

International Fire Safety Standards

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Paper 6 - Communications

6.1 Purpose

IFSS communications activity will focus primarily on:

1. *External communications* – promoting and embedding IFSS in the marketplace with a view to:
 - Encouraging other professional and standards-setting bodies to join the Coalition
 - Encouraging firms participating in construction and real estate markets to sign up as supporters for the initiative
 - Linking the work of the Coalition to wider industry, governments and the public at large and promoting its use
 - Generating third party press and media coverage of the initiative
2. *Internal communications* – supporting the development and implementation of IFSS across the Coalition by:
 - Establishing clear channels for sharing project updates, including development of the standards, expressions of interest from other organisations looking to join/support the initiative; Coalition press releases, marketing, FAQ and messaging materials; feedback from consultations.

6.2 Developing group-wide communications

It is proposed that external communications in the name of the International Fire Safety Standards (IFSS) Coalition are developed and approved through a sub group, the Communications Group, which will meet virtually by conference call and through an online portal at agreed times during the drafting and roll-out of the standards. The group will be comprised of representatives from a number of Coalition organisations and, ideally, from communications and/or marketing roles within those organisations.

The Communications Group will lead the development of shared communications materials such as press releases, presentations, video content, infographics and articles. The Communications Group will submit materials to the Coalition Trustees for use across all Coalition organisations.

Communications materials will be developed in English and made available for Coalition organisations to translate and edit for their own purposes.

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Coalition organisations will be encouraged, independently of the Communications Group, to produce their own communications materials for members and other stakeholders referencing their work as part of the Coalition.

The IFSS communications group should initially seek to agree a set of key messages and a summary/narrative outlining “why” we are undertaking this project; “how” we plan to develop and embed the standards; and “who” is involved.

6.3 Stakeholders

The Communications Group should lead a stakeholder mapping exercise to identify key stakeholders. Categories to include: government/public bodies, industry and media. The aim is to raise awareness of IFSS in a coordinated and systematic way, drawing on existing relationships where they exist. The mapping exercise would allow the Coalition to target key groups of stakeholders with the aim of supporting the roll-out/implementation of IFSS in global markets.

Coalition members and supporters will be encouraged to use their existing contacts to seek opportunities to engage key stakeholders on the IFSS initiative including, for example, at conferences and events, or through the media.

6.4 IFSS Supporters

The end users of IFSS information are a priority audience for the initiative. These stakeholders include investors, contractors, consultants, governments and other public bodies. These groups will create market demand for the standards and lead the adoption of IFSS. They should be encouraged to publicly support the initiative and in doing so add their profile and authority to the project.

This paper proposes the creation of a ‘Supporter’ status which commercial entities, as end users of fire safety standards, can register for. The status would not be legally binding but would promote those businesses that intend to request or use IFSS when it is published.

These businesses would be positioned as first movers in their markets and would be supported to promote the relevance of IFSS to their business and those of their clients.

The Supporter status would be open to any business that wishes to support IFSS but which is ineligible to join the Coalition.

The declaration document should be reviewed by the Communications Group and made available for firms to access, sign and return to the Coalition for confirmation.

6.5 Channels

The Coalition will have the benefit of an extensive network of communications channels when seeking to promote and embed IFSS. These communications channels will be used to update members and interested parties on the development of IFSS; to promote and lead consultations; and to seek widespread support for the project. Communications channels include:

- Supporter organisations' websites and social media channels
- Coalition organisations' newsletters and publications
- Third party print and broadcast media
- Existing relationships (e.g. with local/national government; regulators etc)
- Members and their employers
- Industry events.

6.6 IFSS Website

The Coalition should consider the use of a website as a platform for housing project-related information and as a means of connecting markets and practitioners with the initiative.

The site should be shared across all Coalition organisations and should include content developed by the Communications Group. It should list the Coalition organisations and Supporter firms with links to their websites.

The website will have the ability to integrate social media and other types of content.

In order to be of value the website should be fresh and benefit from content generated through all Coalition organisations. The flow of content is critical to ensure the website remains relevant and that it delivers impact.

6.7 Resources

The Communications Group will work with coalition partners to develop materials, including: a Q&A document; key messages for specific audiences; presentation materials; press releases and online content.