

Code of practice for

Intruder alarm systems signalling to alarm receiving centres

ICS 13.310

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Committees responsible for this Draft for Development

The preparation of this Draft for Development was entrusted to Technical Committee GW/1, Electronic security systems, upon which the following bodies were represented:

- Association of British Insurers
- Association of Chief Police Officers of England and Wales
- Association of Security Consultants
- British Security Industry Association
- British Telecommunications plc
- Consumer Policy Committee of BSI
- Department of the Environment (Building Research Establishment)
- Electrical Contractors' Association
- Fire Brigades Union
- National Approval Council for Security Systems
- Security Facilities Executive
- Security Systems and Alarms Inspection Board

This Draft for Development, having been prepared under the direction of the Consumer Products and Services Sector Committee, was published under the authority of the Standards Committee and comes into effect on 15 November 1999

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The following BSI reference relates to the work on this Draft for Development:
Committee reference GW/1

NOTE There will be no draft for public comment as the Draft for Development serves this purpose.

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Foreword

The preparation of this Draft for Development was entrusted by Technical Committee GW/1, Electronic security systems, to Subcommittee GW/1/2, Installed alarm systems. It supersedes DD 243:1998 which is withdrawn.

It sets out recommendations for the design, installation and configuration of intruder alarm systems signalling to alarm receiving centres (formerly known as central monitoring stations). It also sets out recommendations for the handling of alarm signals and other alarm information received at an alarm receiving centre from such alarm systems.

This Draft for Development includes recommendations for alarm systems that incorporate means for confirming activity within the protected premises, as well as recommendations for alarm systems that do not incorporate such a facility.

This Draft for Development is not to be regarded as a British Standard.

It is being issued in the Draft for Development series of publications and is of a provisional nature. It should be applied on this provisional basis so that information and experience of its practical application may be obtained.

A review of this Draft for Development will be carried out no later than 2 years after its publication. Notification of the start of the review period, with a request for the submission of comments from users of this Draft for Development, will be made in an announcement in *Update Standards*.

According to the replies received the responsible BSI Committee will judge whether the Draft for Development can be converted into a British Standard or what other action should be taken.

Observations which it is felt should receive attention before the official call for comments will be welcomed.

These should be sent to the Secretary of the BSI Technical Subcommittee GW/1/2 at BSI, 389 Chiswick High Road, London W4 4AL, giving the document reference and clause number and proposing, where possible, an appropriate revision of the text.

Summary of pages

This document comprises a front cover, an inside front cover, pages i and ii, pages 1 to 16, an inside back cover and a back cover.

This standard has been updated (see copyright date) and may have had amendments incorporated. This will be indicated in the amendment table on the inside front cover.

1 Scope

This Draft for Development applies to intruder alarm systems having signalling systems that signal to an alarm receiving centre and which conform to BS 4737, BS 6799, BS 7042 and to Class VI wire-free alarm systems conforming to BS 6799, as supplemented by DD 244.

NOTE 1 This Draft for Development does not apply to personal attack (hold up) alarms (whether they are stand-alone personal attack systems or the personal attack part of a combined personal attack/automatic alarm system).

NOTE 2 This Draft for Development does not apply to intruder alarm systems having signalling systems that do not signal to an alarm receiving centre.

NOTE 3 This Draft for Development is intended to apply to intruder alarm systems installed in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Attention is drawn to the fact that certain parts of this Draft for Development may not be appropriate in Scotland, where the police service has not adopted an Intruder Alarm Policy similar to the Policy adopted in 1995 by the Association of Chief Police Officers of England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

2 Normative references

The following normative documents contain provisions, which, through reference in this text, constitute provisions of this Draft for Development. For dated references, subsequent amendments to, or revisions of, any of these publications do not apply. For undated references, the latest edition of the publication referred to applies.

BS 4737-1:1986, *Intruder alarm systems — Part 1: Specification for installed systems with local audible and/or remote signalling*.

BS 5979:1993, *Code of practice for remote centres for alarm systems*.

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this standard, the following terms and definitions apply.

3.1

alarm company

organization prepared to provide and install an intruder alarm system

3.2

alarm condition

state of any detector, processor or tamper detection, which indicates that intrusion, attempted intrusion or unauthorized interference has occurred or is about to occur

3.3

alarm filtering

procedure whereby signalled alarm conditions are intentionally delayed at the alarm receiving centre and their status reviewed for the purpose of preventing unnecessary calls to the police by cancelling certain alarm conditions, where such cancellation is authorized by the subscriber

3.4

alarm message

message conveyed from an alarm receiving centre to the police, which indicates that an alarm condition has occurred at a protected premises, or which provides supplementary information concerning a previously reported alarm message

3.5

alarm receiving centre

continuously manned remote centre in which the information concerning the state of alarm systems is displayed and/or recorded

3.6

alarm signal

signal which, upon being received at an alarm receiving centre or other remote location, identifies a signalled alarm condition

3.7

alert condition

in a sequential confirmation alarm system, state of any detector, sensor, processor or tamper detection, which in a conventional alarm system would have been classified as an alarm condition, but which (in certain sequential confirmation alarm systems) is not classified as an alarm condition unless authenticated by a second or further alert condition or alarm condition originating from an independent sensor, detector or processor

3.8

audibly confirmed

confirmed by a human intelligence at a remote location (normally an alarm receiving centre) who, after having interpreted audio information transmitted from the protected premises, has made a decision that there is a high probability that a genuine intrusion or a genuine attempted intrusion has occurred

3.9

confirmed

audibly confirmed, visually confirmed, or sequentially confirmed

3.10**control equipment**

equipment necessary for the setting, unsetting and testing of an intruder alarm system and for sending an alarm condition to warning devices and/or signalling equipment

3.11**detector**

device that generates an alarm condition in response to intrusion or to attempted intrusion, or to deliberate action by the subscriber

3.12**false alert**

signalled alarm condition, which (without having been extended to the police or other emergency response authority) is regarded by the alarm receiving centre as cancelled, such cancellation having been authorized by the subscriber

NOTE 1 Such authorization is either:

- a) on a case-by-case basis, by use of suitable code words or numbers, in accordance with a defined alarm filtering routine; or
- b) by prior written agreement.

NOTE 2 The following types of communication are examples of cancellation authorized by the subscriber [see option a) of NOTE 1], whereby the subscriber causes:

- a) a “mis-operation signal”; or
- b) an “unset signal”, to be sent to the alarm receiving centre affirming that the signalled alarm condition is to be filtered out and not extended to police

NOTE 3 “False alerts” are not regarded as “false alarms”. “False alarms” are events that have not been successfully identified and filtered out, and have therefore been notified to the police.

3.13**intruder alarm system**

an electrical installation to detect and indicate the presence, entry or attempted entry of an intruder into protected premises

3.14**mis-operation signal**

signal that is definitely and unambiguously identifiable at the alarm receiving centre as indicating to the alarm receiving centre that the alarm system has mis-operated and therefore that the alarm signal is to be filtered out and not extended to the police

NOTE The designation of a particular type of signal as a “mis-operation signal” is therefore a matter for agreement between the alarm company and alarm receiving centre, with the concurrence of the subscriber.

3.15**processor**

device which processes the output from one or more sensors to determine whether an alarm condition should be generated

NOTE The processor may be integral to the control equipment.

3.16**protected premises**

part of a building, to which protection is afforded by an intruder alarm system

3.17**re-arming**

the enabling of the alarm system to signal a further alarm or fault condition, following signalling of an alarm or fault condition during the period between the signalling of the original alarm or fault condition and the alarm system being unset

3.18**remote centre**

premises, remote from those in which the alarm systems are fitted, where the information concerning the state of alarm systems is collected for display or for onward transmission [BS 5979:1993, definition 3.1]

3.19**set**

of an intruder alarm system, or part thereof, in a state in which an alarm condition can be sent to warning devices and/or signalling equipment

3.20**sequentially confirmed**

emanating from two or more independent sensors, detectors and/or processors, which are so configured that there is a high probability that a genuine intrusion or a genuine attempted intrusion has occurred

3.21**shunt lock**

door lock incorporating a switching device within the lock case

3.22**signalled alarm condition**

state of monitoring equipment at an alarm receiving centre (or other remote location), which indicates that intrusion, attempted intrusion or unauthorized interference has occurred at the protected premises or is about to occur

3.23**signalling**

initiation of the transmission of an alarm condition from the protected premises to a remote location

3.24**subscriber**

person or organization utilizing the services of an alarm company for the installation of an intruder alarm system

3.25 system design specification

specification for a proposed intruder alarm system, listing the equipment and components to be supplied, detailing their proposed locations and containing a general indication of their coverage or purpose

3.26 system record

detailed record of an intruder alarm system

NOTE Attention is drawn to BS 4737-1:1986.

3.27 unset

of an intruder alarm system or part thereof; state in which an alarm condition cannot be sent to warning devices and/or signalling equipment

3.28 visually confirmed

confirmed by a human intelligence at a remote location (normally an alarm receiving centre), who, after having interpreted a visual image transmitted from the protected premises, has made a decision that there is a high probability that a genuine intrusion or a genuine attempted intrusion has occurred

4 Alarm confirmation techniques

4.1 Confirmed alarm conditions

The application of alarm confirmation techniques is optional.

The purpose of applying alarm confirmation techniques is to provide high confidence that an alarm signal has been caused by genuine intrusion or genuine attempted intrusion.

Where an alarm system incorporates means for confirming activity within the protected premises it is intended that, once activity within the premises has been confirmed, the alarm receiving centre should normally call the police as soon as practicable thereafter, without necessarily applying any alarm filtering.

It is, however, permissible (by agreement between the parties) to apply alarm filtering to a case where activity within the premises has been confirmed. This might be appropriate, for example, where the alarm receiving centre is aware that the alarm system is being unset, in which case it could well be appropriate to defer calling the police for a limited period of time in order to allow for an alarm filtering routine.

4.2 Other alarm conditions (signalled from alarm systems that are capable of providing confirmation of activity)

Some alarm systems are capable of providing confirmation of activity within the protected premises.

In some cases, only certain parts of the system are capable of providing confirmation of activity. In many cases it may not be possible to have a high degree of certainty that genuine intrusion into those areas capable of providing confirmation will indeed result in confirmatory information being received at the alarm receiving centre.

It is important to recognize, therefore, that in most cases those alarm systems that are capable of providing confirmation may also, in certain circumstances, generate an alarm condition (which may indeed represent genuine intrusion), but without the alarm receiving centre receiving any confirmation of activity within the premises.

It is stressed that designation as confirmed should be made on a case-by-case basis for each alarm condition, as (in most cases) it is not possible to say that all alarm conditions originating from a given alarm system are confirmed.

The alarm company and the subscriber (in conjunction with his or her insurer) should give careful consideration to the case where an alarm system is capable of providing confirmation of activity within the premises and signals an alarm condition to the alarm receiving centre, but does not in fact provide any confirmation that the particular alarm condition results from activity within the premises. If this is a possibility, it is necessary for the parties to consider:

- a) whether the risk (and/or the configuration of the alarm system) is such that the alarm receiving centre should always (at the end of the time delay allowed for alarm filtering on a case-by-case basis) call the police; or
- b) whether the alarm receiving centre should call the police only if there is confirmation of activity within the protected premises.

Choosing option b) reduces the risk of false calls being made to the police, but there may be a risk of a genuine intrusion not being reported to the police. When option b) is to be adopted, therefore, it is important that there is prior written agreement from the subscriber for the alarm receiving centre to filter out alarm signals that are not confirmed, without case-by-case reference to the subscriber or to a keyholder. Subscribers should be advised to consult with their insurers before giving such an agreement.