



Security and Fire Protection for your Home

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When it comes to protecting your home from the impact of crime or fire you can't afford to take any chances. The correct choice of fire or security protection system and provider is vital.

Having a fire or security systems provider in whom you can trust will ensure peace of mind for you and demonstrate to your insurer that you have acted responsibly to protect your home. This need not be a matter of luck - it can be an informed choice if you select an SSAIB certificated company.

This leaflet will advise why it is important to choose an SSAIB certificated provider and what to consider when selecting systems for your home.

Confidence

SSAIB (Security Systems and Alarms Inspection Board) only certificate companies who demonstrate competence and professionalism in the management of their business. Certificated providers must also demonstrate technical competence and professional conduct when it comes to providing security services or fire detection services for your home.

SSAIB certification means that you can be confident in the quality of service provided to protect your home from the potentially devastating consequences of crime or fire.

Increasingly insurers require evidence that all reasonable steps have been taken to mitigate risk. SSAIB certificated provider will meet or exceed your insurer's requirements.

When Buying a System

For increased confidence when buying a fire or security system you should:

- Use only SSAIB certificated companies.
- Always agree a written specification.
- Ascertain what repair or call out cover is provided.
- Ensure that you are given a Certificate of Conformity for your system(s). This confirms that the system(s) has been installed to all relevant standards.
- Confirm whether you have bought or leased the system(s).
- Have your system(s) regularly maintained; this may be a condition of cover.
- Seek and follow up references.
- Ensure that your provider obtains a Police and, if relevant, Fire Services unique reference numbers (URNs) for the installation(s) as this will be used to verify the alarm and initiate a Police or Fire Services response. Only certificated providers are able to obtain URNs.

SSAIB Certificated Installers

SSAIB check the following so that you don't have to:

- That personnel have been screened to the relevant British Standard.
- The competence and experience of management and staff.
- That insurance cover is relevant to the level and nature of work undertaken.
- That premises are adequate for their activity and that the security of documentation and records is ensured.
- That best-practice standards are maintained.
- That sufficient staff and resources are employed to provide the services offered.
- Compliance with all relevant standards and codes of practice, British or European.
- Identity cards are carried.

SSAIB's skilled assessors check all of the above, plus the quality of workmanship undertaken to ensure that standards are maintained.



Police and Fire Services Response

As part of their approach to false alarm management, the Police and Fire Services will generally only respond to monitored alarm system activations where the signal has been verified by either an Alarm Receiving Centre (ARC) or, in the case of a domestic incident, a witness or victim.

Monitored Intruder Alarms

Monitored intruder alarm systems are issued with a unique reference number which is used to identify the premises where the alarm is installed. When the alarm is activated, the ARC monitoring the alarm will verify that it is a genuine emergency and pass the call onto the Police for a response.

Police services in the UK will only offer a response to verified alarm signals from systems which have been granted a Police URN, the aim being to provide an effective response to genuine intruder alarms. Such systems can only be installed by certificated providers and must be subject to a maintenance agreement. Excess false alarms will jeopardise Police response.

SSAIB certification is approved by all UK Police Forces; therefore certificated providers can obtain police URNs for the systems they install.

Monitored Fire Alarms

Some Fire Service authorities are adopting an approach modelled on the Police Policy outlined above. Where this is the case, to obtain a Fire Services response for an alarm activation from a monitored fire alarm system, it will be necessary to have a URN issued by the Fire Services and this will only be available to certificated providers. A maintenance agreement will also be required. Excess false alarms will jeopardise a Fire Services response.

Protecting your Home

Intruder alarms and other electronic security measures will provide an effective deterrent, but should be used in conjunction with, not as a substitute for, appropriate physical security.

Some tips:

- Lock doors and windows even if you are at home.
- Use good quality (to the relevant British Standard) deadlocks on all exterior doors.
- Windows should be fitted with locks or pins. Many primary locks, such as those on patio doors, can be easily defeated.
- Fit a chain or latch to the door, or opt for a wide angle viewer, so that you can check who is there before you open the door.
- Security lighting to the perimeter of your home can be a good deterrent. This can be set to react (turn on) by motion detectors. Add-on motion detectors can now be added to existing lights that do not have them as part of the assembly.
- Timers on interior lights can be a good deterrent if the home is unoccupied for a period of time. Timers set to turn on radios or the TV can also give the appearance that someone is home.
- The property should not be hidden from view by trees and shrubs. These can create a hiding place for an intruder to access the property.
- Valuables should be marked or engraved with a unique identifier (e.g. a number unique to you – driving licence - or date of birth). If the Police recover the item they need to be able to identify the owner.
- Report suspicious activity to the Police.
- Burglar alarm bell boxes should be visible. They are a valuable deterrent and provide an audible warning that an intruder is entering or on the premises.

Your Satisfaction

SSAIB's remit as a Certification Body is to ensure that your interests are protected. This is achieved by allowing only those providers who meet their exacting standards of quality and performance to be certificated by SSAIB.

Only certificated installers are allowed to use the SSAIB Certificated Installer mark.



However, if you are dissatisfied with the service you receive from a certificated company in terms of the system failing to comply with the agreed specification, with standards applicable to the system, or the work has not been carried out to an acceptable standard, SSAIB will investigate the complaint. If substantiated, SSAIB will require the installer to rectify the cause of the complaint.

For more information on protecting your home or choosing a system for your home, visit the SSAIB website www.ssaib.org

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