

Guidance on Escape Route Signage



Fire safety signs or 'Exit Signs' are a critical part of an emergency lighting installation, that provides information about the direction of travel which should be followed to reach a place of safety during the evacuation of a building in the event of an emergency situation.

Identification of Exit and Escape Routes

Signs complying with the European Signs Directive are required at all emergency Exits and along Escape routes.

Where direct sight of a final exit sign is not possible a directional sign or series of signs must be used.

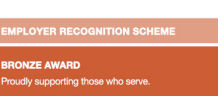
There should be no ambiguity as to which direction the escape route follows.

Exit signs should be clearly visible, unlike the sign shown in the image below.



Directional Arrows

- Every exit sign should be accompanied by a directional arrow.
- The arrow should indicate the direction to a place of safety.
- Directional arrows may not be used on their own.
- Arrows should be used wherever confusion might otherwise occur.
- Arrows should be correctly orientated.
- Straight ahead should be indicated with an arrow pointing up on BS EN ISO 7010 signs, unless this could cause confusion.
- A directional arrow should indicate where there is a change of direction or level. **Where the route leads down steps or stairs a down arrow should be used, unlike the image below.**



Format of Signs

There are a number of formats which are currently used within buildings. Text only signs are no longer permitted, although text can be used in addition to pictogram signs. Pictogram signs must be installed in accordance with one of the following three formats;

1. BS EN ISO 7010 is the format specified in BS 5266 Part 1:2016 and shows the running man within the door with a directional arrow.
2. The format shown in the EU Signs Directive and Guidance shows the running man, an arrow and a door.
3. The BS 5499 format is still deemed to comply with the Signs Directive for use in existing installations, where mixing signage formats would be considered confusing.

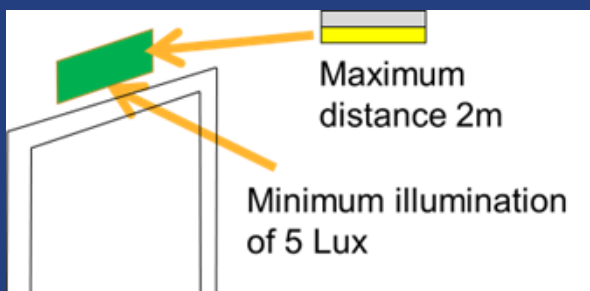


Illumination of Signs

It is recommended that maintained illumination is used to make the signs more visible at all times in premises where the occupants are unfamiliar with the building,

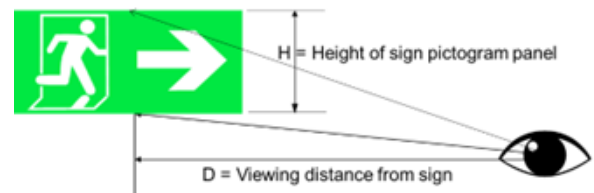
Previously, as a practical rule, the standard required an externally illuminated safety sign to be illuminated by an emergency luminaire located within 2 metres of the sign.

This still applies, but in addition there is now a requirement that the illumination of signs during emergency operation should be not less than 5 lux.



Maximum Viewing Distance

The following calculations should be used to determine the maximum viewing distance; Internally Illuminated Sign: Maximum D (m) = 200 x H (m)
Externally Illuminated Sign: Maximum D (m) = 100 x H (m)



Externally Illuminated Signs

- To be illuminated by mains and adjacent emergency lighting luminaire(s).
- Colorimetric requirements of white and green specified in BS ISO 3864-4:2011 Table 1.
- Illuminance by mains lighting of any part of the face of the sign should be not less than 100 Lux.
- During emergency operation conditions, illuminance of any part of the face of the sign should be not less than 5 Lux.

Internally Illuminated Signs when NOT Self Illuminated (Non-Maintained Operation)

- Should be illuminated by mains lighting.
- Colourimetric requirements are as externally illuminated signs.
- Illuminance of any part of the face of the sign should be not less than 100 lux.

Internally Illuminated Signs When Powered

- Colours should be white out of green.
- Luminance of green shall be at least 2 cd/m².
- Luminance of white should be between 5 and 15 times the luminance of the adjacent green.
- Maximum to minimum luminance within the white or green should be no more than 10:1.
- Response time should conform to BS EN 1838.
- Emergency duration should be the same as the installed emergency lighting.

Standards

- Signs should be located and operated in accordance with BS 5499-4:2013 and illuminated in accordance with EN 1838/BS 5266-7.
- BS 5266 Part 1:2016 recommends the format for signs as BS EN ISO 7010:2012+A5.
- Luminance of internally illuminated signs is detailed in and checked by the tests in BS EN 60598-2-22.

