

BC BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION COMMITTEE
AIBC, APEGBC, BOABC, POABC

File No: 98-0086

INTERPRETATION

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Interpretation Date: January 21, 2004

Building Code Edition: BC Building Code 1998

Subject: elevators emergency recall for single stage fire alarm system

Keywords: elevators emergency recall, smoke detector, elevator lobby, single stage fire alarm, recall level, alternate recall level

Building Code Reference(s): 3.2.4.14., 3.2.6.4.

Question:

Sentence 3.2.4.14.(1) refers to automatic emergency recall of elevators.

1. How is automatic emergency recall activated and by what fire alarm devices / systems?
2. If automatic emergency recall is to be activated by elevator lobby smoke detectors, must these be located at every floor level of the building?

Interpretation:

1.
Recall of elevators by automatic means is not required for an elevator of any building, low or high. However, if automatic recall is provided, then Article 3.2.4.14. would apply.

Sentence 3.2.4.14.(1) addresses automatic emergency recall of elevators, initially to a recall level (usually main floor); or, where an unsprinklered recall level is compromised by the presence of smoke, to an alternate recall level (alternate designated level other than main floor - usually the 2nd floor).

Sentences 3.2.4.14.(1) and (2) indicate that, for an unsprinklered building, smoke detectors (designed as part of the building fire alarm system) are required to be located at the recall level, to initiate an alternate recall sequence. This is necessary in the event the recall level becomes contaminated by smoke.

Sentence 3.2.4.14.(3) indicates that if the building is sprinklered, no alternate floor recall feature is required.

There is no explicit requirement for activation devices / systems for emergency recall of elevators in the first instance to the recall / main level. The automatic elevator recall (when provided) should be activated by the building fire alarm system. This would be consistent with the previous edition of the BC Building Code.

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Article 3.2.6.4. requires manual emergency recall of elevators serving high buildings. Recall switches and the keys for such recall switches, are also prescribed in that Article. Manual recall is required for a high building, but automatic recall may instead, be provided.

2.

There is no explicit requirement for activation devices / systems for emergency recall of elevators in the first instance to the recall / main level. The automatic elevator recall (when provided) should be activated by the building fire alarm system. This would be consistent with the previous edition of the BC Building Code. Therefore, there is no need for elevator lobby smoke detectors on every floor level of the building.

Below is a tabular summary of various elevator design conditions:

		Automatic emergency recall (3.2.4.14.)	Manual emergency recall (3.2.6.4.)	Alternate floor recall feature
Lowrise	unsprinklered	not required ¹	not required	only required if automatic emergency recall is provided. Activation is by smoke detectors at elevator lobby of recall level.
	sprinklered	not required ¹	not required	not required
High building	unsprinklered	not required ¹	Required. Activation is by key-operated switches at/near CACF ²	only required if automatic emergency recall is provided. Activation is by smoke detectors at elevator lobby of recall level.
	sprinklered	not required ¹	Required. Activation is by key-operated switches at/near CACF ²	not required

Footnote 1: Where automatic emergency recall is not required but provided, activation to recall elevators to the recall level should be by means of the building fire alarm system.

Footnote 2: CACF is short for 'Central Alarm and Control Facility'

Note that Provincial Elevating Devices Safety Regulations will also apply.


R. J. Light, Committee Chair