

Escape e-news is the Newsletter published by Safescape (NZ) Ltd. This publication is not intended to offend. If you do not wish to receive further copies please advise us immediately. Comments should be addressed to:- support@safescape.net.nz



Safescape (NZ) Ltd is the NZ Distributor for Clevertronics Products

To Our Readers:-

This is the first issue of what we hope will become a (fairly) regular newsletter, published with the intent of keeping its readers up-to-date with news on the Emergency Lighting Industry, supplying background information, and also announcements of new products as they enter our range — we have to pay the bills somehow!

We would also welcome questions, which we will do our best to answer. (We have never seen ourselves in the role of agony aunts, but we can always give it a try.) On the other hand it might pay to limit the questions to those more or less relating to the subject of the newsletter.

It is hoped that the content will both inform and entertain you, and we welcome any feedback, preferably written in 2B pencil on the back of a \$50 note. Alternatively you may use the e-mail address as below.

support@safescape.net.nz

Written and Edited by Richard Ponting & Jim Breden

SELF TEST — A SAFER OPTION

With all the best will in the world, testing of emergency lighting installations is not seen by building managers as the highest priority they have. Many installations are supervised by staff occupying the building, but who have no training regarding the importance of a properly functioning system. Typically these will be smaller installations such as retail premises, bank branches etc. A self test system is also applicable to a large installation in a single tenancy or where access to the luminaires is relatively difficult. Self Testing can remove all the chance from such installations by automatically signalling the current state of the unit, be it an Emergency or EXIT.

Self Testing, or Diagnostic mode, is a feature offered on nearly all Clevertronics Emergency and EXIT equipment. It comprises an additional plug-in board which allows the fitting to be programmed to perform a self diagnosis every 6 months, the result of which is indicated by a coloured flashing LED. During the Test the Normally Red LED will emit a "Test in Progress" signal comprising a slow Yellow flash. A successful Test will be shown by a slow Red/Yellow flash for a period of 5 days, after which it will revert to the normal solid Red state. A "Failed Test" signal is a fast Red/Yellow flash which will be maintained until such time as the unit is serviced. Self Test requirements are included in AS2293.3.

For more details e-mail support@safescape.net.nz requesting a copy of "Self Test Guide and Overview"

MAKING ALL THE RIGHT NOISES

The next generation of Emergency Escape technology is almost with us. Like most things these days it has an acronym - DSE - or Directional Sound Evacuation systems. Sound is a basic survival signal and has been used for centuries to alert people to danger, but only recently has it been used to guide occupants along a convoluted escape path to safety. Such systems are already in use in both the marine and land based sectors in Europe. Following a number of inquiries set up to look at marine and land-based disasters in Europe and Australia, its effectiveness in smoke filled environments has been identified as a very useful adjunct to an emergency lighting installation.

Professor Deborah Withington of Leeds University, UK, is to present a paper to the IESANZ Convention in Sydney, Oct 2006 which summarises the research that has been undertaken in UK and Japan, amongst other countries, on the subject. One of the most significant discoveries is that a single pitch alarm bell is not nearly so effective in creating an audio based escape path as "broadband" sound. We are blessed with two ears for much the same reason we have two eyes, i.e. binaural reception is critical in locating sound relative to our position and the human ear is more sensitive to variations in broadband rather than narrow band sound. As a result of this research, a compelling set of arguments has had the following results, taken from Professor Withington's paper:-

International standards and codes have now been accepted for the installation, testing and maintenance of Directional Sound Evacuation (DSE) systems both in the building and marine environments.

The USA government National Institute of Standards & Technology (NIST) has produced a report following the collapse of the World Trade Centre on 9/11. Recommendations 18, 19 & 20 from this report highlight improvements required for the evacuation systems. The addition of 'audible exit marking' (DSE) into the forthcoming release of the US National Fire Alarm Code (NFPA 72) is in specific response to these recommendations.

In the UK, British Standard BS8456 is a code of practice for the design and installation of DSE systems in the building environment.

Additionally, the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) of the International Maritime Organisation issued circulars 1167 & 1168 in 2005 detailing the testing, approval and maintenance of audio/visual based evacuation guidance systems as an alternative to the use of low location lighting systems.

Clevertronics - Safescape's associate company in Australia - is at the forefront of the industry in developing combined light/sound equipment for emergency evacuation of buildings. The first installation in this part of the world is presently going into a building in Melbourne, owned by AMP and occupied by the Port of Melbourne Authority. It is due to be commissioned early in 2007. The equipment comprises items from the Clevertronics Emergency and EXIT ranges which have been fitted with sound emitting modules triggered at the same time as the emergency lighting mode. These systems require no extra wiring and can be programmed to emit a range of sounds including voice.

Watch this space!

Professor Withington's paper, "Light Plus Sound" will be published in the Transactions of the Convention.

Thought for the Day - from Groucho Marks

Politics is the art of looking for trouble, finding it everywhere, diagnosing it incorrectly and applying the wrong remedies.....