

Proposed Fire Code Amendment: Firefighters' Elevator Out of Service Notification Requirements

Background Document for December 7, 2017 Stakeholder Consultation

The topic of elevator availability, or perceived lack of availability, has been covered in a variety of mainstream media in recent months.

To respond to emerging concerns associated with elevator availability and the lack of data on the topic, the Technical Standards and Safety Authority (TSSA), in partnership with the Ministry of Government and Consumer Services (MGCS) and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs (MMA), engaged Retired Superior Court Justice Douglas Cunningham to author an independent study, with support from Deloitte's Public Sector Strategy team. Release of the study's findings is pending.

The elevator sector touches a broad set of stakeholders across the province. One of the many stakeholders includes First Responders, including firefighters, paramedics, and police, who are responsible for addressing emergencies in a timely and efficient manner. Lack of elevator access, as may occur when elevators are out of service, can be a significant barrier to the ability of First Responders to quickly respond to and address an emergency, potentially introducing health and safety risks for residents.

In response to this concern, the Office of the Fire Marshal and Emergency Management (MCSCS) reviewed what changes if any could be made to the Ontario Fire Code to strengthen requirements. While the options to address the broader elevator availability problem under the Ontario Fire Code are limited, revisions to Subsection 7.2.2. Elevators and Subsection 1.1.1. General are under consideration.

The Fire Code changes being proposed are to require owners to notify the fire department, building occupants and supervisory staff when a firefighters' elevator is not operating for more than 24 hours.

There are similar requirements in the Fire Code for out of service standpipe and hose systems, sprinkler systems and fire alarm systems. There is currently no specific requirement to notify the fire department if the firefighters' elevator is not operational. An out of service firefighters' elevator may significantly delay emergency response time as well as reduce overall elevating device capacity in the building.

Notification procedures would increase awareness of a non-operational firefighters' elevator and the notice would allow firefighters and building occupants to be better prepared in emergency situations.

Any unexpected delay in responding to an emergency can increase the risk to resident health and safety. Notifying the fire department will not put a firefighters' elevator back in service, but will help firefighters and other first responders to be better prepared for the situation and to work with owner's to restore the operability of the elevator in a timely manner.

PROPOSED CHANGE TO THE 2015 ONTARIO FIRE CODE

(O. Reg. 213/07, as amended current to January 1, 2015)

CHANGE NUMBER:

CODE REFERENCE: Article 1.1.1.1. of Division B

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED CHANGE:

Revise Article 1.1.1.1. to include notification requirements for out of service firefighters' elevators.

- Add a new requirement
- Making a technical change to an existing requirement
- Making an editorial/administrative change to an existing requirement

EXISTING OFC PROVISIONS

Notification

1.1.1.1. Where **tests**, repairs or alterations are made to fire protection installations, including sprinkler and standpipe systems, a procedure of notification shall be established, and the procedure shall include notifying the **fire department** and the **building** occupants where necessary for safety in the event of a fire emergency.

PROBLEM

A non-operational firefighters' elevator would impact firefighting procedures in high buildings and currently there is no specific requirement to notify the fire department, building occupants and supervisory staff to raise awareness.

PROPOSED OFC CHANGE

Notification

1.1.1.1. Where **tests**, repairs or alterations are made to fire protection installations, including sprinkler and standpipe systems, or to a firefighters' elevator, a procedure of notification shall be established, and the procedure shall include notifying the **fire department** and the **building** occupants where necessary for safety in the event of a fire emergency.

Note: A corresponding change is also being proposed to Article 7.2.2.2.

RATIONALE FOR CHANGE

Notification procedures where firefighters' elevators are not operational for more than 24 hours would serve to increase awareness and allow the fire department, building occupants and supervisory staff to be better prepared in case of a fire emergency. This awareness may also lead to shorter repair times to return the elevator to operational status.

IMPACT

- Improved notification procedures for out of service firefighters' elevators.
- Increased awareness for fire fighters, occupants and supervisory staff in the event of a fire emergency.
- Potentially shorter repair times to return elevators to operational status.
- Minimal cost to owners.

OBJECTIVE BASED ANALYSIS OF THE CHANGE OR NEW PROVISION

N/A

FUNCTIONAL STATEMENT(S) AND LINK(S) TO OBJECTIVE(S)

N/A

PROPOSED CHANGE TO THE 2015 ONTARIO FIRE CODE

(O. Reg. 213/07, as amended current to January 1, 2015)

CHANGE NUMBER:

CODE REFERENCE: Article 7.2.2.2. of Division B

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED CHANGE:

- Add new Article 7.2.2.2. for Out of Service Elevator requirements
- X **Add a new requirement**
- Making a technical change to an existing requirement**
- Making an editorial/administrative change to an existing requirement**

EXISTING OFC PROVISIONS

None

PROBLEM

A non-operational firefighters' elevator would impact firefighting procedures in high buildings and currently there is no specific requirement to notify the fire department, building occupants and supervisory staff to raise awareness.

PROPOSED OFC CHANGE

Out of Service Requirements

7.2.2.2. If a firefighters' elevator is not operational for more than 24 hours,

- (a) the **fire department** and **building** occupants shall be notified in accordance with Article 1.1.1.1. and
- (b) the **supervisory staff** shall be notified.

Note: A corresponding change is also being proposed to Article 1.1.1.1.

RATIONALE FOR CHANGE

Notification procedures where firefighters' elevators are not operational for more than 24 hours would serve to increase awareness and allow the fire department, building occupants and supervisory staff to be better prepared in case of a fire emergency. This awareness may also lead to shorter repair times to return the elevator to operational status.

IMPACT

- Improved notification procedures for out of service firefighters' elevators
- Increased awareness and better preparedness for firefighters, building occupants and supervisory staff in the event of a fire emergency.
- Potentially shorter repair times to return elevators to operational status.
- Minimal cost to owners.

OBJECTIVE BASED ANALYSIS OF THE CHANGE OR NEW PROVISION

N/A

FUNCTIONAL STATEMENT(S) AND LINK(S) TO OBJECTIVE(S)

[F11, F12-OS1.4, OS1.5 OP1.4].