



40. Fire - Evacuation & Drills - Emergency Evacuation Chairs Full Service & Inspection

Category:	Fire
Subcategory:	Evacuation & Drills
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 dedication to maintaining serviceable emergency evacuation chairs ensures that mobility-impaired individuals can be safely evacuated from multi-storey buildings. By ensuring these specialised devices function correctly in schools and colleges, you support equality legislation and safeguard the most vulnerable members of the school community. Your expertise in overseeing these essential accessibility tools demonstrates your vital role in inclusive emergency preparedness.

Task Summary

Statutory: Emergency evacuation chairs must be serviced and inspected annually by a competent contractor to confirm mechanical integrity and safe operation. This comprehensive maintenance involves checking chair mechanisms, testing deployment systems, verifying structural integrity, and ensuring compliance with safety standards. The service includes functional testing of all moving parts, inspection of harnesses and restraints, checking battery systems, and verifying wheel operation. These devices are critical for evacuating mobility-impaired pupils, staff, or visitors from upper floors in multi-storey schools and colleges. The inspection includes checking for wear, damage, and proper storage. Evidence produced includes the contractor's inspection certificate confirming compliance and functionality, detailed service report documenting all checks performed and maintenance completed,

and any recommendations for repairs or replacement.

Relevant Legislation & Guidance

- **Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005:** Requires adequate arrangements for disabled persons during evacuation
- **Equality Act 2010:** Requires reasonable adjustments for disabled persons including emergency evacuation
- **Fire Safety: Approved Document B (Buildings other than dwellinghouses):** Provides guidance on evacuation equipment for disabled people
- **British Standard BS 9999: Fire safety in the design, management and use of buildings - Code of practice:** Includes guidance on evacuation equipment maintenance
- **The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014** (for independent schools): Requires adequate provision for pupils with disabilities

Typical Frequency

Emergency evacuation chairs must be serviced and inspected annually where fitted, with this comprehensive maintenance typically scheduled during school holidays. In educational settings with evacuation chairs, annual servicing is essential for ensuring equipment reliability. The frequency cannot be reduced as it is a statutory requirement for maintaining evacuation capability for disabled persons.

Applicability

This task applies to educational establishments that have emergency evacuation chairs installed, which is occasional as these are typically found in multi-storey buildings or those serving disabled users. It is a core statutory task where chairs are present, essential for ensuring accessibility and equality compliance. The task applies to schools and colleges with evacuation chairs for disabled occupants.

Responsible Persons

- **Task Type:** Approved Contractor
- **Contractor Requirements:** This task should be carried out by a competent evacuation equipment maintenance company with specialist knowledge of chair mechanisms and safety standards. Contractors should hold appropriate accreditations for evacuation equipment. Typical cost range: £150-£300 per chair depending on type and condition.
- **Permit to Work:** No permit to work is typically required, though access to storage and usage areas may be needed.

- **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 thorough inspection and any repairs
- **Cost implications:** Budget £150-£300 annually per chair for professional servicing
- **Resource requirements:** Allow access to chair storage and deployment areas
- **Potential disruption:** May require temporary removal of chairs for detailed inspection
- **Risk assessment requirements:** Service findings should inform the fire risk assessment

Task Instructions

Prerequisites & Safety

- Ensure the contractor has expertise in evacuation chair systems
- Provide access to chair storage and usage documentation
- Confirm inspection can be conducted safely in storage areas
- Arrange for safe handling of chairs during inspection

Tools & Materials

- Chair inventory and usage records
- Specialist testing equipment for chair mechanisms
- Replacement parts and components as needed
- Safety equipment for handling chairs
- Documentation templates and checklists

Method (Step-by-Step)

Phase A: Pre-Service Assessment

1. Review chair inventory and previous service records
2. Identify all evacuation chairs requiring service
3. Gather usage records and incident reports
4. Prepare inspection schedule and safety procedures

Phase B: Visual Inspection

1. Inspect chair frames and structural integrity

2. Check wheels, brakes, and mobility systems
3. Examine harnesses, restraints, and safety features
4. Verify battery systems and charging equipment
5. Assess storage conditions and accessibility

Phase C: Functional Testing

1. Test chair deployment and folding mechanisms
2. Verify wheel operation and braking systems
3. Check harness and restraint functionality
4. Test battery performance and charging
5. Confirm all safety features operate correctly

Phase D: Maintenance and Servicing

1. Lubricate moving parts and mechanisms
2. Clean and maintain chair components
3. Replace worn harnesses or components
4. Adjust brakes and wheel alignments

Phase E: Documentation and Certification

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

Measurements & Acceptance Criteria

- Chair mechanisms must deploy and fold smoothly
- Wheels and brakes must operate correctly
- Harnesses must be in good condition and secure
- Battery systems must hold charge adequately

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 remove faulty chairs from service. Escalate issues to facilities management and arrange urgent repairs or replacement. Implement alternative evacuation procedures for affected individuals.

Reinstatement & Housekeeping

Return all chairs to service and ensure proper storage. Ensure storage areas remain accessible.

Completion Checks

Verify that the inspection certificate confirms chair compliance. Confirm that the service report covers all chairs inspected. Ensure recommendations are specific and prioritised.

Client Oversight Checklist (Before the Visit)

- Confirm contractor's expertise in evacuation chair systems
- Provide chair inventory and usage records
- Arrange access to storage and deployment areas
- Schedule during period when disruption is minimised

Client Oversight Checklist (During the Visit)

- Observe inspection of chair components and mechanisms
- Ensure comprehensive functional testing of all systems
- Verify that safety features are tested thoroughly
- Confirm detailed documentation of findings

Deliverables & Acceptance Criteria (After the Visit)

- Receive inspection certificate confirming chair compliance
- Review detailed service report with test results
- 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 ensure evacuation capability. Agree timescales for chair replacement. Schedule re-inspection after major repairs.

Reinstatement & Sign-off

Confirm chairs are operational and properly stored. 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 certificate and service report 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 chair functions, missing worn components, or failing to check storage conditions
- **Best practices for efficient completion:** Maintain detailed usage records, conduct pre-service visual checks, and coordinate with disability support staff
- **Pro tips for educational settings:** Use servicing visits to review chair usage training, coordinate with disability advisors, and maintain clear records of chair assignments
- **Warning signs that indicate problems:** Difficulty deploying chairs, worn harnesses, or battery failures

Quick Reference Checklist

- Chair inventory and previous records reviewed
- All evacuation chairs identified and inspected
- Structural integrity and mechanisms checked
- Functional testing of deployment and mobility completed
- Harnesses and safety features verified
- Maintenance and component replacement completed
- Inspection certificate and service report received
- Evidence uploaded to Compliance Pod

Grouped Tasks

This task is not normally grouped with other tasks.

Related Tasks

- Fire - Evacuation & Drills - Emergency Evacuation Chairs Quarterly Inspection
- Fire - Evacuation & Drills - Sleeping Accommodation Evacuation Drill

- Fire - Evacuation & Drills - Building Evacuation Drill

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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.