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January 14, 2011

NFPA

Attn: Lee Richardson

NFPA 72, Administration Secretary

1 Batterymarch Park

Quincy, MA 02169-7471

Re: SIG-SSS, ROP (72-460, 72-474, 72-478) and (72-463, 72-597, 72-464, 72-598, 72-473, 72-600, 72-477)

Dear Mr. Richardson:

Several proposals have been submitted for review to the technical committee on Supervising Station Fire Alarm Systems (SIG-SSS) concerning making all fire alarm systems send point identification (proposals 72-460, 72-474, 72-478) and allowing the supervising station to delay the retransmission of alarm signals to the fire department until a fire alarm can be verified (72-463, 72-597, 72-464, 72-598, 72-473, 72-600, 72-477).

The intent of this letter is to inform the members of the SIG-SSS technical committee that the Fire Marshals Association of Colorado and the Colorado State Fire Chiefs' Association are opposed to these proposals. Our substantiation for the opposition is as follows:

Point ID communication:

The submitter did not give any technical justification for why Point ID is necessary. Requiring point ID would eliminate conventional (zone) type fire alarm panels with no explanation of why this is necessary. Accurate and specific information that can be provided to emergency response personal can certainly be a benefit. However, the question that should be asked is, what different response do we expect to see from emergency response personal? Most Fire Departments will not change how they respond to a structure given manual pull-first floor

[M001] or general fire alarm. Ultimately, how a Fire Department responds to a fire alarm remains within their procedures.

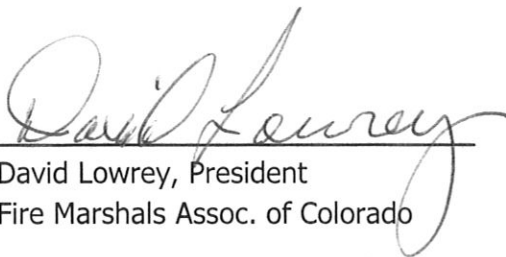
Many buildings simply don't need an addressable type fire alarm system to meet the requirements of the governing code for that area. Any jurisdiction has the legal right to amend their adopted code to require point ID if that's their preference. The requirement for point ID for all buildings will certainly increase the cost of the fire alarm systems. There is no technical justification for increasing the cost of fire alarm systems for a building that is required to only monitor a sprinkler system, elevator recall or duct detectors.

Calling the premise prior to dispatch:

The intent, per the submitter's substantiation is to reduce the number of unwanted or nuisance alarms. We cannot argue the fact that unwanted and nuisance alarms remain a problem for fire alarm systems. Nor do we disagree with the submitter's statement that these unwanted and nuisance alarms place the public and responding fire fighters at risk.

However, these proposals are not fixing the problem. By delaying the response, you can actually be increasing the risk to fire fighters and the occupants of the building in a fire situation. Eliminating emergency response to fire alarms will only allow the owner of the system to ignore a dysfunctional fire alarm system. Occupants of the building will become more complacent in not evacuating and in an actual fire situation; emergency response personal will be delayed responding to the building allowing the fire to possible double in size.

Unwanted and nuisance alarms can be reduced significantly through proper design, installation, acceptance commissioning, and on-going inspection, testing and maintenance as outlined in NFPA 72, none of which requires a delay in Fire Department response.



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David Lowrey, President  
Fire Marshals Assoc. of Colorado



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Steven J. Pischke, President  
Colorado State Fire Chiefs' Assoc.

CC Warren Olsen, Chair - SIG-SSS  
Robert Schifiliti, Chair – Technical Correlating Committee