
**Fire resistance tests — Elements
of building construction —
Requirements for active fire curtains**

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Contents

Page

Foreword	v
Introduction	vi
1 Scope	1
2 Normative references	1
3 Terms and definitions	2
4 Symbols	4
5 Requirements	5
5.1 General	5
5.2 Side retention	6
5.3 Additional requirements for multiple active fire curtains	7
5.3.1 Multiple active fire curtains	7
5.3.2 Required overlap	9
5.3.3 Larger than tested	9
5.4 Horizontal or angled	9
5.5 Pass door(s)	11
5.6 Vision panels	12
6 Sampling	13
6.1 Test samples, testing and conformance criteria	13
7 Test methods	14
7.1 General	14
7.2 Durability and force gauge	15
7.3 Reliability and durability	15
7.4 Deployment	15
7.4.1 Response time and velocity	15
7.4.2 Delayed and/or multi-positional deployment	16
7.4.3 Emergency egress control	16
7.4.4 Emergency access control	16
7.5 Smoke leakage	16
7.5.1 General	16
7.5.2 Total smoke leakage of active fire curtains with smoke-resistance	16
7.6 Fire resistance	16
7.6.1 General	16
7.6.2 Integrity	17
7.6.3 Insulation	17
7.6.4 Radiation (heat flux)	17
7.6.5 Deflection zone	18
7.6.6 Initial deployment	18
7.6.7 Operation following initial deployment — emergency egress	18
7.6.8 Operation following initial deployment — emergency access	18
7.6.9 Delayed and/or multi-positional deployment	18
7.7 Reaction to fire	18
7.8 Ancillary devices	19
7.8.1 General	19
7.8.2 Ancillary devices activation	19
7.8.3 Hold-open devices	19
7.8.4 Fire detection and alarm systems	19
7.8.5 Sensory equipment for obstruction warning	19
7.8.6 Pressure-sensitive protective equipment (PSPE)	19
7.8.7 Self-test facility for dwellings	19
8 Marking, labelling and packaging	20
Annex A (normative) General requirements for testing	21

Annex B (normative) Order of testing	24
Annex C (normative) Fire-resistance test method	26
Annex D (normative) Overlapping multiple active fire curtains	41
Annex E (normative) Test method for active fire curtains reliability and response time and the durability of materials	43
Annex F (normative) Test method for reliability of motor operation at elevated temperatures	46
Annex G (normative) Calculation of ambient temperature smoke leakage	52
Annex H (normative) Test method for the durability and reliability of alternative or additional motors	55
Annex I (normative) Test method for ancillary and optional equipment	58
Annex J (normative) Test method for durability and force gauge	62
Annex K (informative) Typical product performance summary	65
Annex L (normative) System design	67
Annex M (informative) Installation	79
Annex N (informative) Commissioning	83
Annex O (informative) Inspection, testing and maintenance	86
Annex P (informative) Typical approving authority pre-installation checklist	88
Annex Q (informative) An engineered approach to using radiative heat flux for tenable conditions for single-level horizontal routes	89
Annex R (informative) Yarns and fabric materials	99
Annex S (informative) Typical installation checklist	100
Annex T (informative) Model installation certificate	103
Annex U (informative) Typical inspection checklist	105
Annex V (informative) Model commissioning certificate	107
Annex W (informative) Model completion certificate	109
Annex X (informative) Model servicing certificate	111
Bibliography	113

Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives).

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For an explanation of the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), see www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html.

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 92, *Fire safety*, Subcommittee SC 2, *Fire containment*.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at www.iso.org/members.html.

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Introduction

As fire-separating elements, active fire curtains are intended to provide two main functions:

- a) to maintain any compartmentation of buildings needed to limit the spread of fire and smoke; and
- b) to allow access to protected escape routes, both vertical and horizontal, without any loss of fire resistance, and to limit smoke entry into these routes, i.e. protected corridors and protected shafts.

They can also be partially deployed to control the deployment of fire effluent within buildings in the event of fire, prior to being fully deployed as active fire curtains.

Recommended positions and ratings for fire-separating elements for means of escape purposes are given in national codes providing either prescriptive or risk-based approaches using the principles of fire safety engineering.

When used as part of a fire-engineered design solution, active fire curtains can become a critical element of design. If active fire curtains do not deploy to their operational position, the fire-engineered design solution is compromised. However, in the event that other fire protection systems or elements do not function (e.g. due to total power failure), active fire curtains in their fire-operational position provide fire separation.

Active fire curtains used in life safety and property protection applications can be vertical, horizontal or angled. Depending on the application, they are at times used to replace fire doors, roller shutters, non-loadbearing walls, non-loadbearing ceilings, glazed elements, etc. At times, they are also used to form fire separation, e.g. forming protected routes or lobbies. They provide some of the functionalities of a fire door, but when used only for fire and smoke leakage, as a fire door, then different requirements apply. These requirements are given in ISO 3008-1 and ISO 5925-1, and further information is given in ISO/TR 5925-2. Active fire curtains enable greater widths and deployments using less space than other traditional methods.

It is essential that any proposed use of active fire curtains be assessed in the context of the building use and perceived occupancy to ensure that it is ultimately suitable and fit for purpose, taking into consideration such factors as:

- a) fire resistance;
- b) reaction to fire;
- c) smoke leakage;
- d) occupancy type and risk profile;
- e) occupancy load;
- f) means of escape for egress;
- g) ingress for fire and rescue service;
- h) life safety and property protection objectives.

Some examples of how active fire curtains are deployed are:

- a) deploy fully upon receipt of a signal from the fire alarm system;
- b) remain retracted when the fire alarm system is activated and only deploy upon receipt of a signal from a local smoke/heat detector. In these circumstances, the only active fire curtains to deploy are those where fire or smoke are in the vicinity;
- c) remain retracted when the fire alarm system is activated for a predetermined time to allow for evacuation before deploying fully;

- d) for vertical installations, move to a given height above finished floor level when the fire alarm system is activated to contain smoke for a predetermined time before closing fully for fire separation;
- e) for vertical installations, move to a given height above finished floor level when a specific fire alarm system signal is provided to contain smoke when the fire location is such that active fire curtains are not required to deploy fully;
- f) deploy upon loss of primary and auxiliary power supply.

In fire safety situations, it is often important to establish the heat transfer from one side of the separating element to the other in order to calculate escape route sizes and safe operating distances. Traditionally this has been established using insulation and radiation measurements.

NOTE National codes apply to life safety. Higher performance levels are sometimes necessary for certain applications if property protection is required.

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