

LABSS INFORMATION PAPER INFOP13 - 2016 Version 3 – 2 August 2016

PROVISION OF SECONDARY GLAZING WITH A PROPRIETARY MAGNETIC TAPE AND FIXINGS
MEANS OF ESCAPE AND TRICKLE VENTILATION

Applicable to Domestic Buildings created by a Conversion to which Regulations 4 and 12 apply
Consideration of Standards 2.9 Escape Windows and 3.14 Trickle Ventilation

BACKGROUND**Applicability – Conversions**

For the purposes of this determination when considering the effects of fitting secondary glazing units over existing windows which will be required to meet escape window requirements and which will require the provision of trickle ventilation, full compliance with the Mandatory Standards 2.9 and 3.14 referred to here, apply only to those buildings which are subject to a conversion in terms of Regulation 4.

Applicability – Existing Buildings not subject to a conversion

Works to install secondary glazing to existing buildings which are not subject to a conversion are exempt from the need for a building warrant but those works must be carried out on condition that this work or fitting is to a standard no worse than that at present. So if the secondary glazing is to be fitted to an existing escape window in an existing dwelling, it must have due regard to the functionality of the existing window or it should meet the criteria expressed here. In either event, the fitting of the secondary glazing should not result in non-compliance of a standard which was met by the original window.

SUMMARY

The two issues under consideration here are

- the adequacy of the escape window, access, functionality and egress from it to meet **Mandatory Standard 2.9**, and
- the provision, when needed, of trickle ventilation to meet **Mandatory Standard 3.14**

DECISION**Mandatory Standard 2.9**

To meet the aims of Mandatory Standard 2.9, with regard to the provision of an escape window, accessed via a prescribed secondary glazing unit, the following criteria must be met:

To facilitate access to the escape window the secondary glazing features should include a:

- Split system install – this should allow the lower section to be removed independently to upper section to facilitate access to escape window.
- The lower section should be capable of being easily removed via pull tab clearly marked – secondary glazing is fixed using a proprietary magnetic tape and fixings which when broken allows the secondary glazing unit to be easily lifted free to give access to the escape window for unobstructed use of it.

DECISION

Mandatory Standard 3.14

To meet the aims of Mandatory Standard 3.14, with regard to the provision of trickle ventilation where deemed necessary, via a prescribed secondary glazing unit the following criteria must be met:

To facilitate access to the existing window ventilation openings the secondary glazing features should include:

1. **Conventional Trickle Vents** - Install an open vent with cover and slide to open and close.
2. **Controllable Vent slats** - Remove the top section of the secondary glazing unit to provide controllable ventilation openings. The size of section removed depends on the size of system installed or specification provided. In this install the beading is left deliberately short at top of window at both sides. This also works when no beading installed, just remove the top side section of each secondary glazing system to allow controllable ventilation.
3. **Other site specific solutions** - These must be discussed and agreed by the designer, the occupant and the verifier on a case by case basis.

CONDITIONS OF ACCEPTANCE

In addition, due regard must be had to the site specific characteristics referred to here.

SITE SPECIFIC CHARACTERISTICS

These shall be assessed by the designer and approval granted by the verifier only if the operation of the window for escape purposes and trickle ventilation purposes is not compromised by the fitting of the proprietary glazing units and

- access to and egress from the specified escape window is achieved, and
- specific cognisance of the Technical Handbook guidance must be considered. This guidance advises that “*A permanent ventilator is not recommended since occupants like control over their environment and uncontrollable ventilators are usually permanently sealed up to prevent draughts*”. In particular, the purpose of secondary glazing is to improve the U-value of the window and/or reduce drafts – the formation of a permanent opening in the secondary glazing will significantly reduce the effectiveness of this adding to the occupant’s desire to permanently seal the opening.
- Due regard must be taken of any existing trickle ventilation provision within the existing window. To facilitate the trickle ventilation within the secondary glazing unit the installation must ensure a flow of air from the outside – this may mean removing any controllable fixings on the existing window.

In every case, discussions must be held with the designer, occupant and verifier to agree and to ensure compliance with the conditions of this decision

Written instructions MUST be left with the building occupants to explain the operation of the secondary glazing unit.

REASONS FOR DECISION

To ensure that the aims of the Mandatory Standards referred to in this LABSS Information Paper are not compromised by the fitting of secondary glazing to existing windows within a property which is subjected to a conversion to create a dwelling