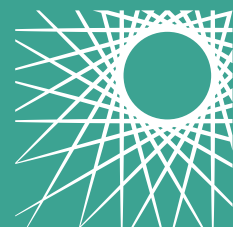


PIN 001

Professional
Information
Notes

EWS1
Assessments

cbuilde.com | v1 Jun 2021



cabe
chartered
association
of building
engineers

Competence to undertake EWS1 assessments

This note sets out CABE's position on the minimum acceptable level of competence and professional indemnity insurance required when a building engineer is appointed to undertake EWS1 assessments.

This note has no statutory authority but defines CABE's position and may be relevant to any disciplinary proceedings should a building engineer be found to have breached the CABE Code of Professional Conduct by exceeding the limits of their competence or operating without adequate Professional Indemnity insurance.

Disclaimer

CABE will endeavour to keep this Professional Information Note up to date and correct but does not make any representations or warranties about the completeness, accuracy or reliability of its content. Responsibility for the outcome of any activity connected with this communication, including but not limited to, compliance with all relevant legislation, remains with the user.

It is the responsibility of those undertaking EWS1 work to ensure that they have the correct PI Insurance in place to cover that work. No responsibility is accepted by CABE for any loss or damage arising in any way from the interpretation of this communication.

Background

As a result of concerns relating to fire safety of external wall cladding systems and in accordance with government guidance, the RICS has introduced a standardised certification methodology for assessment of external walls in higher risk buildings. Use of the EWS1 form has now extended beyond the initial scope of higher risk buildings.

EWS1 certification has two categories:

Option A – where the external wall materials are unlikely to support combustion

Option B – where combustible materials are present in the external wall.

Differing levels of competence and experience are required depending on the level of risk associated with the building (typically low to medium risk below 18m, higher risk above 18m) and whether the assessment requires certification to Option A or Option B. Information on expected levels of competence are set out below.

Relevant government guidance can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/building-safety-advice-for-building-owners-including-fire-doors>

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The RICS EWS1 form was updated in March 2021 and can be found at https://www.rics.org/globalassets/rics-website/media/news/news--opinion/fire-safety/ews1-form-5.3.21_final_clean2.pdf

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The RICS has also produced a series of FAQs which should be read by any CIBE Member considering offering EWS1 assessment services. <https://www.rics.org/uk/news-insight/latest-news/fire-safety/cladding-qa/>

Who can undertake EWS1 assessments?

EWS1 assessment should only be undertaken by CABE Members who are:

- competent to undertake the relevant level/option for EWS1 assessment; and
- fully covered by Professional Indemnity Insurance (PII) for the assessment work being undertaken.

The RICS has published guidance on who is suitable to undertake EWS1 assessment which can be found at Annex A of this information note. The March 2021 updated EWS1 certificate notes the following in relation to undertaking assessments.

Note 1 – this form includes two options. Option A is for buildings where the materials used in the external wall would be unlikely to support combustion. Option B is for buildings where Option A does not apply and a more detailed review (and hence higher level of fire expertise) is required. The signatory should use either the Option A approach or the Option B approach and delete/cross out the unused option. Within each option there are sub-options, the user should tick the box of the relevant sub-option.

Note 2 – for Option A, the signatory would need the expertise to identify the relevant materials within the external wall and attachments, and whether fire resisting cavity barriers and fire stopping measures have been installed correctly. However, this would not necessarily include the need for expertise in fire engineering. The signatory should be a fully qualified member of a relevant professional body within the construction industry.

Note 3 – for Option B, the signatory would need a higher level of expertise in the assessment of the fire risk presented by external wall materials. For Institution of Fire Engineers (IFE) members, this should be a Chartered or Incorporated Engineer with full membership of the Institution. For non-IFE members, the signatory should be a fully qualified member of a relevant professional body that deals with fire safety in the built environment, with either actual or equivalence to the Chartered or Incorporated Engineer status registered with Engineering Council.

On this basis, CABE members (and any person wishing to appoint a CABE member) undertaking EWS1 assessment should have due regard to the following:

1. As a minimum to comply with RICS guidance EWS1 assessment of any type should only be undertaken by full members of CABE i.e. members eligible to use the post nominals MCABE, MCABE Chartered Building Engineer or FCABE
2. Technician (Tech CABE), Associates (ACABE), Graduates (Grad CABE) and honorary members of CABE are not full membership grades and as such are not deemed competent to undertake EWS1 assessment of any form. Associate and Graduate grades in particular are developmental grades on the pathway to achieving full membership
3. CABE currently has an arrangement to provide access to members on RICS training for EWS1 for low to medium risk buildings and it is recommended that all CABE Members undertaking Option A assessments complete this training. Please contact the CABE training team for details of qualifications and experience required to access this training.
4. for Option B, CABE members who are registered at CEng or IEng with relevant fire engineering or fire safety experience may undertake EWS1 assessments. The minimum standard of equivalence (if not Engineering Council registered with IFE at IEng or CEng) would be MCABE Chartered Building Engineer or FCABE with relevant fire engineering or fire safety experience, please note:
 - the following RICS guidance and the guidance provided above do not provide conclusive evidence of competence to undertake EWS1 assessments but do represent the minimum standards deemed suitable by CABE. It remains for CABE members to check and manage the limits of their competence in accepting appointments to undertake EWS1 work. Members working beyond the limit of their own demonstrable competence could give rise to disciplinary investigation.
 - CABE members must recognise that lenders and valuers are setting their own criteria for recognition of EWS1 forms above and beyond guidance issued by either RICS or CABE and there is no guarantee that any given lender will recognise member's qualifications. It is, therefore, highly recommended that CABE Members undertaking EWS1 assessment check with the lender that their certificate will be accepted **prior** to undertaking work.

Annex A

RICS list of relevant professional bodies.

For Option A

The EWS1 form must be completed by a signatory who would need the expertise to identify the relevant materials within the external wall and attachments, and whether fire resisting cavity barriers and fire stopping have been installed correctly. However, this would not necessarily include the need for expertise in fire engineering. The signatory should be a fully qualified member of a relevant professional body within the construction industry.

The following list are bodies recognised as operating in the built environment. This list is not exhaustive, nor does it constitute an endorsement or approval from RICS, UKF or BSA. Other bodies with relevant expertise may be able to assist. Anybody instructing an EWS1 form must be satisfied that the signatory meets the requirements as described above.

Qualified members of:

- Architects Registration Board (ARB)
- Association of Consultant Approved Inspectors (ACAI)
- Chartered Association of Building Engineers (CABE)
- Chartered Institute of Architectural Technologists (CIAT)
- Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB)
- Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers (CIBSE)
- Construction Industry Council Approved Inspectors Register (CICAIR)
- Institute of Clerks of Works and Construction Inspectorate (ICWCI)
- Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE)
- Institution of Fire Engineers (IFE)
- Institute of Fire Safety Managers (IFSM)
- Institution of Structural Engineers (IStructE)
- Local Authority Building Control (LABC)
- Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA)
- Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS)
- Society of Façade Engineers (SFE)

For Option B

The signatory would need a higher level of expertise in the assessment of the fire risk presented by external wall materials. For IFE members, this should be a Chartered or Incorporated Engineer with full membership of the institution. For non-IFE members, the signatory should be a fully qualified member of a relevant professional body that deals with fire safety in the built environment, with either actual or equivalence to the Chartered or Incorporated Engineer status.

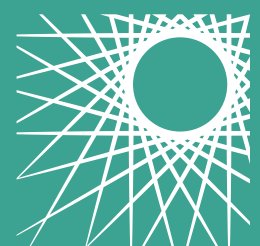
This does not constitute an endorsement or approval from RICS, UKF or BSA. Other bodies with relevant expertise may be able to assist. Anybody instructing an EWS1 form must be satisfied that the signatory meets the requirements as described above.

We're here to help

If you have any queries about EWS1 Assessments,
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