



16. Fire - Extinguishing Equipment - Fire Shutters & Curtains Full Service & Inspection

Category:	Fire
Subcategory:	Extinguishing Equipment
Frequency:	Yearly
Status:	Statutory
Type:	Approved Contractor
Priority:	Core
Commonality:	Occasional

Note: This document provides guidance to support compliance but is not a substitute for professional advice.

Why This Task Matters

Your commitment to maintaining fire shutters and curtains ensures that automatic barriers deploy correctly to protect escape routes and contain fires. By ensuring these critical systems function reliably in dining halls, stages, or science prep areas, you safeguard pupils and staff during emergencies. Your expertise in overseeing these specialised protective systems demonstrates your essential role in maintaining comprehensive fire safety measures.

Task Summary

Statutory: Fire shutters and fire-resistant curtains must be serviced annually to confirm their automatic closure mechanisms, integrity, and safety features. This comprehensive maintenance involves testing deployment systems, inspecting structural integrity, verifying fire resistance, and checking control mechanisms. The service includes functional testing of automatic and manual controls, inspection of fusible links or electrical systems, assessment of curtain or shutter materials, and lubrication of moving parts. These systems are particularly important in dining halls, stages, or science prep areas where fire separation is required. The inspection includes checking mounting systems, clearance around openings, and integration with fire alarm systems. Evidence produced includes the contractor's inspection report detailing all components checked and test results,

inspection certificate confirming compliance and functionality, and any recommendations for maintenance or replacement.

Relevant Legislation & Guidance

- **Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005:** Requires fire shutters and curtains to be maintained in good working order
- **Fire Safety: Approved Document B (Buildings other than dwellinghouses):** Provides guidance on fire shutter and curtain maintenance
- **British Standard BS 8524: Active fire curtain barrier assemblies:** Specifies requirements for fire curtain maintenance and testing
- **British Standard BS 9999: Fire safety in the design, management and use of buildings - Code of practice:** Includes guidance on fire shutter maintenance
- **The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014** (for independent schools): Requires adequate fire safety barriers

Typical Frequency

Fire shutters and curtains must be serviced and inspected annually where fitted, with this comprehensive maintenance typically scheduled during school holidays. In educational settings with these systems, annual servicing is essential for ensuring reliable operation. The frequency cannot be reduced as it is a statutory requirement for maintaining fire safety barriers.

Applicability

This task applies to educational establishments that have fire shutters or curtains installed, which is occasional as these systems are typically found in specific high-risk areas. It is a core statutory task where these systems are present, essential for maintaining fire compartmentation. The task applies to schools and colleges with fire shutters in stairwells, fire curtains in auditoriums or dining areas, and similar barrier systems.

Responsible Persons

- **Task Type:** Approved Contractor
- **Contractor Requirements:** This task should be carried out by a competent fire safety systems maintenance company with specialist knowledge of automatic barriers. Contractors should hold appropriate certifications for fire shutter and curtain systems. Typical cost range: £200-£400 per system depending on size and complexity.
- **Permit to Work:** May require coordination with building users during testing.
- **Delivery Model:** Normally contractor-delivered due to the specialist testing equipment and

technical knowledge required.

Key Considerations

- **Timing considerations:** Schedule during school holidays to allow for testing and any repairs
- **Cost implications:** Budget £200-£400 per system annually for professional servicing
- **Resource requirements:** Allow access to control systems and barrier locations
- **Potential disruption:** May require temporary closure of areas during testing
- **Risk assessment requirements:** Service findings should inform the fire risk assessment

Task Instructions

Prerequisites & Safety

- Ensure the contractor has expertise in fire shutter and curtain systems
- Provide access to control panels and system documentation
- Confirm testing can be conducted without endangering building occupants
- Arrange for safe testing conditions and area isolation if needed

Tools & Materials

- System documentation and control manuals
- Testing equipment for deployment mechanisms
- Replacement fusible links and control components
- Lubricants and cleaning materials
- Safety equipment for working at height

Method (Step-by-Step)

Phase A: Pre-Service Assessment

1. Review system documentation and previous service records
2. Identify all fire shutters and curtains requiring service
3. Check control system integration with fire alarms
4. Prepare testing schedule and safety procedures

Phase B: Visual Inspection

1. Inspect shutter/curtain materials for damage or wear
2. Check mounting systems and guides for alignment

3. Examine fusible links, electrical systems, and controls
4. Verify clearance around openings and operation paths
5. Assess integration with building management systems

Phase C: Functional Testing

1. Test automatic deployment from fire alarm activation
2. Verify manual control operation and override functions
3. Check deployment speed and full closure
4. Test reset and reopening mechanisms
5. Confirm system status indicators and alarms

Phase D: Maintenance and Servicing

1. Lubricate moving parts and guides
2. Replace worn components and fusible links
3. Clean and maintain control systems
4. Adjust alignment and tension as required

Phase E: Documentation and Certification

1. Document all test results and system performance
2. Prepare detailed inspection report with findings
3. Issue inspection certificate confirming compliance
4. Recommend maintenance schedule and any upgrades

Measurements & Acceptance Criteria

- Deployment time must meet manufacturer specifications (typically <30 seconds)
- Full closure must be achieved without gaps or obstructions
- Control systems must respond correctly to activation signals
- Materials must maintain required fire resistance rating

If Results Fail

Follow instructions on the Compliance Pod task completion form to record remedial/follow up actions and generate Reactive Task Tickets as required. Immediately isolate faulty systems and implement alternative fire safety measures. Escalate significant issues to facilities management and arrange urgent repairs. Monitor affected areas closely until systems are restored.

Reinstatement & Housekeeping

Restore systems to normal operation and remove any temporary barriers. Ensure control systems are reset and indicators show normal status.

Completion Checks

Verify that all systems have been inspected and tested. Confirm that the inspection report details all components and test results. Ensure the inspection certificate confirms system compliance.

Client Oversight Checklist (Before the Visit)

- Confirm contractor's expertise in fire barrier systems
- Provide system documentation and control details
- Arrange access to all system components
- Schedule during period when testing disruption is minimised

Client Oversight Checklist (During the Visit)

- Observe inspection of system components and controls
- Ensure functional testing covers all deployment modes
- Verify that faulty components are identified and replaced
- Confirm comprehensive documentation of test results

Deliverables & Acceptance Criteria (After the Visit)

- Receive detailed inspection report with test results
- Review inspection certificate confirming system compliance
- Ensure recommendations for maintenance are specific and prioritised
- Confirm that all documentation is complete and accurate

Defects & Follow-up

Follow instructions on the Compliance Pod task completion form to record remedial/follow up actions and generate Reactive Task Tickets as required. Prioritise repairs to critical barriers protecting escape routes. Agree timescales for component replacement. Schedule re-testing after major repairs.

Reinstatement & Sign-off

Confirm systems are operational and control indicators show normal status. Complete final sign-off once all documentation is received.

Record-Keeping & Evidence

- **Upload Process:** Upload any required statutory or supporting evidence to the corresponding task form in Compliance Pod.
- **Statutory Evidence:** Contractor's inspection report and certificate must be retained for at least 3 years.
- **Supporting/Good Practice Evidence:** Detailed test results and maintenance recommendations support audit readiness.

Common Pitfalls & Best Practice Tips

- **Common mistakes to avoid:** Not testing all deployment modes, missing control system faults, or failing to check integration with fire alarms
- **Best practices for efficient completion:** Maintain detailed system records, conduct pre-service visual checks, and coordinate with fire alarm maintenance
- **Pro tips for educational settings:** Use servicing visits to train staff on system operation, check barrier accessibility for emergency services, and consider modern alternatives if maintenance is problematic
- **Warning signs that indicate problems:** Slow deployment times, incomplete closure, or frequent activation faults

Quick Reference Checklist

- System documentation and previous records reviewed
- All fire shutters and curtains identified
- Visual inspection of materials and components completed
- Functional testing of deployment systems conducted
- Control systems and integration verified
- Maintenance and lubrication completed
- Inspection report and certificate received
- Evidence uploaded to Compliance Pod

Grouped Tasks

Grouping is feasible; align with related tasks of the same frequency and contractor visit.

Related Tasks

- Fire - Extinguishing Equipment - Portable Fire Extinguishers Full Service & Inspection

- Fire - Extinguishing Equipment - Fire Hose Reels Full Service & Inspection
- Fire - Extinguishing Equipment - Sprinkler Systems Full Service & Test
- Fire - Extinguishing Equipment - Fire Suppression Systems Full Service & Test
- Fire - Extinguishing Equipment - Smoke Vents & AOVs Full Service & Test
- Fire - Extinguishing Equipment - Fire Hydrants Full Service & Inspection
- Fire - Extinguishing Equipment - Dry & Wet Risers Full Service & Inspection

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Users must ensure that all tasks are carried out in line with current legislation, manufacturer instructions, site-specific risk assessments, and organisational policies. Where necessary, professional advice should be sought from competent and accredited specialists — for example, fire risk assessors, water hygiene consultants, electrical engineers, gas safety contractors, or health and safety advisors.