

AEI Cables spells out technical guidance on Category 3 Control fire performance cables

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AEI Cables has spelled out the technical guidance to those responsible in the supply chain for selection and installation of cables for Category 3 Control fire performance cables under the revised British Standard.

The industry-wide campaign is raising awareness of the dangers of not using approved cabling as specified under the revised version of BS8519: 2020, the Code of Practice for Category 3 fire performance cables.

Industry bodies supporting the campaign include the leading Electrical Safety First organisation and fire safety membership body The Institution of Fire Prevention Officers (IFPO).

The systems powered by these cables – including smoke and heat extraction systems – assist fire services in firefighting and a safe evacuation in the case of life safety. Category 3 Control fire performance cables reduce harmful smoke, toxic gases and flame spread in the event of a real fire.

The applications of Category 3 Control fire performance cables applies to evacuation alarms for the disabled in care homes, emergency voice communications systems and voice alarm systems in relevant buildings including tall buildings, office spaces, hospitals, shopping malls and stadia.

The new Code is intended to inform and guide designers, contractors, fire engineers, regulators and enforcers including building control bodies, fire authorities, Health and Safety inspectors and equipment suppliers and manufacturers.

The gives guidance and recommendations on the selection and installation of fire-resistant power and

control cable systems that need to maintain their circuit integrity for life safety and fire-fighting.

It is primarily intended for use in buildings which, due to their size, height, form or use, require the installation of life safety and fire-fighting systems, e.g. sprinkler pumps, wet riser pumps, smoke control systems, fire-fighting and evacuation lifts or other systems as required by a fire engineering strategy.

BS 8519:2020 makes reference to the recommendations of BS 9999 and BS 9991, with regard to the design and installation of the electrical distribution systems for life safety and fire-fighting equipment. It also makes reference to three categories of circuits required to maintain their circuit integrity under defined fire conditions for varying fire survival times of 30 minutes, 60 minutes and 120 minutes.

Appropriate cable tests are identified for each cable category derived from applicable British Standards assessing cable performance under conditions of fire as might be expected in an actual fire incident.

BS 8519:2020 also aims to ensure that the level of circuit fire integrity is not compromised by other components of the whole electrical distribution system, including cable glands, terminations, joints and cable support systems.

By incorporating this guidance into the selection of cabling for these critical systems, those using these striking new buildings can move about safe in the knowledge that they are safe.

Stuart Dover, General Manager of AEI Cables, said: "If these systems fail because the cable is not able to function properly then the consequences are apparent. Lives and property are at stake here. Category 3 Control fire performance cables reduce harmful smoke, toxic gases and flame spread in the event of a real fire.

"We have seen a lot of support for our message and our customers are seeing the peace of mind of installing approved cables which provide continuity of power for these systems."

The wider fire safety industry and professionals have also welcomed the message including the professional fire safety membership body the Institution of Fire Prevention Officers (IFPO).

AEI Cables is the only supplier in the UK with independent approval from LPCB for BS8519 Category 3 Control fire performance cables with a fire survival time of up to 120 minutes.

AEI Cables' Firetec Enhanced cabling has been approved and certified by LPCB to BS8519 (Annex B), Category 3 Control in addition to Category 2 Control. The BS Code of Practice under BS8519 contains six categories of cables, three for power cables and three for control cables each covering survival times of 30, 60 or 120 minutes.

Using the very latest in technology and science, the Firetec Total Fire Solutions range offers Mineral Insulated Cabling (MIC), Firetec Enhanced fire performance cabling, accessories and technical support from the AEI Cables distribution facility at Washington, Tyne and Wear.

All AEI Cables' products are supplied with approvals from independent bodies including BASEC and LPCB. It also holds approvals from organisations including Lloyds, the MoD, Network Rail and LUL and works to international standards around the world. For more information see the AEI Cables [website](#), tel 0191 410 3111 or email sales@aeicables.co.uk.