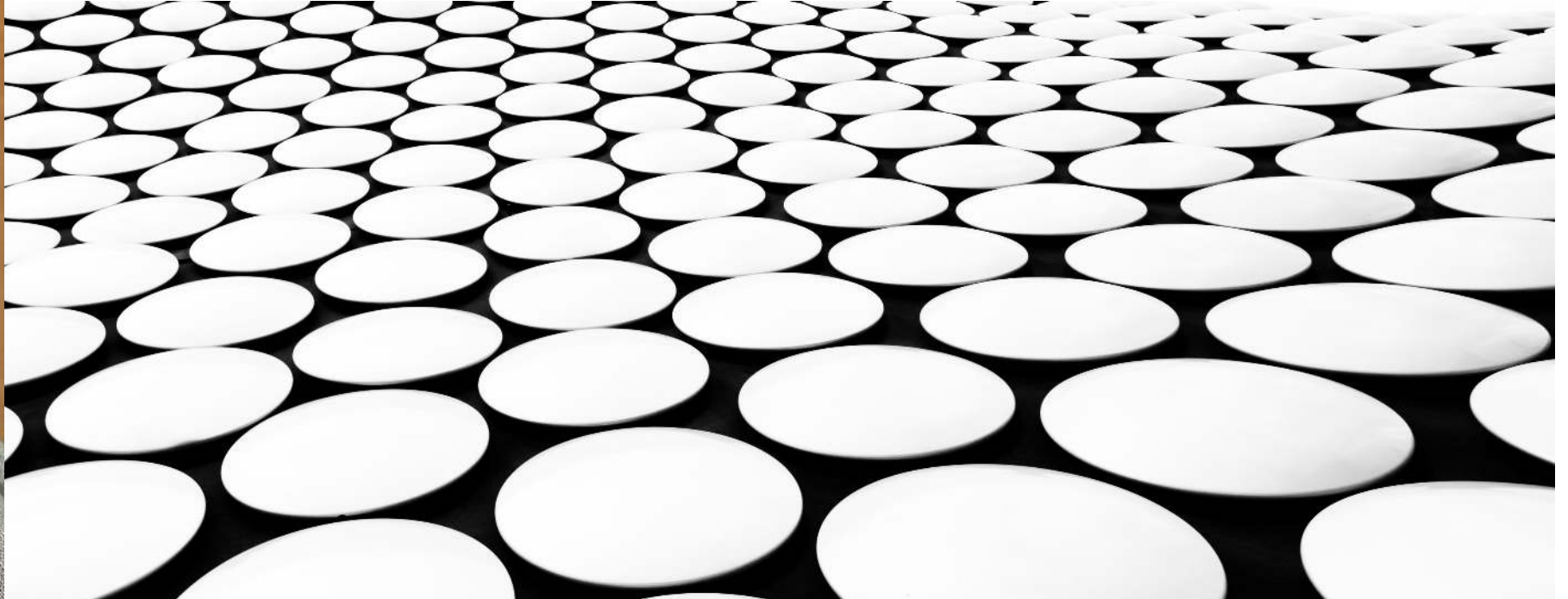


# ANNUAL FIRE SAFETY STATEMENTS & ACCREDITED PRACTITIONERS (FIRE SAFETY)

AFSS REVISION – WHAT’S CHANGED & WHAT DO I NEED TO DO ABOUT IT?



## ACRONYMS & DEFINITIONS

- **AFSS** – Annual Fire Safety Statement = *the document issued on behalf of the owner of a building stating that all fire systems required for that building still **perform** as designed & installed.*
- **EP&A** – Environmental Planning & Assessment (Act or Regulation) – the law that requires maintenance & AFSS be issued
- **D&BP Act** – Design & Building Practitioners Act 2020 – the law that underpins the accreditation regime of APFS.
- **EFSM(s)** – Essential Fire Safety Measure('s) – *the individual types of fire-related equipment/ systems and the performance codes they are required to achieve for that building – e.g. “Fire Hydrants” or “Automatic Fire Detection & Alarm Systems”.*
- **APFS** – Accredited Practitioner (Fire Safety) – previously known as “CFSP” or Competent Fire Safety Practitioner- *the person that inspects, verifies and ‘**endorses**’ an essential fire safety measure as performing in accordance with the codes required for that building.*
  - **FSA** - Fire Safety Assessor - *the qualification/ role to become accredited as an APFS to endorse measures on an AFSS*
- **Endorse** – To have assessed, inspected and verified (in person) the performance of each fire safety measure and inspected the fire exit systems of a building.

# CHANGES TO AFSS & ACCREDITATION

NSW Environmental Planning & Assessment Regs updated to require that persons endorsing measures on the AFSS must be a Competent Fire Safety Practitioner (CFSP) and that an industry accreditation scheme would be put in place to accredit them.

October 1<sup>st</sup> 2017

D&BP Act Gazettes the change to Accredited Practitioners (Fire Safety) & their listing on the FPA Australia accreditation register. Only APFS on this register are permitted to endorse the essential fire safety measures on the AFSS:

<https://connect.fpaa.com.au/FireSafetyAssessor>

February 2019

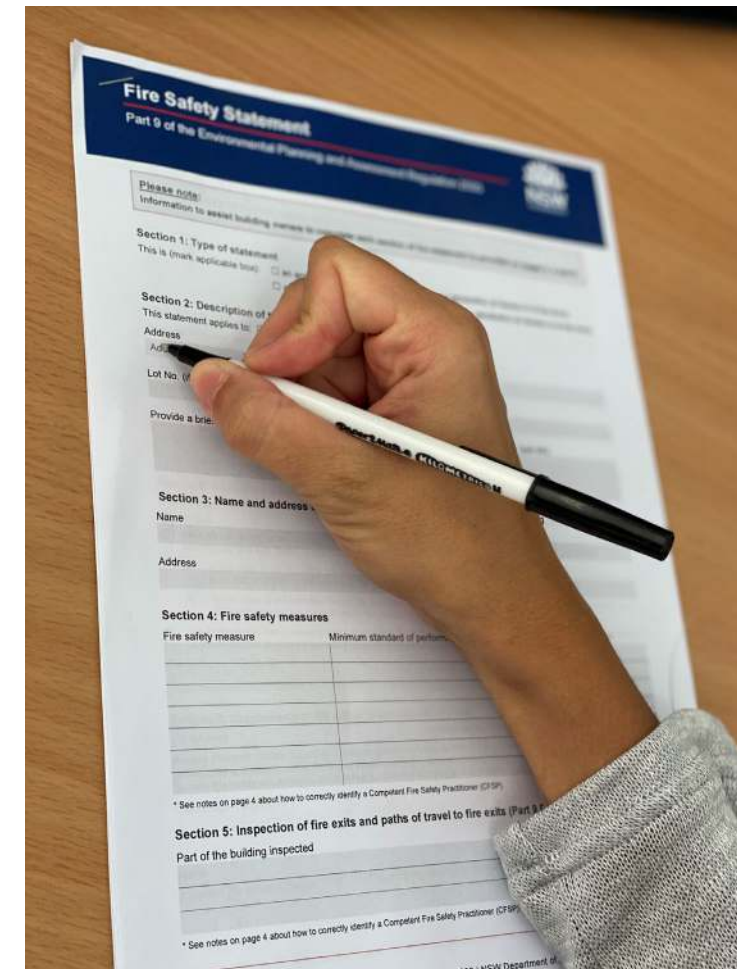
July 1<sup>st</sup> 2020

9 x industry bodies had submitted their concept plan for an industry accreditation scheme to Planning NSW and FPA Australia was identified as the successful organisation. NSW Government secretary stated they would gazette that accreditation scheme into legislation early 2020.

*1<sup>st</sup> July 2021:  
Transitional pathway  
to become an APFS  
closes: - must now  
become accredited by  
Qualified Pathway  
only.*

## THE NEW AFSS

- From March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021, the AFSS Version 3.1:
  - <https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Policy-and-Legislation/Buildings/Fire-safety-in-buildings/Fire-safety-certification>
- Version 3 Changes:
  - Different numbering 😞
  - Change to format of the fire safety measures 😞😞
  - Requirement for a APFS to **endorse** paths of travel (part 9 Division 7) instead of effectively the owner or agent 😊
  - APFS(s) who **endorse** fire safety measures must have an accreditation number and only endorse measures they are accredited for (from July 1<sup>st</sup>) 😊 More on this later.
  - Better defined roles for APFS, Agent, Owner, Statement Issuer, etc 😊.



## SELECTING AN APFS

- From July 1<sup>st</sup> 2020, the APFS you engaged to endorse your essential fire safety measures must be accredited for *each* measure and must attend site, inspect & verify *every* measure.
- Not every APFS is accredited to endorse every measure – e.g. your current APFS may be a sprinkler expert, but not yet competent to endorse hydrants or smoke alarms, etc.
- The register: <https://connect.fpaa.com.au/FireSafetyAssessor> was applicable from July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020 and the accreditation status/ level/ type and accreditation number of each CFSP is visible.
- Anyone on the register has:
  - Passed preliminary exams
  - Carries Professional Indemnity Insurance including run-on-cover
  - Has committed to moving from ‘experienced’ to ‘qualified’ within 4 years of formal recognition
  - Has signed a code of practice allowing external auditing of their work – meaning their accreditation status can be revoked if they are found to be incorrectly endorsing measures. (58 x investigations & 13 x suspensions as at 09<sup>th</sup> July 2021)
- The fire industry is changing to become a trusted profession that can be relied on!





## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR STRATA, BUILDING & FACILITY MANAGERS?

- Since October 2017, Strata, Facility Managers and Building Owners have effectively been endorsing the APFS as competent and also signing to say the paths of travel in the building are safe..... No wonder they were concerned!
  - PI risk for Building & Facility Managers
  - PI & Civil risk for building owners
- From July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020, Strata, Facility Managers and Building Owners will be signing to say they engaged a Accredited Practitioner (Fire Safety) from a register.
  - Providing the APFS is on the register & endorses only measures they are accredited for, huge risk reduction for managers.
  - The APFS being accredited, insured and 'professionally liable', is taking-on responsibility by endorsing measures on behalf of the owner. Reducing risk for Managers and Owners.



## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR STRATA, BUILDING & FACILITY MANAGERS?

- The APFS must *go to site & be able to prove it*, personally verify all records and systems to ensure they can *prove* when audited that the system perform as endorsed.
  - This also means personally re-inspecting after repairs if required to verify performance.
  - Requirements for the APFS to attend site in person to inspect & verify are outlined in:
    - FPA Australia Good Practice Guide – 04 – Fire Safety Statements – Section 8
    - NSW Govt - Planning & Environment – Fact Sheet on new fire safety requirements – dated August 2017
- The APFS is different to testing to AS1851. Inspection & Testing results will not satisfy ALL requirements to *verify* performance.
- As there were no qualifications required for fire protection until July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020, the price of fire protection services – as benchmarked by our industry association has not substantially changed since 2003.
- The price for an AFSS will rise as significant costs, risks and training are required to reach accreditation.
- The owners; while outlaying more, will receive increasingly professional, reliable advice that increases safety & reduces their risk.



## GAPS?

- The APFS accreditation scheme is still new & requires further adjustments.
  - We are still 3-4 years away from all APFS being qualified instead of transitional.
- Not all Essential Fire Safety Measures covered by accreditation yet.
  - Discuss ideas on how to choose in the interim.
- Performance/ Alternative Solutions/ FER's not yet a category of accreditation
  - Discuss ideas on how to choose in the interim.
- Cost –touchy!
  - Industry reputation to combat
  - Time, scope & cost of accreditation + assessment only becoming known now- what about future years?
  - Insurance cost not yet fully known as run-on-cover for individuals and companies required.





## QUESTIONS?

### 2020 Fire Protection

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