event needs to be assessed by a registered building surveyor or fire engineer as suitable for physical features (heat, area involved, people proximity, lights, sparks, durations, surrounding material combustibility, etc.) of the display intended
- the responsible pyro technician must hold and be able to produce on request a valid license for the product in use for the event
- the responsible technician, along with the venue owner/occupier, are to ensure that the venues' installed fire protection equipment is serviceable, maintained and fit for purpose. All fixed and portable equipment must be available and accessible for use in an emergency. Venue staff are not to block access to fire appliances by repositioning tables and chairs, etc. in a way that restricts easy access to those appliances
- before the event, the pyro technician must ensure that if special risk portable fire equipment is supplied it is maintained to relevant Australian Standards, is serviceable and fit for purpose
- the responsible pyro technician is to ensure that the manufacturer's safety directions are followed for both the initiation of the device and the safe operating distance from the members of the public is adhered to. Where not available, such documents as the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1126 should be consulted for guidance in the absence of direction from any Australian Standard with regards to the use of pyrotechnics before an audience
- risk management methodologies must be in place at the venue or site which includes a set of documented emergency procedures, based on AS 3745
- the responsible pyro technician is required to produce a separate *Event Risk Management Plan* which addresses the event specific hazards and risks
- the conditions contained within an occupancy permit or a relevant fire engineering report for a venue must be complied with.

4. REFERENCES

Victorian Building Regulations 2006 (Part 12)

Dangerous Goods (Explosives) Regulations 2011

Building Act 1993

AS 3745: Planning for Emergencies in Facilities

AS/NZS4360: Risk Management

NFPA 1126

Note: *this is a controlled document and may only be modified by authorised personnel after review by FRV Fire Safety Advisory Group.*