

PRESS RELEASE

InFiReS/Insurers Property Crime Research Group

Insurers warn of approaching deadline in Nottinghamshire: Intruder Alarm Users need to TAKE ACTION NOW

THE POLICE

In Nottinghamshire many thousands of intruder alarm systems in commercial and domestic premises are currently monitored by an alarm receiving centre (ARC) able to arrange a routine immediate police response following an alarm activation. However, in 2004 Nottinghamshire Police announced some changes to their policy for providing a police response to intruder alarm systems, the most significant being a requirement that ALL alarm systems that cannot currently provide a 'confirmed activation'* must be upgraded to do so by 1 April 2006 or police response will be withdrawn.

*Note. In the event of a break in or interference with the alarm signalling link, most current alarm systems only provide the ARC with a single activation signal. For an activation to be treated as 'confirmed', and thus to qualify for a police response in Nottinghamshire after 1 April 2006 the alarm system needs to be able to provide the ARC with a second signal.

INSTALLERS

Most alarm installers operating in the Nottinghamshire police area have written to their customers to recommend that they arrange for the necessary upgrade work to be undertaken, but many report a poor response rate or a reluctance by customers to invest the required sums to install a good quality confirmation system.

INSURERS

At its simplest, upgrading an alarm system to provide a confirmed activation requires replacement of the alarm control panel; but insurers' advice is that installation of extra detection devices and a dual path signalling system is usually necessary, to ensure that a confirmed activation can be obtained at an early stage in any break in or in the event of interference with a signalling link. They also point out that it is also prudent to pay careful attention to how the system is to be unset, as this can help ensure that the police can still be called if an intruder forces open the designated entry door. (*cont*).

ALARM USERS

- ? The numbers of systems potentially requiring an upgrade means that alarm users who delay acting may find that it is not possible to have the necessary work completed by the April 2006 deadline.
- ? The insurers of many premises require that a police response alarm be installed and maintained. Policyholders who do not upgrade, or seek their insurers' agreement to dispense with police response, may find themselves in breach of their policy conditions; with possible adverse consequences in the event of a claim.
- ? Alarm users who have arranged for employees to act as keyholders need to bear in mind their duty of care under Health & Safety legislation. If police response is not maintained, or an inadequate confirmation system is installed, keyholders attending premises following an alarm activation may be at risk of encountering, alone, persons engaged in criminal acts.

URGENT ACTION REQUIRED

- ? Alarm users should check with their insurance broker/company whether or not an alarm receiving police response is or will remain a requirement of any insurance cover
- ? Alarm users should discuss appropriate options with their alarm installer.

[ends] [29 September 2005]

Notes for editors

The Fire Protection Association is the UK's national fire safety organisation and is supported by the Association of British Insurers and Lloyd's.

InFiReS is a scheme operated by a group of insurance companies supporting a series of expert working groups and consultants who are researching and promulgating best practice for the protection of property and business from loss due to fire and other risks.

The IPCRes Working Group, under the *InFiReS* umbrella, is responsible for a large number of core insurance security documents providing authoritative guidance on crime prevention in the domestic and commercial sectors.