

ASIAL Guidelines for the Installation, Maintenance, and Back-to-Base Monitoring of Smoke Detectors/Sensors Connected to Residential and Commercial Security Systems

(Information for the Customer)

ASIAL recommends that its member companies provide a copy of this guideline to existing or prospective customers who may wish to have smoke sensors connected to security alarm panels.

Purpose of Smoke Detectors/Sensors:

The purpose of any smoke detector is to detect the presence of smoke and assist in alerting persons on site via noisemakers. Smoke sensors linked to an alarm panel monitored back-to-base may provide some further measure of safety, however this should be in addition to any mandatory requirements dictated by identified risk or statutes.

Fire Brigade Response to Monitored Smoke Detectors/Sensors:

Fire brigades in each State/Territory vary in their approach towards monitored smoke sensors. While a duty of care exists to respond to any potential fire, brigades are aware that residential smoke sensing devices are more prone to false alarms than certified fire system devices. ***Customers should be aware that fire brigades in many areas may charge for callouts to false smoke alarms.***

Customer Responsibilities:

Security alarm companies are not expert in smoke or fire detection, and are not generally qualified to offer advice or solutions. Customers should seek their own independent expert advice in relation to appropriate smoke or fire statutes, detection, and appropriate measures.

Suitability for Purpose:

1. As a general guideline, ASIAL recommends that member companies never install smoke sensors connected to alarm panels for any of the following reasons:
 - Under a Development Application
 - Building Audit requirement
 - Building Code of Australia (BCA) requirement
 - Australian Standards requirement
 - Legislative requirement
 - Insurance requirement

(Or relevant State/Territory-based equivalents of above)
2. A security alarm system should never be used as the primary monitoring method for an Australian Standards compliant fire alarm system, even if standards compliant fire monitoring is not required.

3. Smoke sensors connected to security alarm systems should only be supplementary and, as such, ASIAL recommends against connection of large numbers of sensors (e.g. more than 5, or numbers of smoke sensors greater than the number of security detection devices.)
4. ASIAL recommends against security alarm panels being used to control or trigger other functions as a result of the detection of smoke.

Disclaimers:

ASIAL and its member companies advise the following disclaimer information:

- Smoke sensors connected to alarm panels do not meet BCA requirements or any other statutes in relation to smoke/fire detection.
- Security alarm monitoring centres are not approved fire monitoring centres and, whilst they will carry out instructions to the best of their ability, they cannot guarantee response to any specific alarm event.
- No claim is made that the use of smoke sensors linked to alarm panels will avoid serious injury or death resulting from fire.
- Because smoke sensors are not approved fire sensors, ASIAL supports the position adopted by many members of limiting smoke alarm response procedures to phoning the premises and/or listed emergency contact/s.
- If a customer requires their alarm monitoring centre to request fire brigade attendance upon receipt of a smoke alarm (and the monitoring centre agrees to do so), then any costs associated with the dispatch of fire appliances will be the responsibility of the customer.
- It is the customer's responsibility to regularly test and maintain the alarm system (including all connected devices) in compliance with manufacturer's recommendations.

Useful Websites:

www.iccwa.org.au/fire/htm

www.energyrating.gov.au/library/pubs/sb200405-smokealarms.pdf