1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In order to ensure a safe place of work with safe access and egress, legislation requires employers to take measures to mitigate specific risks associated with fire.

1.2 The aim of this bulletin is to provide a description of the NIGALA’s arrangements for fire safety training, fire safety risk assessment, fire strategy and fire evacuation procedures.

2.0 FIRE SAFETY TRAINING

2.1 It is a requirement that all employees should receive annual fire safety training covering fire prevention, what to do in the event of a fire and a demonstration on how to use a fire extinguisher.

2.2 Fire Awareness training is available to NIGALA employees by following the link below and clicking on Fire Awareness Training. This training is mandatory and must be completed on an annual basis by all employees.

   http://www.hsclearning.com/

2.3 The Health & Safety Officer (Sinéad Casey) will monitor compliance of this training and reports on completion of the training will be provided the Health & Safety Committee and the Executive Team on an annual basis.

3.0 FIRE SAFETY RISK ASSESSMENT

3.1 The Fire Safety Regulations (NI) 2010 came into effect on 15 November 2010 which brought about significant changes to how fire safety is managed in all non-domestic premises. The regulations put the emphasis of fire prevention and risk reduction by placing responsibility on the owners/occupiers of premises to ensure fire safety.

3.2 The regulations require all non-domestic premises to hold a valid fire safety risk assessment. This replaces the fire certification process and any fire certificates held will no longer be valid.

3.3 Fire Safety Risk Assessment can be defined as,

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“An organised and methodical look at premises, the activities carried on there, and the likelihood that a fire could start and cause harm to those in and around the premises” (www.nifrs.org).

3.4 The legal duty which is imposed by the legislation can be considered in terms of seven general requirements:

(i) Carrying out a fire safety risk assessment of the premises.
(ii) Putting in place fire safety measures which have been identified as necessary as a result of the fire safety risk assessment outcome.
(iii) Implementing these fire safety measures using risk reduction principles.
(iv) Putting in place fire safety arrangement for the ongoing control and review of the fire safety measures.
(v) Complying additionally with the specific requirements of the Fire Safety Regulations.
(vi) Keeping the fire safety risk assessment and outcome under review.
(vii) Record keeping.

3.5 The prime objective of the fire risk assessment is to ensure a reasonable standard of fire precautions for life safety. The aim of the fire risk assessment is to:

- Identify the fire hazards.
- Reduce the risk of those hazards causing harm to as low as reasonably practicable.
- Decide what physical fire precautions and management arrangements are necessary to ensure the safety of people within the premises if a fire does start.

3.6 Fire safety risk assessments will be undertaken annually in all three NIGALA offices i.e. Centre House, Spencer House and Dobbin Centre, by trained risk assessors as per the NIGALA Risk Assessment Programme. NIGALA Risk Assessors are:

- Sinéad Casey ext 309;
- James Lawne ext 269.

3.7 The findings of the risk assessments will be reported to The Health & Safety Committee, relevant Assistant Directors/Line Managers, and to the Risk Management Committee when additions, deletions and amendments to the Risk Register are required.

3.8 Action required to remove/control risks will be approved by the Risk Management Committee, in liaison with the Corporate Services Manager.

3.9 The Corporate Services Manager and the Risk Management Committee (through the Health & Safety Committee, as appropriate) will be responsible for ensuring the required action is implemented.

3.10 As per the H&S Committee Terms of Reference, H&S Committee minutes are forwarded to SMT for their information. Reports regarding implemented actions and
issues will be reported to SMT as necessary via Declan McAllister, Chair of H&S Committee who also attends SMT meetings.

4.0 **Fire Safety Manual Records/Maintenance**

4.1 Centre House, Spencer House and Dobbin Centre each has a Fire Safety Manual held on site and it is the responsibility of the Nominated Person to maintain records within the manual as per requirement.

**Nominated Persons:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Extension no.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Centre House</td>
<td>James Lawne, ext no. 269</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dobbin Centre</td>
<td>Angela Marshall, ext no. 331</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spencer House</td>
<td>Sinéad Casey, ext no. 309</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please refer to Appendix 1 for summary of routine fire inspections and tests to be carried out by nominated persons (where applicable).

5.0 **Fire Wardens/Fire Safety Responsibility**

**Centre House:**

- Chief Fire Officer: Centre House Building Security
- NIGALA Fire Warden: Declan McAllister
- NIGALA Deputy Fire Warden: James Lawne

**Spencer House:**

- Fire Warden: Sinéad Casey

**Dobbin Centre:**

- Fire Warden: Angela Marshall

5.1 **Fire Warden’s Duties**

During the evacuation procedure, the fire wardens will:

- Provide instruction to all within the office regarding safe evacuation of the office.
- Ensure that the office is clear and ensure WCs (where applicable) are empty.
- Proceed to Assembly Point.

It is imperative that all employees and visitors comply with any instructions provided by nominated person/fire warden.
6.0 FIRE STRATEGY – EVACUATION PROCEDURE

6.1 OFFICE CHECKS AND PROCEDURES

In order to maintain a safe, secure environment for employees and visitors, nominated persons (see section 4) will perform the following duties:

- Carry out daily checks regarding the following:
  - Means of escape;
  - Lock up/end of day inspection i.e. final inspection of office to ensure that all equipment is switched off or left running safe (e.g. refrigerator), ensure combustible materials are not left near electrical apparatus, all heaters are switched off, fire doors closed.

- Remove any obvious items of waste/obstruction from fire exits. All fire exits must be kept clear at all times.

- Observe and report on any of the following:
  - Suspicious packages;
  - Spillage and leakage;
  - Obstructions;
  - Faulty doors;
  - Fire exits/doors to be kept closed;
  - Any other defects.

- Litter, spillages and leakages are to be dealt with immediately when they are discovered. Obstructions such as waste material are to be removed immediately.

6.2 FIRE PREVENTION

The following management measures are in place to ensure good housekeeping practices:

- Fire drills will be carried out annually in Spencer House by the caretaker and in the Dobbin Centre by the landlord. Fire drills occur bi-annually in Centre House and are carried out by building security. The Nominated Person for each NIGALA office will log the event in the Fire Safety Manual recording the date of the drill, duration of the evacuation, those in attendance, and any observations/deficiencies in the procedures.

- Combustible materials will not be stored near ignition sources.

- Smoking is not permitted in any area inside the premises. The NIGALA has a non-smoking policy in place.
- All relevant records will be updated and held on site i.e. fire safety manual records.

- Maintenance contracts are in place for fire fighting equipment, electrical equipment/PAT testing to be carried out on an annual basis by external contractors.

- Cleaning materials will be locked away.

- Fire Risk Assessments will be conducted on an annual basis in accordance with Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations 2001 (NI) and The Fire Safety Regulations (NI) 2010.

6.3 **FIRE DETECTION AND ALARM SYSTEMS**

It is important that a managed evacuation of each NIGALA office can be accomplished efficiently and quickly. All employees must be aware of what to do in the event of fire alarm sounding.

Upon initiation of any alarm, the fire panel in each building (Centre House at reception desk in main foyer, Spencer House at back entrance of the building, Dobbin Centre in one of the units – the chemist) will be activated, displaying to floor, zone number and brief location and brief description of the activation.

- If an employee member discovers a fire or one is reported to nominated person, the break-glass point should be activated. This will immediately raise the alarm and warn people in the premises of the danger.

- Alert the Fire & Rescue Service:

  - From Mobile: 999
  - From Office Landline: 9 for an outside line, then 999

- Follow fire evacuation procedures (see 6.5).

- Immediately after the fire alarm has been sounded the fire warden should:
  - See that any doors immediately surrounding the fire situation are closed.
  - Escort persons from the building in accordance with evacuation procedures ensuring that all doors through which are passed are closed.

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6.4 **EMPLOYEES/VISITOR RECORDS**

**Centre House**
- NIGALA employees have been issued with swipe card/door pass which must be used on entrance/exit of the NIGALA office. If an employee does not have their swipe card, the Visitors Book at reception must be signed on entrance/exit.
- Visitors to NIGALA, Centre House must sign the Visitors Book at reception on entrance/exit of the office.

**Spencer House**
- Visitors to NIGALA, Spencer House must sign the Visitors Book at reception on entrance/exit of the office.

**Dobbin Centre**
- Visitors to NIGALA, Dobbin Centre must sign the Visitors Book at reception on entrance/exit of the office.

The above is to ensure an accurate record of employees/visitors in each NIGALA office in the event of fire evacuation.

6.5 **EVACUATION PROCEDURES**

- Stop work immediately.
- Do not run or stop to lift personal possessions.
- All employees and visitors are to walk quickly to the appropriate assembly point irrespective of the routes used by fire wardens/nominated persons and report to their appointed fire warden at the assembly point.

**ASSEMBLY POINTS:**

**Centre House:**
- Primary: Corner of Montgomery Street and Gloucester Street.
- Secondary: Victoria Street end of Victoria Square.

**Spencer House:**
- Spencer House Car Park

**Dobbin Centre:**
- Dobbin Centre Car Park

6.6 **EVACUATION ROUTES**

- Evacuation must be by the nearest available exit unless otherwise directed by nominated persons/security.
- Evacuation via passenger lifts will not be possible during an evacuation.

Please refer to Appendix 2 for evacuation routes for each NIGALA office.
6.7 **EVACUATION OF DISABLED EMPLOYEES/VISITORS - PERSONAL EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLANS (PEEP)**

**Employees/Self-Employed Panel Members:**

- **New Start Evacuation Questionnaire (see Appendix 3)**

  When a new employee has been appointed to the NIGALA they will be provided with an evacuation questionnaire as part of their Health & Safety induction. This is to identify if an employee requires a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP). A PEEP may be required where a person has any of the following:
  
  - Mobility impairment
  - Visual impairment
  - Hearing impairment
  - Cognitive disability

  On completion of the questionnaire, if it is identified a PEEP is required, this will be completed along with the individual and a NIGALA risk assessor, using the guidelines from the HM Government Fire Safety Risk Assessment: Means of Escape for Disabled People document.

  When completed, the PEEP will then be shared with designated people i.e. Fire Wardens, Evac Chair Personnel (if appropriate) and Line Manager.

- **PEEP Letter (see Appendix 4)**

  An initial letter will be sent to employees requesting the NIGALA be advised if an individual feels a PEEP is required. The purpose of this is to review and update emergency evacuation procedures for employees due to a change in the individual’s circumstances, whether a temporary or permanent change.

  If it is identified a PEEP is required, this will be completed by the Health & Safety Officer and the individual, using the guidelines from the HM Government Fire Safety Risk Assessment: Means of Escape for Disabled People document. Please refer to Appendix 5 for the PEEP template.

  If a PEEP was not initially required by an individual and circumstances change thereafter, if it the individual feels they would benefit from a PEEP please advise the Health & Safety officer who will arrange to devise the plan along with the individual in accordance with their needs.

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When completed, the PEEP will then be shared with designated people i.e. Fire Wardens, Evac Chair Personnel (if appropriate) and Line Manager.

**Visitors/Members of the Public:**

Signage will be displayed at reception advising visitors the NIGALA operates a PEEP system and requesting the visitor/member of the public advise employees at reception if they need assistance in the event of an eviction.

If a visitor/member of the public identifies him/herself as requiring assistance, reception will contact the NIGALA fire warden (as detailed in section 5) to speak with the person and advise of the evacuation procedure in line with their identified disability.

If it has been established a person has mobility impairment, Evac Chair personnel will be notified of same in the event the person requires assistance evacuating the building.

**All visitors will evacuate the building along with the employee they are visiting, complying with the advice and guidance of the Fire Warden.**

**Mobility Impaired**

- Mobility impaired can also include those individuals who have heart disease, asthma/breathing difficulties, and heart conditions for example, and temporary conditions such as pregnancy.

- In Centre House an Evac Chair can be used to assist those who may be mobility impaired in the event of an emergency evacuation. Personnel must be trained in the use of the Evac Chair. The following NIGALA employees based in Centre House are trained in the use of the Evac Chair:

  | Name        | Ext. No.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ann Andrew</td>
<td>261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Lawne</td>
<td>269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leah Hughes</td>
<td>232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louise Tweedie</td>
<td>270</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Spencer House and Dobbin Centre NIGALA offices are situated on the ground floor.

**Visual Impairment**

- In the event of an emergency evacuation, each NIGALA office location is fitted with a fire alarm which will sound indicating the need to evacuate the building.

- Within Centre House there is an intercom system available. Security of Centre House building will use the intercom to alert all within the building.
Where it is known a visitor has a visual impairment, the employee with whom the person is visiting will evacuate the building along with the employee complying with instructions provided by the fire warden.

**Hearing Impaired/Deaf**
- Each NIGALA office has been fitted with visual beacons which are linked to the fire alarm. These will flash when the fire alarm has been raised, thus alerting those with hearing difficulties to evacuate the premises.

- Where it is known a visitor has a hearing impairment, the employee with whom the person is visiting will evacuate the building along with the employee complying with instructions provided by the fire warden.

**Cognitive Disabilities**
- People with cognitive disabilities may not have the same perception of risk as non-disabled people. If it is known a person has a cognitive disability the nominated person/fire warden will ensure safe evacuation from the building. Where a person with a known cognitive disability is visiting an employee of NIGALA, the employee will ensure the person leaves the building safely by complying with instructions provided by the fire warden.

**Children**
- If children are visiting with an employee of NIGALA, the employee will ensure the children leave the building safely by complying with instructions provided by fire warden.

It is imperative that all employees and visitors comply with any instructions provided by the fire warden.

### 6.8 Procedures for Re-Entry of Building

- **Centre House** employees will re-enter the building through via the main reception doors to the main building. Security will ensure that the rear gate is locked after evacuation is completed. All passes are to be shown to the security guards on re-entering the building.

- **Spencer House** employees will re-enter the building through the double doors leading out to the car park, leading into the main foyer of the building.

- **Dobbin Centre** employees will re-enter the building through either main entrance on left or fire exit on right.
7.0 **Extinguishing Fires/Firefighting Equipment**

7.1 Employees should only attempt to extinguish a fire if it is felt safe to do so, and only after the fire alarm has been raised.

7.2 All incidents, however small, are to be reported to the fire warden.

7.3 Each NIGALA office has a number of fire extinguishers and fire blankets available to them. All employees receive fire safety training annually which includes a demonstration on how to operate a fire extinguisher.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Equipment</th>
<th>Suitable for use on:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Water Extinguishers</td>
<td>- Fires involving solid materials such as wood, paper or textiles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Red extinguisher, Red label)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foam Extinguishers</td>
<td>- Fires involving solid materials such as wood, paper or textiles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Red extinguisher, Cream label)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co2 Extinguishers</td>
<td>- Particular suitably for fires involving electrical equipment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Red extinguisher, Black label)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire Blankets</td>
<td>- Light duty fire blankets suitable for dealing with small fires involving cooking oils or clothing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8.0 **Bomb Threat and Evacuation**

8.1 In light of the report to security of a suspect device requiring the evacuation of the building, the following procedures will be followed:

**Centre House:**
- The security guard will manually sound the bomb alarm system and using the PA system will instruct all occupiers on a safe route out of the building to the bomb evacuation assembly point. All public doors are to be opened to facilitate speedy evacuation.

- Security staff will notify the fire wardens at the bomb assembly point once the ‘all clear’ has been given by the police. No one is to re-enter the building until it has been deemed safe to do so.
Spencer House:
- The caretaker will manually sound the alarm system. Evacuation procedures as per fire evacuation must be followed. No one is to re-enter the building until it has been deemed safe to do so.

Dobbin Centre:
- Dobbin Centre does not have security or caretaker on site. As a result, in the event of bomb threat, Dobbin Centre relies on the PSNI/landlord to inform of this. Evacuation procedures as per fire evacuation must be followed. No one is to re-enter the building until it has been deemed safe to do so.

9.0 CROSS-REFERENCE TO OTHER RELATED NIGALA DOCUMENTS

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<tr>
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<th>DOCUMENT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Risk Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>H&amp;S Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NIGALA Risk Assessment Programme</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10.0 GUIDANCE/LEGISLATION

10.1 Guidance/legislation to be aware of includes:
- Northern Ireland FIRECODE Policies and Principles (hard copy available in each office library).
- The Fire Safety Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010 (available on NIGALA intranet).
- The Fire and Rescue Services (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 (available on NIGALA intranet).

11.0 APPENDICES

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<tr>
<th>APPENDIX</th>
<th>DOCUMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Summary of Routine Fire Inspections and Tests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Evacuation Routes for each NIGALA office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>New Start Evacuation Questionnaire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Letter to Employees regarding PEEP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan Template</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>