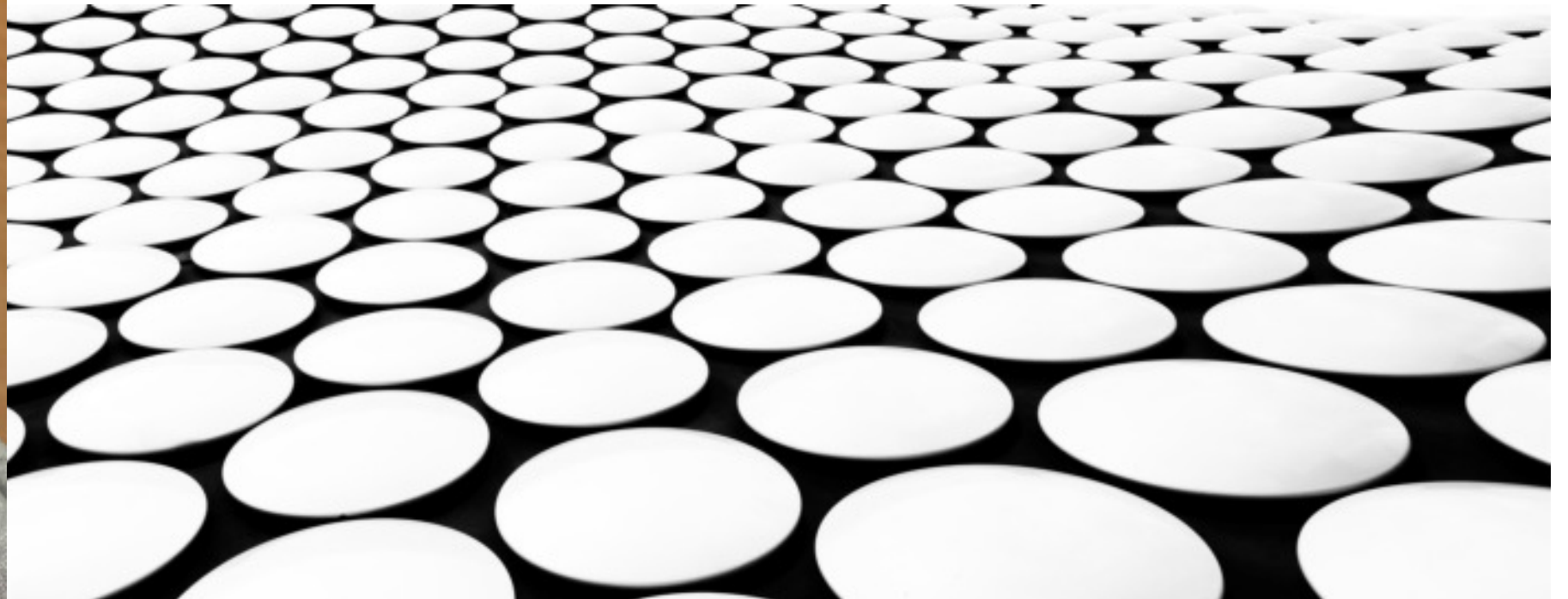
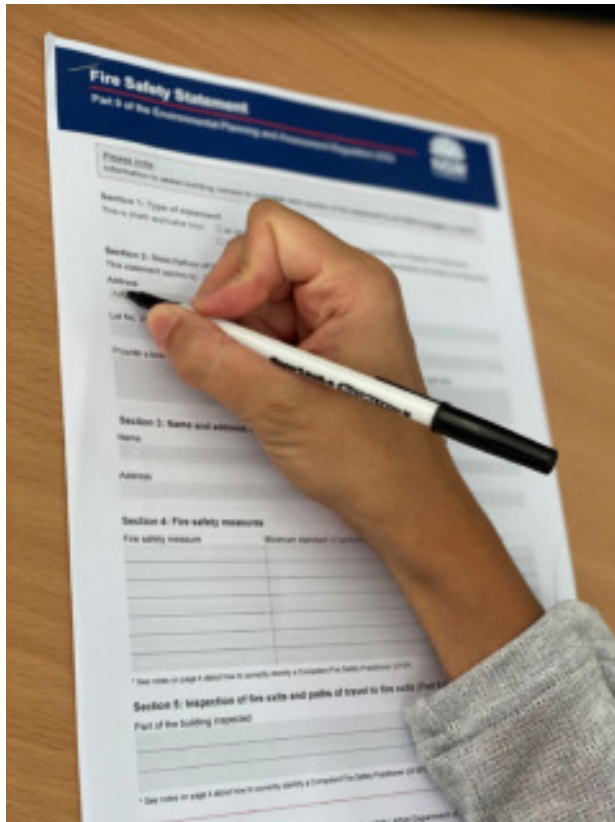


WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN A FIRE CONTRACTOR (OTHER THAN PRICE).

WHAT CAN I DO TO MAKE THE RIGHT DECISIONS?



WHY FIRE PROTECTION?

- Fire & Rescue NSW states: *“The risk of a fatality in a home fire is halved if there is a working smoke alarm.”*
- They also state the importance of smoke alarms being maintained –smoke alarms are only one of the many systems in your building - keeping you safe.
- Fire & Rescue NSW attended 24,597 structural fire incidents in 2021.
- Deaths from fire are relatively uncommon at 25 - 35 per year - likely due to the relatively high levels of fire protection found in Australian buildings.
- But..... Just like your car, if it's not serviced, it may not work that day you really need it.
- And that's why I hope you're here today.....

WHY FIRE PROTECTION?

- What's the right level of service?
- How do I know what I need to maintain?
- How do I choose a contractor that will keep my building, my family and myself safe from fire?
- What's the difference between them?
- What should I be looking for in a contractor?

WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO?

- As a building owner (strata or otherwise), the law requires you 'maintain' the fire equipment and systems in your building.
- The law does not state how you must maintain it; however, there is only one current Australian Standard for maintaining fire protection systems – and that is AS1851-2012.
- Maintaining your fire system regularly is like servicing your car regularly or charging your phone to make sure they work when needed.
- The first step in choosing a fire contractor is getting confirmation that they are going to follow AS1851-2012 in-full.
 - Do you half charge your phone?
 - Do you just service the left side of your car?
 - Why do the same with your fire protection.
- Myself and another contributor to LookUpStrata both lose work to contractors who cherry-pick the requirements of AS1851-2012 by not pricing the annual pump servicing, not pricing the annual flow test or not doing the monthly testing of pumps, panels and sprinklers.
- Those contractor's prices are likely cheaper, but the person(s) losing out is YOU! Are you agreeing that you don't care if the systems protecting you work reliably to keep you safe?
- No.1 take-out – get written confirmation that the quote you are reading includes ALL testing to AS1851-2012.
- P.S. The legislating of AS1851-2012 is in the NSW's Govt. fire safety report and is likely to occur in 2022.

WHAT ELSE DO I HAVE TO DO?

- As a building owner (strata or otherwise), the law requires you also submit an Annual Fire Safety Statement (AFSS) every year.
- This is different and additional to maintenance. It is more like the pink slip for registering your car each year – it's a document stating that your fire system *performs* the way it was designed and intended.
- The maintenance to AS1851 we've already spoken about contributes to the system being reliable, but the AFSS assessment requires your fire system's performance be inspected & verified by an Accredited Practitioner (Fire Safety).
- The Accreditation scheme is the first step in the professionalisation of the fire industry and the first time owners can research the qualifications of the practitioner on a public register.

SELECTING AN ACCREDITED PRACTITIONER (FIRE SAFETY)

- From July 1st 2020, the APFS you engaged to endorse your essential fire safety measures must be accredited for *each* measure and must attend site (in-person), inspect & verify *every* measure.
- Not every APFS is accredited to endorse every measure – e.g. your current APFS may be a sprinkler expert, but not accredited to endorse hydrants or smoke alarms, etc.
- The register: <https://connect.fpaa.com.au/FireSafetyAssessor> outlines the accreditation status/ level/ type and number of each practitioner.
- Anyone on the register has:
 - Passed preliminary exams
 - Carries Professional Indemnity Insurance including run-on-cover
 - Has committed to moving from 'experienced' to 'qualified' within 4 years of formal recognition
 - Has signed a code of practice allowing external auditing of their work – meaning their accreditation status can be revoked if they are found to be incorrectly endorsing measures. (100+ investigations & 20+ suspensions in 2021)
- The fire industry is changing to become a trusted profession that can be relied on!



WHAT ELSE SHOULD I LOOK FOR?

- What does Google say? Fire Protection is a service industry just like your local café.
- Fire protection is a complex subject – ask to see an example annual report to see if:
 - Is it written in plain English?
 - Does it have photos to show you what has been reported?
 - Does it reference the standard(s) applicable and explain *why* the item reported is required?
 - Does it plainly identify who you should direct questions to?
 - Does it identify items duplicated from last year and self-report warranty items?
- How is the contractor going to arrange access? Do you see value in your time not being wasted?
 - Are they coming between 7am and 11am & you have to wait?
 - Can you request a time, but have to wait?
 - Will they provide a QR code notice and allow you to book a specific time?
 - I'm biased, but I know which one I'd prefer.



WHAT ELSE SHOULD I LOOK FOR?

- Competent contractors operate on specialist asset management software that can give great data to owners – case-study – discuss.
- What does your strata manager say? Chances are they deal with many fire contractors and can tell of their experiences. Are they on-time? Do they deliver good service?
- Is the contractor a Strata Community Association 'Strata Services Specialist'? Discuss.
- How does the contractor contribute back to their industry and strata?
- How does the contractor contribute back to the community at large?
- What is the contractor's approach to training of their staff? FPAS accredited business?
- What is the business's values and are they in alignment with yours?



QUESTIONS?

- As submitted:



MORE INFO?

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