

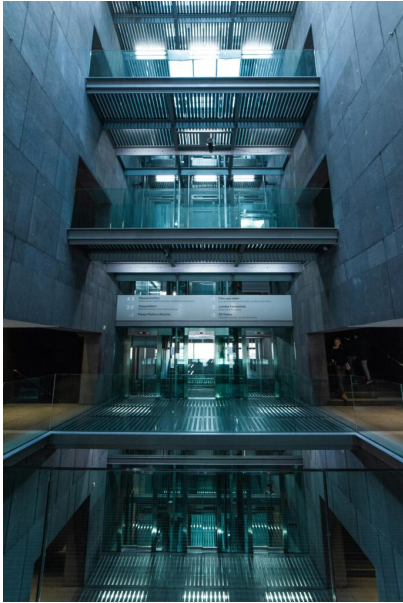
Compliance Uncertainty Leaves Lift Fire Safety Exposed in FM Sector

2 months ago



Last month, the [Building Safety Regulator \(BSR\) became a standalone public body](#), separating from the Health and Safety Executive to provide a more dedicated oversight of building safety. The move forms part of a continuing shift toward more robust standards of fire and safety systems across the built environment.

Within this context, new research commissioned by [PEW Electrical](#) indicates that lift and escalator fire safety is emerging as a potential weak spot in building safety management, particularly in complex residential and mixed-use properties.



The research reveals significant uncertainty among facilities management professionals when it comes to navigating building safety compliance in practice. It found that almost half (44%) of FMs say that they remain unclear about their obligations under the Building Safety Act and 56% of FMs are unclear about documentation and accountability requirements. A further 46% of FMs also admit that they are unaware of the BSR's inspection requirements for lifts and escalators.

These concerns extend to information management. Nearly half (47%) of FMs say that the industry suffers from fragmented and inconsistent record-keeping, raising questions about how reliably the “golden thread” of safety information is being maintained across lift supply chains.

When asked about the main challenges to ensuring fire safety compliance, the most frequently cited issues point primarily to delivery barriers, rather than a lack of intent. These include keeping up with evolving fire safety standards (29%), coordinating multiple contractors and stakeholders (24%), and budget pressures affecting the frequency and quality of inspections (18%).

Technical complexity also plays a role, with almost one in five (17%) highlighting the difficulty of retrofitting existing systems to meet modern fire safety requirements.

These challenges are compounded by the specialist nature of lift systems within wider fire strategies. While lifts play a critical role in evacuation planning and firefighter access, responsibility for design, maintenance, inspection and documentation is often distributed across multiple parties, increasing the risk of gaps in technical oversight and accountability.

However, despite the challenges, the findings suggest that facilities teams are actively maintaining lift systems and preparing estates for emergencies, even if compliance frameworks remain complex.

The research found that eight in ten (80%) conduct fire safety inspections and maintenance for lifts and escalators at least twice a year, three quarters (74%) say that their fire evacuation plans are regularly practised with occupants, and nearly 85% say they are confident in the effectiveness of their fire safety protocols during emergencies.



Commenting on the findings, Jason Clark, registered engineer and Chairman at PEW Electrical, said: “It’s clear that facilities managers are taking fire safety seriously: inspections are happening regularly, and there’s a strong focus on operational performance. But compliance today is about much more than maintenance alone. It’s about documentation, accountability, and making sure technical decisions are properly coordinated across the supply chain.”

“Lifts sit at the centre of fire strategy, accessibility and emergency response. If those systems are managed in isolation, or if information is fragmented between contractors, it becomes very difficult for dutyholders to be confident that risks are being fully controlled.”

“Adding to the challenge, facilities teams are under pressure to retrofit and demonstrate compliance in buildings that were never designed for modern evacuation strategies.”

With regulatory enforcement expected to increase, PEW Electrical warns that lift fire safety will remain a pressure point unless regulatory understanding, technical competence and supply chain coordination improve in parallel.

“We know that the FM sector is committed to safety. But what’s needed now is greater alignment between operational activity and regulatory assurance – and this can’t be achieved if we continue to operate in silos.”

Clark concluded: “We need better collaboration between lift specialists, engineers, managing agents and suppliers if we are serious about supporting FMs, ensuring compliance, and genuinely strengthening safety outcomes.”

PEW Electrical is encouraging facilities managers and dutyholders to engage with specialist partners early when reviewing fire strategies and maintenance regimes to reduce risk and ensure occupant safety.