



BSR E1.22 - 202x
Entertainment Technology – Fire Safety Curtain Systems

DRAFT

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Interest category codes:

CP = Custom-market Producer DE = Designer
DR = Dealer or Rental company G = General interest
MP = Mass-market Producer U = User

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1 General

1.1 Scope

This standard governs the design, materials, fabrication, installation, operation, testing, and maintenance of fire safety curtain systems used for proscenium opening protection.

1.2 Purpose

1.2.1 A fire safety curtain system shall be used where required by building codes, fire codes, or by the Authority Having Jurisdiction.

1.2.2 A fire safety curtain system shall work in conjunction with other building life and fire safety systems. (See Annex note B.1.2.2.)

1.2.3 A fire safety curtain system shall protect occupants of the audience area from a fire on stage and shall, in combination with other building life and fire safety systems, provide occupants of the audience area sufficient time for safe and orderly egress.

1.2.4 A fire safety curtain shall reduce the transmission of radiant heat, block debris, and contribute to the control of smoke and gas movement for a period of 20 minutes.

1.2.5 A fire safety curtain is a specialized fire protection system, and its plans and specifications shall be developed in accordance with this standard by Qualified Persons experienced in the installation, inspection, and testing of fire safety curtain assemblies.

1.3 Equivalency

The provisions of this standard are not intended to prevent the use of any material or to prohibit any design or method of fabrication not specifically prescribed by this standard, provided that any such alternative material, design, or method of fabrication complies with the intent of the provisions of this standard. The quality, strength, and effectiveness of all materials and methods of work shall be at least equivalent to those prescribed in this standard.

2 Definitions

2.1 Batten. A horizontal pipe, tube, or other structural shape in a pocket of or attached to a fire safety curtain.

2.2 Brail Fire Safety Curtain. An unframed fire safety curtain that is folded horizontally in an accordion fashion for storage.

2.3 Brail Fire Safety Curtain System. A system that opens and closes a brail fire safety curtain.

2.4 Bumper (Yield Pad). A filled pocket of fabric located below the bottom batten or bottom member of a frame.

2.5 Fill. The set of yarns placed crosswise in the loom, interlaced with the warp, forming the crosswise threads in the fabric. Also known as cross machine direction.

2.6 Fill Safety Curtain. The actual barrier including the membrane, structural framing, and attached hardware that closes the proscenium opening.

2.7 Fire Safety Curtain System. A fire safety curtain with all required hardware and controls to form a complete, fully operable assembly. (See Annex note B.2.7)

2.8 Framed Fire Safety Curtain. A curtain assembly containing both a rigid perimeter frame and internal members.

2.9 Labeled. Equipment or materials to which has been attached a label, symbol, or other identifying mark of an organization that is acceptable to the Authority Having Jurisdiction and concerned with product evaluation, that maintains periodic inspection of production of labeled equipment or materials, and by whose labeling the manufacturer indicates compliance with appropriate standards or performance in a specified manner.

2.10 Listed. Equipment, materials, or services included in a list published by an organization that is acceptable to the Authority Having Jurisdiction and concerned with evaluation of products or services, that maintains periodic inspection of production of listed equipment, material, or service and meets appropriate designated standards or has been tested and found suitable for a specified purpose.

2.11 Multi-part Fire Safety Curtain System. A system that opens and closes multiple fire safety curtains with horizontal overlaps.

2.12 Noncombustible. A material that, in the form in which it is used and under the conditions anticipated, will not aid combustion, or add appreciable heat to a fire. Materials, when tested in accordance with ASTM E136-19A,

Standard Test Method for Behavior of Materials in a Vertical Tube Furnace at 750 degrees C and conforming to the criteria contained in Section 8 of the referenced standard, are considered as noncombustible.

2.13 Pressure Differential. The force exerted over the fire safety curtain system caused by the difference in air pressure on each side of the curtain.

2.14 Proscenium Opening. The main opening in the proscenium wall used for viewing performances.

2.15 Proscenium Wall. The wall that separates the stage area from the audience area.

2.16 Qualified Person. A person who, by possession of a recognized degree or certificate of professional standing, or who by extensive knowledge, training, and experience, has successfully demonstrated the ability to solve or resolve problems relating to the subject matter and work.

2.17 Straight Lift Fire Safety Curtain System. A system that opens and closes a fire safety curtain as one flat panel without bending or folding.

2.18 Stay Chain. A secondary suspension system to support the top member of a Fire Safety Curtain when deployed.

2.19 Unframed Fire Safety Curtain. A curtain without rigid horizontal members other than the top and bottom battens.

2.20 Vertical guide pockets (“Smoke Pocket”). Partial enclosures on both the stage left and stage right sides of the proscenium opening on the proscenium wall that protects the edges and guides of a fire safety curtain system. (See Annex note B.2.20)

2.21 Warp. The set of yarns placed lengthwise in the loom, crossed by, and interlaced with the fill, forming the lengthwise threads in the fabric. Also known as machine direction.

3 Unframed Fire Safety Curtains

3.1 Identification

Fabric fire safety curtains shall be permanently identified per paragraph 3.3.5 and the fabric shall be listed as complying with the ASTM E119-20 fire tests described in paragraph 3.4. (See Annex note B.3.1)

3.2 Fabric

The fabric shall have a tensile strength of not less than 7.14 kg/mm (400 pounds per inch) in both the warp and fill directions as tested in accordance with ASTM D5034-21, Standard Test Method for Breaking Strength and Elongation of Textile Fabrics (Grab Test). (See Annex note B.3.2.1)

The fabric shall not lose over 35% of the warp strength when subjected to 50 cycles in accordance with ASTM D4157-13 (2017) Standard Test Method for Abrasion Resistance of Textile Fabrics (Oscillatory Cylinder Method) using the 100-grit emery paper as the abradant and using 26.7 newtons (6 pounds) tension and 13.3 newtons (3 pounds) compression force.

The fabric shall have a smoke density rating of 25 or less, as tested in accordance with ASTM E84-21 Standard Test Method for Surface Burning Characteristics of Building Materials.

The fabric shall have an air permeability of less than 7.62 cubic meters/min per square meter (25 cfm per sq ft) tested in accordance with ASTM D737-18 Test Method for Air Permeability of Textile Fabrics.

3.3 Construction

3.3.1 Exposed fabric edges shall be prevented from unraveling and shall not compromise the strength of the fabric. (See Annex note B.3.3.1)

3.3.2 The fabric and its seaming shall have a tensile strength at least two times the tension stress resulting from a pressure differential of 95.8 Pa (2 psf) on the fire safety curtain over the area of the proscenium opening.

3.3.3 Top and bottom pockets shall be sized to permit insertion of battens where required.

3.3.4 The fire safety curtain shall be guided at the two opposite vertical edges for the full extent of travel.

3.3.5 The fire safety curtain shall have a label in a location that is visible and convenient for identification by the Authority Having Jurisdiction after installation of the fire safety curtain system. The label shall include the name of

the fire safety curtain manufacturer, product or style of fabric, date of manufacture, list of fire tests, and testing agency.

3.4 Testing

3.4.1 A sample of the fire safety curtain shall be tested in accordance with ASTM E119-20 Standard Test Methods for Fire Tests of Building Construction and Materials procedure applicable to nonbearing walls and partitions for a period of 30 minutes.

3.4.2 The sample construction shall replicate the sewing of the full- sized curtain, shall have a minimum of two vertical seams, and shall have a bottom pocket containing a minimum 5.95 kg/m (4 pounds/foot) batten.

3.4.3 The sample shall overlap and seal the top and vertical furnace edges.

3.4.4 The unexposed surface of the sample shall not glow during the testing procedure, and flame or smoke shall not penetrate the sample. Only the surface cleansing vapors created by the oven's elevating temperatures in the first minutes of the procedure shall be acceptable. Unexposed surface temperature measurements and hose stream testing shall not be required.

4 Framed Fire Safety Curtains

4.1 Fire-resistance

4.1.1 Fire-resistance ratings. The fire-resistance rating of materials shall be determined in accordance with the test procedures set forth in ASTM E 119-20 for a period of 30 minutes, or in accordance with the alternative methods listed below. Unexposed surface temperature measurements and hose stream testing shall not be required. Where materials, systems or devices that have not been tested as part of a fire-resistance-rated assembly are incorporated into the assembly, sufficient data shall be made available to show that the required fire- resistance rating is not reduced. Materials and methods of construction used to protect joints and penetrations in fire-resistance-rated coverings shall not reduce the required fire-resistance rating. (See Annex note B.4.1.1)

4.1.2 Alternative methods for determining fire resistance. The application of any of the alternative methods listed in this section shall be based on the fire exposure and acceptance criteria specified in ASTM E 119-20. The required fire resistance of a building element shall be permitted to be established by any of the following methods or procedures.

4.1.2.1 Fire-resistance designs documented in approved sources.

4.1.2.2 Prescriptive designs of fire-resistance-rated building elements as prescribed in Section 721 of the 2018 International Building Code.

4.1.2.3 Calculations in accordance with Section 722 of the 2018 International Building Code.

4.1.2.4 Engineering analysis based on a comparison of building element designs having fire-resistance ratings as determined by the test procedures set forth in ASTM E 119-20.

4.1.2.5 Alternative protection methods as allowed by Section 1.3.

4.1.3 Surface-burning characteristics. The fire resistive cover shall have a flame spread index of 75 or less and a smoke developed index of 450 or less when tested in accordance with ASTM E84-21.

4.2 Frame

4.2.1 The frame shall be designed to comply with current AISC steel design standards or other applicable standards.

4.2.2 The slenderness ratio for compression members shall not exceed 200:1.

The frame shall be braced to maintain its shape and integrity in the event of a single lift line or guide failure.

4.2.3 The frame shall consist of an assembly of horizontal members, vertical end members, intermediate vertical supports, and bracing.

4.3 Frame Members

4.3.1 Framing shall be noncombustible.

4.3.2 Steel frame members shall be designed so the maximum combined stresses from gravity loads and a 95.8 Pa (2 psf) pressure applied over the entire curtain surface shall not exceed one third of the frame material's yield strength at room temperature. Other frame materials shall be permitted only when allowable stresses are fully documented by an engineering analysis performed by a Qualified Person.

4.3.3 The intermediate vertical members shall brace the horizontal members and provide restraint against lateral buckling.

4.3.4 Horizontal members shall be spaced to support face material and bracing for end members.

4.3.5 End members shall have sufficient strength to distribute the lateral forces resulting from the pressure differential to the guide shoes.

4.3.6 Frame member splices shall develop the full strength of the member. (See Annex note 4.3.6)

4.4 Guide Assemblies

4.4.1 Each vertical edge of the curtain shall have a minimum of two assemblies to guide the frame within its vertical path of travel.

4.4.2 Guide assemblies shall allow unrestrained expansion of the curtain assembly created by the fire. (See Annex note B.4.4.2)

4.5 Fire Resistive Cover Material

4.5.1 Either one or both sides of the frame shall be covered with fire resistive materials. Flexible or rigid cover materials such as glass fiber fabric, steel sheet, insulation, or gypsum, singularly or in combination, shall be selected by a Qualified Person to meet the temperature and strength criteria.

4.5.2 Cover and its attachment shall withstand a minimum horizontal pressure of 95.8 Pa (2 psf) unless higher pressures are required by code.

4.5.3 The Fire Resistive Cover Material shall have a label in a location that is visible and convenient for identification by the Authority Having Jurisdiction after installation of the fire safety curtain system. The label shall include the name of the fire safety curtain manufacturer, product or style of cover material, date of manufacture, list of fire tests, and testing agency. Labeling shall also include the name of the Installing contractor, contact information and date of installation.

5 Opening Proximity

5.1 The fire safety curtain in a straight lift fire safety curtain system shall be a maximum of 102 mm (4 inches) from the proscenium wall.

5.2 The top part of a multi-part fire safety curtain shall be a maximum of 102 mm (4 inches) from the proscenium wall.

5.3 The fire safety curtain in a brail fire safety curtain system shall be a maximum of 203 mm (8 inches) from the proscenium wall.

6.4 The distance shall be measured from the stage side of the proscenium wall inside the vertical guide pocket area to the center of the upper batten on unframed curtains; on framed curtains, the measurement shall be made from the stage side of the proscenium wall inside the vertical guide pocket area to the surface nearest the proscenium wall.

6 Vertical Edges

6.1 The vertical edges of unframed fire safety curtains shall overlap the proscenium wall a minimum of 457 mm (18 inches). The measurement shall be with the curtain closed and without a pressure differential.

6.2 The vertical edges of framed fire safety curtains shall overlap the proscenium wall a minimum of 152 mm (6 inches). The measurement shall be with the curtain closed and without a pressure differential.

6.3 The vertical guide pocket shall overlap unframed fire safety curtains a minimum of 305 mm (12 inches).

6.4 The vertical guide pocket shall overlap framed fire safety curtains a minimum of 152 mm (6 inches).

6.5 Vertical guide pockets shall be constructed from rolled structural steel sections and minimum 6.3mm (1/4") thick steel plate or equivalent construction.

6.6 Vertical guide pockets shall protect the vertical edges and guide system of a fire safety curtain from interference between the fire safety curtain and people, stage curtains, scenery, or other items.

6.7 The vertical guide pockets shall be attached to the proscenium wall and shall not interfere with movement of the fire safety curtain. Vertical guide pockets shall be designed to withstand anticipated loads.

6.8 Access for servicing the curtain and vertical guide shall be provided by means of a movable or removable panel for a minimum of 3.05 m (10 feet) above the floor for an unframed fire safety curtain and the full height for a framed or brail fire safety curtain when closed.

6.9 The vertical guide pockets shall extend vertically to protect the entire edge of the fire safety curtain throughout its range of travel and shall include allowance for over-travel.

6.10 Vertical guide pockets shall be permitted to support guide components.

6.11 Guides on unframed curtains shall be designed and installed to withstand the forces from a 95.8 Pa (2 psf) pressure differential applied to the fire safety curtain and maintain an overlap of the proscenium wall. (See Annex note B.6.11)

6.11.1 Guides on unframed curtains shall be spaced no more than 457mm (18 inches) apart.

7 Horizontal Edges

7.1 Fire safety curtains shall overlap the proscenium wall above the opening by a minimum of 610 mm (24 inches) in the closed position with no pressure differential.

7.2 Multi-part fire safety curtains with non-continuous edges within the proscenium opening shall overlap each other by a minimum of 610 mm (24 inches) where unframed, and a minimum of 305 mm (12 inches) where framed. The measurement shall be with the curtain closed and without a pressure differential.

8 Bumpers

8.1 There shall be a minimum 76.2 mm (3 inches) thick bumper made with an outer covering of the same material as the fire safety curtain fabric, filled with noncombustible materials to a 48.1 kg per cubic meter (3 pound per cubic foot) density.

8.2 The bumper shall be affixed beneath the bottom frame member of framed fire safety curtains or sewn beneath the bottom batten of unframed fire safety curtains.

8.3 The bumper shall contact and compress against the stage floor when the curtain is in its deployed position.

9 Battens

9.1 The top batten in unframed fire safety curtains shall be designed to limit vertical deflection to 1/180 of the span between supports with no pressure differential.

9.2 The bottom batten in unframed fire safety curtains shall weigh a minimum of 5.43 kg/m (3.65 pounds/foot).

10 Rigging

10.1 Non-emergency opening and closing shall be powered.

10.1.1 Straight lift unframed fire safety curtain systems for proscenium openings less than (79 m²) 850 square feet shall be permitted to be unpowered.

10.2 All lifting and load supporting components shall be fabricated of noncombustible materials.

10.3 Fasteners shall be adequate for the imposed loads at the elevated temperatures listed in ASTM E119 for a duration of 20 minutes.

10.4 All components shall be installed as recommended by the manufacturer.

10.5 Rigging shall be designed by a Qualified Person, certified by a third party, and installed or supervised by a person who has had his/her knowledge and work experience certified by a third-party acceptable to the Authority Having Jurisdiction.

10.6 Rigging components, where possible, shall comply with ANSI E1.4 – 2016 Entertainment Technology - Manual Counterweight Rigging Systems and ANSI E1.6-1 – 2021 Entertainment Technology - Powered Hoist Systems.

10.6.1 A device that slows a load without stopping it may be used in place of a load securing device only when risk assessment and risk reduction mitigates hazards associated with descent of the load as a result of release or failure of the other load securing device. Fire safety curtain hoists are deemed to comply.

10.6.2 Hoist shall be equipped with a sensor to disable the prime mover once emergency closing is initiated.

10.6.3 Emergency stop activation shall not disable the emergency closing functionality of a fire safety curtain hoist.

10.6.4 A control station is not required for the emergency descent operation of fire safety curtain hoists. If emergency descent of a fire safety curtain is enacted, its hoist controls shall be rendered inoperative until the curtain release mechanism is reset. (See Annex Note B.13.6.4)

10.7 Framed and unframed fire safety curtains shall be installed with a secondary suspension system (example "Stay Chains") attached to structural framing to support the curtain when deployed.

10.8 Brail fire safety curtains shall be installed with the top batten dead hung with a support system attached to structural framing. This suspension system shall be in addition to the system used for hoisting.

10.9 Lift line spacing for brail fire safety curtains shall not exceed 2.44 m (8 feet) and the end hoisting lines shall be a maximum of 610 mm (24 inches) from the vertical edge of the curtain.

10.10 Where a manual winch is used, the handle shall not rotate during emergency closing.

11 Signage

11.1 All signs and labels shall be in English. If typical operating personnel are not English literate, additional signs or labels in the appropriate language shall be provided.

11.2 Manual release stations shall have a sign indicating method of operation.

11.3 Powered operation stations shall have a sign indicating that emergency operation shall use the manual release station.

11.4 General operation signage shall include the following:

11.4.1 Method of powered operation.

11.4.2 Method of manual operation.

11.4.3 Inspection requirements and date of last inspection.

11.4.4 Specified frequency of manual release testing.

11.4.5 Notice that release system must be restored prior to operation.

11.4.6 Installation company, date of installation, and contact information.

11.5 All labeling and signage required in this section shall comply with the requirements of the following recognized national standards:

11.5.1 ANSI Z535.1-2017, Safety Color Code

11.5.2 ANSI Z535.2-2011, Environmental and Facility Safety Sign ANSI Z535.3-2011, Criteria for Safety Symbols

11.5.3 ANSI Z535.4-2011, Product Safety Signs and Labels

12 Operation

12.1 The hoist system shall be capable of moving the lifted load from a static condition and returning it to the static state, maintaining control throughout the operation. A fire safety curtain hoist system operating during emergency descent in compliance with applicable standards is deemed to comply. (See Annex Note B.12.1)

12.2 The fire safety curtain system shall be capable of emergency closing and non-emergency opening and closing.

12.2.1 A fire safety curtain assembly shall be designed to operate in emergency and nonemergency conditions for all imposed loads, including dead loads of the assembly, and for a pressure differential of 95.8 Pa (2 psf) on the fire safety curtain over the area of the proscenium opening.

12.3 Emergency closing shall be initiated by either automatic or manual means independently.

12.4 Automatic closing shall be initiated only by the detection of fire on stage. Detection shall use electronic heat detectors, sprinkler flow detection, or combination thereof. (See Annex note B.12.4)

12.4.1 Electronic heat detectors shall be installed in accordance with NFPA 72-2019 National Fire Alarm Code. (See Annex note B.12.4.1)

12.4.1.1 Electronic rate of rise detectors shall be rated "Ultra-Fast" with a rating of 9 degrees C (15 degrees F) per minute.

12.4.1.2 Electronic fixed-temperature heat detectors shall be selected based upon the temperature requirements of the application.

12.4.2 Sprinkler system flow detection devices shall be installed in accordance with NFPA 13-2019. (See Annex note B.12.4.2)

12.5 Manual release systems shall include a minimum of two operator stations that independently initiate emergency closing.

- 12.5.1 A manual release station shall be installed at both sides of the proscenium opening. Stations shall be unobstructed, visible, and operable from stage floor level.
- 12.5.2 The manual release station location shall meet ADA requirements.
- 12.5.3 The emergency manual release device shall be painted red per ANSI Z535.1-2017, Safety Color Code.
- 12.5.4 Operations requiring cutting or severing a line shall not be permitted.
- 12.5.5 Manual emergency operation shall be accomplished by a single person.
- 12.5.6 A sign shall clearly identify the device and its operation. (See Annex note B.12.5.6)
- 12.6 Standby or emergency power per NFPA 70-2020 shall be provided if power is required for emergency closing.
- 12.7 Non-emergency closing or opening shall not affect or disable emergency closing systems or devices.
- 12.8 Non-emergency operation shall be accomplished by a single person.
- 12.9 Powered non-emergency operation shall incorporate hold to run controls.
- 12.9.1 The control station shall have guards to prevent accidental operation.
- 12.9.2 The control station location shall meet ADA requirements.
- 12.10 Where resetting is required after emergency closing or testing, the procedures for resetting shall require no more than two persons. Resetting shall be accomplished without the need for tools, ladders, or other equipment. Use of equipment shall be permitted for replacing and resetting of electrical release devices.
- 12.11 In emergency closing, the curtain shall close from any position to the full closed position at an average speed of not less than 152 mm/second (6 inches/second) and not more than 610 mm/second (24 inches/second).
- 12.11.1 The last 2.44 m (8 feet) of travel shall require a minimum of 5 seconds. (See Annex note B.12.11.1)
- 12.12 Emergency closing speed shall be either governed during the curtain's entire travel or shall be decelerated for the last 2.44 m (8 feet) of travel. Deceleration shall be accomplished by dashpot, mechanical brake, or other device. Removing weight from the curtain side or adding weight to the counterweight side is not permitted for achieving deceleration. (See Annex note B.12.12)
- 12.13 All fire safety curtains shall be in the closed position except during events with an audience, rehearsals, technical production activity, or activities on stage that necessitate the curtain be open. (See Annex note B.12.13)

13 Testing, Training, Maintenance, Inspection, and Repairs

13.1 Records

An Owner's log shall be provided with each fire safety curtain system installed. The log shall include the date of installation, name of the installing contractor, instructions for maintenance, testing, manual emergency closing, and manual operation. All tests and maintenance activities shall be recorded in the log. For fire safety curtain systems where the operation is modified, the manual shall be updated or replaced. The log shall be maintained and shall be made available to the Authority Having Jurisdiction for inspection.

Except for fire safety curtains complying with the prescriptive designs in Annex A, drawings, calculations, or other documentation shall identify the loads applied to the building under normal and emergency operation, including the forces on the curtain guides and the anticipated curtain deflection resulting from a 95.8 Pa (2 psf) pressure differential.

13.2 Pre-Acceptance Testing

13.2.1 Emergency closing and non-emergency operation shall be demonstrated. The Authority Having Jurisdiction shall be notified of the time and place of the demonstration. The demonstration shall include successfully passing the test for emergency closing a minimum of three consecutive times. All emergency operation devices shall be demonstrated at least once. Manual release of cabling to demonstrate proper operation shall be permitted.

13.2.2 Prior to final acceptance, the Owner or a designated representative shall be trained by a Qualified Person on the operation, maintenance, and testing requirements of the fire safety curtain system.

13.3 Periodic User Testing

The emergency closing of the fire safety curtain system shall be tested at least once every 30 performances but not less than once every three months.

13.4 Annual Inspection

13.4.1 A Qualified Person shall inspect the fire safety curtain system at least once a year.

13.4.2 Inspection shall include complete visual inspection of the curtain, rigging, and both the automatic and manual initiating and release devices.

13.4.3 Emergency manual closing shall be tested including testing each manual emergency release device at least once.

13.4.4 The log shall be reviewed by the Qualified Person.

13.4.5 The Owner or the Owner's designated representative shall be trained by a Qualified Person on the operation, maintenance, and testing requirements of the fire safety curtain system as a part of each annual inspection.

13.4.6 The Authority Having Jurisdiction shall be notified of the time and place of the annual inspection.

13.5 Maintenance

Devices with finite life spans shall be replaced per the manufacturer's recommendations. Such devices shall include, but not be limited to, batteries, lubricants, fluids, and organic fiber lines.

13.6 Repairs

Unless alternate measures approved by the Authority Having Jurisdiction are in place, deficiencies found that affect the emergency closing of the fire safety curtain system or adversely affect the permeability or performance of the fire safety curtain shall be repaired and user-tested (per 13.3) before the theater is occupied for an event with an audience. Other deficiencies shall be repaired within 30 days. Repairs shall be recorded in the Owner's Log and kept on file by the Owner.

Annex A - Examples, not a normative part of the standard

A.1 This Annex contains examples of prescriptive designs based on fire safety curtains and standards commonly used in the United States and is not a part of the requirements of this standard. It is included for informational purposes only. As the understanding and knowledge about fire safety curtain systems increases based on research and experience, dependence on these examples should lessen. The prescriptive designs in this Annex are limited to the design examples and are not general requirements to be applied to all fire safety curtain systems.

A.2 Fabric Fire Safety Curtain Construction

A.2.1 Fabric curtains should be made of continuous vertical strips of fabric sewn together with no horizontal seams.

A.2.2 All seams and other functional stitching should use a minimum of 25.4 mm (1 inch) wide overlap construction with two rows of lockstitch stitching using flame-resistant thread or an alternative construction with equivalent or superior performance. A sample should be tested per 3.4.

A.2.3 Vertical edge hems should have a minimum of three layers of fabric. The hem should be of uniform thickness and width where guide members or metal reinforcements are attached.

A.3 Unframed Straight-lift Fire Safety Curtain Systems

A.3.1 For proscenium openings with a maximum width of 15.2 m (50 feet) and a maximum height of 9.14 m (30 feet) and where there is a minimum clear height for the fire safety curtain system of twice the height of the proscenium opening plus 1.52 m (5 feet), an unframed straight-lift fire safety curtain system with roller guides should be permitted. Guides should use continuous tracks with captive trolleys or rollers at each vertical edge of the curtain. Trolleys or rollers should be attached to the vertical edges of the fire safety curtain with a minimum of three fasteners. Trolleys or rollers should be spaced not more than 457 mm (18 inches) on center.

A.3.2 For proscenium openings with a maximum width of 12.8 m (42 feet) and a maximum height of 6.7 m (22 feet) and where there is a minimum clear height for the fire safety curtain system of twice the height of the proscenium opening plus 1.52 m (5 feet), an unframed straight-lift fire safety curtain system with cable spool guides should be permitted. Spool guides should be attached to the vertical edge of the fire safety curtain not more than 457 mm (18 inches) on center.

A.3.3 There should be metal edge reinforcements fabricated of 16-gauge galvanized steel a minimum of 152 mm (6 inches) wide on both faces of the fire safety curtain, and bolted to each vertical edge hem of the fire safety curtain. The bolts used to attach the guides should also be permitted for attaching the metal reinforcing to the curtain. Fasteners should be minimum 6.35 mm (0.25 inch) diameter SAE J 429 Grade 5.

A.3.4 The top and bottom battens should be minimum 60 mm O.D. x 3.91 mm (2 inches schedule 40 steel pipe).

A.3.5 Wire rope guides should be minimum 6.35 mm (0.25 inch) diameter at each vertical edge of the curtain, anchored top and bottom.

A.3.6 Vertical guide pockets should be constructed of steel and should enclose the edge of and overlap the fire safety curtain by a minimum of 305 mm (12 inches) for the full extent of the fire safety curtain throughout its travel plus 305 mm (12 inches). The vertical guide pockets should be a steel channel fastened to the proscenium wall and have a minimum 6.35 mm (0.25 inch) steel plate attached to the other flange or should be a one piece bent 6.35 mm (0.25 inch) steel plate. The vertical guide pocket should be a minimum of 152 mm (6 inches) in depth, measured perpendicular from the proscenium wall. Where a plate is attached to a channel, the attachment should be bolted connections with bolt spacing not greater than 610 mm (24 inches) on center. The vertical guide pockets should be fastened to the proscenium wall constructed of solid 4000 PSI concrete with anchors made of minimum AISI 1018 or 12L14 steel, SAE J 429 Grade 5 fasteners, or other rated fasteners as appropriate for the substrate. Anchors and fasteners should be spaced not more than 1.22 m (4 feet) on center and should be selected to resist all forces imposed by the fire safety curtain.

The hardware specified in this section is for attaching the Vertical Guide Pockets to the proscenium wall using construction-appropriate anchors and attachments. As wall constructions vary, it is incumbent upon designers and contractors to provide a substrate and attachment hardware suitable to resist the forces imposed by the Fire Safety Curtain as described in the standard.

A.3.7 Lift lines should be minimum 6 mm (0.25 inch) 7 X 19 small diameter specialty cord (formerly known as galvanized aircraft cable) conforming to ASTM A1023M-19, Standard Specification for Stranded Carbon Steel Wire Rope for Special Purposes.

A.3.8 Emergency closing speed should be either governed during the curtain's entire travel, or should be decelerated for the last 2.44 m (8 feet) of its travel.

A.3.8.1 Descent governors should limit the rate of descent of the fire safety curtain during automatic closure.

A.3.8.2 Deceleration should be accomplished by dashpot, mechanical brake, or other device. Removing weight from the curtain side or adding weight to the counterweight side is not permitted for achieving deceleration.

A.3.9 Emergency closing of a manual counterweight fire safety curtain system should be one of the following types:

A.3.9.1 Overbalance Bar System: An overbalance bar system consists of a pipe or bar that is suspended over the fire safety curtain and is guided by the center two or three lift lines. The suspension system for the bar should be designed such that the release line holds the bar suspended over the fire safety curtain and, when emergency closing is activated, the bar's weight is dropped onto the fire safety curtain. The bar should add sufficient weight to achieve emergency closing. Tag lines should be provided on the bar to facilitate the resetting of the bar after it has been tripped. The overbalance bar should be capable of being reset by two people maximum.

A.3.9.2 Overbalance Arbor System: The overbalance arbor system consists of a guided weight that is released when emergency closing is activated. The weight of the overbalance arbor acts on the fire safety curtain system counterweight so the combined weight of the fire safety curtain and overbalance arbor is sufficient to activate emergency closing. The overbalance arbor should be capable of being reset by two people maximum.

A.3.10 Emergency closing of a winch operated fire safety curtain system should be by clutch release, brake release, or similar mechanism.

A.4 Brail Fire Safety Curtain Systems

A.4.1 The minimum clear height to store the brail fire safety curtain should be 1.52 m (5 feet) or 125% of the proscenium height, whichever is greater.

A.4.2 The top and bottom battens should be as for unframed straight lift wire rope guided fire safety curtain. Wire rope guides should be as for unframed straight lift wire guided fire safety curtain. Edge reinforcement should not be used.

A.4.3 Vertical guide pockets should be as for unframed straight lift, wire rope guided fire safety curtains except the vertical guide pocket should be a minimum of 203 mm (8 inches) in depth measured perpendicular from the proscenium wall with a minimum of 100 mm (4 inches) between the center of the brail curtain and the back of the guide pocket.

A.4.4 The top batten should be suspended from structural framing.

A.4.5 Lift lines for brail fire safety curtains should pass through rings or loops on the surface of the curtain. Lift lines should attach to the bottom batten.

A.4.6 The brail fire safety curtain system should use an electric winch.

A.4.7 Activation of the emergency closing should release a clutch, brake, or similar mechanism holding the fire safety curtain. Emergency closing speed should be controlled by a governor.

Annex B - Supplemental Information

This annex is not a part of the requirements of this standard and is included for informational purposes only. It contains explanatory material, numbered to correspond with the applicable text paragraphs.

B.1.2.2 A fire safety curtain system is only one part of an effective life and fire safety plan for a stage in an assembly occupancy. This has been recognized in the US for over 95 years (ref: Letter Circular LC 137, December 13, 1924, US Department of Commerce Bureau of Standards). Current British standards for similar systems also recognize an integrated approach (ref: Technical Standards for Places of Entertainment, Model Technical Regulation, Recommendations E4, District Surveyors Association and ABTT). Contemporary US model fire and building codes have evolved to place greater reliance on fire detection, fire suppression, fire detection and notification systems, smoke management, emergency egress, emergency illumination, type of construction, crowd management, and operations. A fire safety curtain system meeting this standard is most effective if integrated in a coordinated plan. Fire safety curtain systems are limited in effectiveness when used as the sole means of protection. Fire Safety Curtain systems are most effective when efficient extraction ventilation is provided above the stage.

B.2.7 Other styles or types of fire safety curtains such as trip or roller systems have been constructed and installed. Because of difficulties in reliability, these types are no longer recommended but are permitted to be repaired or replaced subject to specific approval of the Authority Having Jurisdiction.

B.2.20 Historically, the vertical guide pocket was presumed to contribute to the retardation of smoke movement through the proscenium opening and was called a smoke pocket.

B.3.1 The means for identifying listed equipment may vary for each organization concerned with product evaluation; some organizations do not recognize equipment as listed unless it is also labeled. The Authority Having Jurisdiction should utilize the system employed by the listing organization to identify a listed product.

B.3.2.1 The application of ASTM D5034-21 Standard Test Method for Breaking Strength and Elongation of Textile Fabrics (Grab Test) to glass or other similar brittle-fiber fabrics requires special methods of attaching or gripping the tested fabric to the testing machine, since the standard testing methods will cause premature failure of the fibers at the jaw. Testing of fabrics for compliance with this standard should require modification of the standard testing procedures by the use of either (a) padded jaws, (b) rubber jaws, or (c) gluing of the fabric in a manner such that the fabric failure is not at the jaws and a result of the deformation and distress caused by the jaws but instead tests the fabrics strength.

B.3.3.1 Exposed cut edges can unravel and should be hemmed.

B.4.1.1 Fire safety curtain assemblies are intended to provide only a reasonable level of separation of the audience from on-stage fires for a period sufficient for evacuation of the audience. As such, the hose stream test in ASTM E 119-20 should not be required.

B.4.3.6 Not more than half of all splices in parallel frame members should align in planes perpendicular to the fire safety curtain.

B.4.4.2 It is common practice to use knife guides along the sides of the curtain.

B.6.11 Guide systems that restrain the edge of the curtain continuously are more likely to overlap the fire safety curtain with the proscenium wall when the fire safety curtain bulges under unequal atmospheric pressures. The natural deflection (hour-glassing) of the common unrestrained wire rope guide system requires limiting the use of this system to fire safety curtain systems for smaller sized proscenium openings where the total pressure is less, and the length of the wire rope guide is limited.

B.12.1 By design the emergency descent of fire safety curtains is driven by gravity rather than by the hoist. Emergency descent is initiated by a separate set of operators that, once activated, will cause the curtain to close completely at a specific speed regardless of the fault status of the hoist. The emergency descent functions of a fire safety curtain hoist are distinct from and additional to the non-emergency functions.

B.12.4 Fire modeling has shown that fusible links do not perform the intended function of releasing the curtain in the event of a fire. See: *Fire Safety in Theatres – A New Design Approach* by Ove Arup & Partners PC and The

Fire Protection Research Foundation <https://studylib.net/doc/8734574/fire-safety-in-theatres---a-new-design-approach-final-report>.

B.12.4.1 This work is typically associated with and provided by fire protection trades.

B.12.4.2 This work is typically associated with and provided by fire protection trades.

B.12.5.6 The following figure is an example of the sign adjacent to an emergency closing device.

In Case of Fire, Pull Red Ring
to Lower Fire Safety Curtain

B.12.12.1 The limit on velocity for 2.44 m (8 feet) above the floor is intended to prevent or lessen injury to occupants in the path of closing.

B.12.12 The greater the overbalance of the fire safety curtain the more probable the fire safety curtain will close irrespective of the effects of atmospheric pressure, time, lack of maintenance, and minor obstructions in its path. Speed governors or checking systems more readily permit a greater overbalance of the fire safety curtain and thus generally are more reliable in assuring the fire safety curtain will close in an emergency than overbalance systems that physically add weight to put the curtain out of balance.

The most common governor is a closed loop hydraulic design where a pump is driven by the closing of the fire safety curtain, either connected to the shaft of a winch or to a traction driven head block, and the speed governed by a valve and reservoir. Adjusting the valve permits using the pump as a governor to closing speed.

B.12.13 Having the fire safety curtain assembly in a closed position has many advantages: first, the fire safety curtain gets moved and used helping to assure that during an emergency the fire safety curtain should perform as expected; second, if there is a problem with the fire safety curtain it will be noticed while being closed or reset; third, it keeps the technicians, janitors, and users conscious of the fact that there is a fire safety curtain and the area below it along with the smoke pockets needs to be kept clear of obstructions; and fourth, it gets the technicians, janitors, and users used to operating the fire safety curtain and through this use they become familiar with the fire safety curtain and its workings and they will become less afraid to use or possibly overlook this piece of safety equipment. If there is a problem closing or resetting the fire safety curtain it will be noticed and maintenance can be performed in a timely fashion.

B.13.6.4 When released, a fire safety curtain hoist may back-drive against a hydraulic governor. Frequently the rotor is spinning at up to twice the motor operational RPM. Should an operator attempt to stop a falling fire curtain by depressing the Up-command pushbutton, a hazard may be created.