



## INFORMATION NOTE FOR LOCKSMITHS - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

This document relates to questions received from locksmiths in relation to Technical Guidance Documents. It is not a legal interpretation and locksmiths should ensure that they are familiar with the contents of the regulations. The regulations can be found at this link [click here](#). The PSA would like to thank the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government for their assistance in preparing this information note.

**Q** Is it now mandatory to fit thumb-turn or equivalent locks?

**A** In fitting out a newly built dwelling house or extension to an existing dwelling, a thumb-turn or other readily openable mechanism must be fitted to a door that is the final exit door.

Where a repair or replacement is being carried out to an existing final exit door which is already fitted with a thumb-turn lock, then at least a thumb-turn must be used. Locks must be replaced with a lock of equivalent or enhanced compliance.

**Q** What is meant by final exit door?

**A** In the majority of dwelling houses the primary means of escape will be through the hallway/stairs leading to the front door. Occupants must be able to exit through this door without a key in an emergency. This door is the final exit door. A thumb-turn complies with this requirement. The addition of a dead-bolt does not contravene this requirement.

**A** Does this mean I must now fit a thumb-turn or equivalent lock to outside doors?

**A** If it is a replacement lock to an existing door you must fit a lock that is not a greater breach of the regulation. You may replace like with like, however customers should be made aware of the various solutions available.

**A** A colleague has informed me that in a bungalow all external doors are final exit doors, is this true?

**A** No. Other doors such as a back door where you must go through the kitchen is not considered a final exit door.

In a bungalow the primary means of escape will generally be the hallway which leads to the front door. This will be regarded as the final exit door.

**Q** How do I ensure that I don't break building regulations?

**A** If you are repairing or replacing fittings such as handles, hinges or locking mechanisms then you may replace like with like. The building regulations require that in existing buildings any repair must not result in a greater breach of the regulations.



**Q** Apart from a new house are there other circumstances where I must comply with building regulations?

**A** Where there is a material alteration such as the replacement of a door or where an extension has been built, the new standards set out in the building regulations must be adhered to.

**Q** Can I be relieved of my obligations under building regulations by a home or business owner?

**A** No. Where building regulations require certain conditions to be met this cannot be contravened.

**Q** The home owner says their insurance insists on a different type of lock, can I fit the lock requested?

**A** No. In circumstances where building regulations apply or where a final exit door is already fitted with a thumb-turn lock there is no scenario where these may be contravened. An insurance company cannot insist in a breach of building regulations.

**A** My customer wants window restrictors fitted, what are the requirements?

**A** The installation of window restrictors is permitted, however they cannot be lockable and must be readily openable. The use of a safety catch is allowable.

**Q** What about commercial buildings?

**A** In a commercial building the same principles apply. Replacement of like with like can be made as long there are no new contraventions.

**Q** My customer is a nursing home, they don't want their vulnerable residents to be able leave the building where no fire exists. What solution can I give them?

**A** The building regulations require that there is an unimpeded means of escape in the event of a fire. Therefore, where in the event of a fire all doors can be exited easily by the trigger of the fire alarm then no contravention of building regulations exists.