

# Why Every Building Duty Holder Needs Proper Training – and Why One Hour Could Save your Organisation

3 hours ago



By Becky Clutton, Head of Member Support & Operations, [SAEMA](#)

The landscape of building safety and accountability in the UK changed fundamentally with the introduction of the Building Safety Act 2022. Yet as we speak with members and industry colleagues managing suspended access systems across sites and estates, we're acutely aware that many duty holders still don't fully understand the weight of responsibility now resting on their shoulders – or the potential consequences of getting it wrong.

### The new reality for duty holders

Organisations that own, manage or operate higher-risk buildings must now appoint building duty holders who are directly responsible for ensuring safety, compliance and the wellbeing of occupants. This applies across both public and private sectors – from housing associations and local authorities to healthcare providers, universities, commercial property firms and developers.

The roles are varied but critical: Accountable Persons, Building Safety Managers, Principal Duty Holders. What they all have in common is that they carry serious legal obligations under the Building Safety Act, including compliance, record-keeping, fire safety management and resident engagement.

Without adequate training, organisations face not just legal risk and operational disruption, but reputational damage that can take years to repair. In a post-Grenfell world, the public – rightly – expects better. Regulators are watching closely. The days of appointing duty holders without ensuring they're

properly trained and competent are over.

Why training matters more than ever

I've worked in this industry long enough to know that good intentions aren't enough. Duty holders need to understand their legal responsibilities in detail. They need confidence in managing structural and fire safety obligations. They need to know how to prevent incidents through proactive management rather than reactive crisis response.

Most importantly, they need to demonstrate a culture of responsibility and compliance – not just to regulators, but to the residents and building users whose safety depends on them getting it right.

Training achieves several critical objectives:

**Legal Compliance:** It ensures duty holders meet the standards required under the Building Safety Act 2022 and related legislation including the Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

**Competence:** It builds genuine confidence in managing the day-to-day challenges of structural and fire safety obligations, not just theoretical knowledge.

**Risk Reduction:** It equips duty holders to prevent incidents before they happen, through proper understanding of operating procedures, planning for safe use, and maintenance protocols.

**Accountability:** It demonstrates to regulators, residents and stakeholders that your organisation takes safety governance seriously.

**Reputation Management:** In an era where one safety incident can dominate headlines for months, proper training reduces reputational risk by ensuring transparency and professional competence.

The SAEMA solution

That's exactly why we developed our Online Duty Holder Training Programme. We wanted to create something that was comprehensive but accessible – something that busy professionals could complete without taking days out of their schedule, but which would genuinely equip them to meet their responsibilities effectively.

The result is a one-hour online course that covers everything a duty holder needs to know:

- Types of suspended access systems and their specific requirements
- Who the duty holder is and what that role legally entails
- Legal responsibilities under current legislation
- Operating procedures and planning for safe use
- Maintenance, testing and examination protocols
- Typical procedures for operatives working with the systems

The course is 100% online, interactive and accessible via desktop or mobile. Participants receive a completion certificate for their compliance records. It's suitable for accountable persons, building safety managers, property managers and compliance officers across all sectors.

#### Demonstrating leadership in building safety

What I find most rewarding is when organisations adopt our training not because they're being forced to, but because they genuinely want to demonstrate proactive compliance, competence and leadership in building safety.

These are the organisations that understand building safety isn't just about ticking boxes - it's about creating a culture where everyone from board level down understands their role in keeping people safe.

Whether you're managing high-rise residential blocks for a housing association, overseeing hospital buildings for an NHS Trust, ensuring student accommodation safety at a university, or maintaining compliance across a commercial property portfolio, the principle is the same: competent, trained duty holders are not optional. They're essential.

#### Making compliance practical

SAEMA's aim with this training has always been to make it feel useful and grounded in real-world scenarios - something teams can immediately apply with confidence. We don't just explain what the law requires; we show how to implement it in practice.

The suspended access systems sector has always taken safety seriously. But the Building Safety Act has raised the bar significantly, and rightly so. The organisations that will thrive in

this new regulatory environment are those that see training not as a burden, but as an investment in competence, safety and reputation.

One hour of focused training can equip your duty holders with the knowledge they need to meet their legal responsibilities effectively. More importantly, it can give them - and you - the confidence that comes from knowing you're doing things properly.

Because when it comes to building safety, there's no room for uncertainty.

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SAEMA Online Duty Holder Training is available now. For full details and to book your place, visit: <https://training.saema.org/>

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