



Factsheet on European Standards for Intruder Alarms

What are European standards for intruder alarms?

European standards for intruder alarms are new standards being brought in to improve the installation of intruder alarms at every stage of the process. The standards will be introduced to the UK on 1st October 2005, but they are already having an impact as the intruder alarm sector gears up for the changes.

Despite the fact that they will be introduced from October, the standards are still going through development. This means that the UK will adopt European standards using the scheme document PD 6662:2004 – ‘Scheme for the application of European standards for intruder and hold-up alarm systems’. As development of the standards continues, the scheme document will be updated accordingly.

Why are the standards being implemented?

The security industry is constantly pursuing the desire to raise standards, to make equipment more reliable and to improve customer satisfaction. These standards will put a structured framework on ensuring an installation is fit for purpose. The new systems will provide more facilities and flexibility and should ensure better security for customers.

Compliant equipment

Manufacturers have been developing equipment compliant with the new standards for several months. Systems will be graded depending on the level of security required for the premises. Manufacturers have developed systems for each grade and have been educating installers on the different functions and capabilities of each system.

Installation changes

Both for installers and their customers, a number of changes will be evident both in the specification and installation stages. A structured risk assessment process should be undertaken before deciding on the appropriate equipment. This may include filling in a ‘Location Survey Checklist’, which will help installers determine the extent of detection needed, ensuring all areas of significant risk are supervised. It is imperative that the grade of the system is agreed with the customer’s insurance company before installation commences, particularly with regard to signalling types and methods of unsetting to be employed as per DD243.

Installers will have to make sure that the equipment they are buying from their manufacturer or distributor complies with the new standards. The main practical change for installers is in the programming as engineers must be aware of which functions/signals are required for each grade of system. Installers must also bear in mind when certificating a system that the lowest grade component in any system determines the overall grade of that installation.

What does this mean for the end-user?

It is clear that the end-user will benefit greatly from the introduction of the new standards. The design, manufacturing and installation processes will all have been improved to bring greater service, reliability and efficiency from intruder alarms.

End-users should not notice many changes in the process of buying an intruder alarm. They may be asked to contact their insurer to find out which grade of system their premises requires, and they will notice that their installer goes through a more extensive risk assessment procedure.

What about costs?

As European standards will mean increased functionality, it is possible that this may lead to increased costs being passed onto the end-user.

One of the changes that the end-user should bear in mind is that the higher the grade of the system, the more costly the equipment. This is because higher grades have more functionality and therefore a greater resilience against intrusion.

An awareness of this makes agreeing the grade with your insurer at an early stage particularly important. If the insurer is not consulted until during the installation process and then requires a different grade of system, this could not only delay the installation, but also incur higher costs.

Where can I find out more information?

End-users

End-users can contact their installation company for details on how the changes will affect them and for a comprehensive risk assessment designed to find the appropriate system for their needs.

Details of BSIA intruder alarm installers can be found by visiting the website www.bsia.co.uk or by calling 01905 21464.

Intruder alarm sector

For help on the interpretation of the new standards, intruder alarm manufacturers and installers should refer to the guidance documents available on the BSIA website. These can be found at www.bsia.co.uk/download.html

For further clarification on areas of uncertainty, contact your trade association, inspectorate or insurer.