

# **News Release**

**20th November, 2014**

**Hospitals must deal with the problem of false fire alarms**

London Fire Brigade has said that around 30,000 of its call-outs are to false alarms every year - amounting to one call-out every 15 minutes. And hospitals are some of the worst offenders when it comes to false fire alarms. Other fire brigades around the country cite similar figures.

For hospitals, the false-alarm problem is one that can have serious long-term effects on staff and patient safety, because they can eventually lead to a lack of response from building occupants - the exact opposite of what fire alarms are intended to do.

What's more, many fire brigades are now billing serial false-alarm offenders to recoup the costs of sending out equipment. Reports earlier in 2015 suggest that London hospitals have been billed almost £180,000 in fines from the London Fire Brigade.

One of the key causes of false alarms in hospitals is that they are using alarm systems that respond to stimuli such as steam, dust or even burning toast. The LFB says that this type of false alarm accounts for 36% of its unnecessary call-outs.

The LFB’s advice on how these false alarms can be cut includes ensuring there is an appropriate maintenance contract in place that includes action to identify the cause of false alarms and reduce such incidents as necessary. They also recommend a review of false alarm incidents to identify and resolve issues, helping to spot common cause or a single events that trigger repeated false alarms.

Derrick Hall, head of Siemens Building Technologies Fire Products says: "False alarms are a problem that can be dealt with by using the right technology. Siemens Cerberus PRO alarm systems offer Advanced Signal Analysis (ASA) technology that can differentiate between a real fire and materials such as steam or burning food."

The Siemens Cerberus PRO fire safety system can be set to be highly sensitive or a more robust setting, depending on client requirements, and has advanced signal analysis (ASA) technology which can differentiate between steam, burning toast, dust and other materials.

The Cerberus PRO range includes aspirating smoke detection that can quickly and reliably differentiate between smoke and other emissions and has proven technology that virtually eliminates false alarms.

Hall adds: "Finding a robust product which is widely available from a range of reliable installers is therefore very important. Siemens fire products are available from a number of installers, and all of them receive special training on the system to ensure they know how to get the best performance out of it for their customers."

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people in the UK. Last year’s revenues were £3.36 billion\*. As the world’s largest engineering

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*\* Data includes intercompany revenue. Data may not be comparable with revenue reported in annual or interim reports.*

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