



CIBSE COVID-19 RECOMMISSIONING OF LIFTS AND ESCALATORS

Version 2

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Recommissioning of Lifts and Escalators Post Lockdown

Many lifts and escalators will have been switched off for lockdown. Whilst most will go back into service without any glitches there are some precautionary steps that should be taken before returning them to regular service. If the lift has been isolated at the main isolator the lift contractor should be called in to return it to service. If there any doubt about the lifts then the maintenance contractor should be contacted to bring the lift back into safe use.

With respect to lifts social distancing will be a problem. A simple calculation will reveal that lifts with a rated load of 20 persons or fewer can only carry 1 person and observe the 2-metre social distancing rule. Consider staggered working hours and/or working to reduce peak demand on lifts.

Clean off surfaces, including push buttons, frequently but be aware that some cleaning agents may cause damage to buttons and/or cause them to stick.

LOLER is the regulation that applies to workplaces requiring periodic thorough examination every 6 months for a passenger carrying lift – rather like an MOT for a motor vehicle but with a different periodicity. Make sure that your LOLER certificate is up to date and do not put the lift back into service without a current corticate. If the lift has been out of service and decommissioned properly ask you lift contractor to come and reinstate it. Do NOT do it yourself.

If the LOLER Certificate is out of date then the lift must not be used – there are no extensions to the deadlines under LOLER due to coronavirus.

If the lift is hydraulic it may have sunk onto the buffers due to internal valve leakage over the time it has been switched off. The safest way by far is to have a routine maintenance visit to get the lift back into service as the lubrication on the guides may have dried out and the lift may make an awful noise when she returns to service as a result.

Escalators do not come under LOLER but after a period out of service they may need their drive and steps chains lubricating again. It is also worth making sure that no foreign bodies that may cause a comb plate trip are on the step band when restarted. There are some very good guidelines in the Safed EMW document that give recommended daily checks for escalator owners but, once again, a routine maintenance visit prior to going into service is recommended.

[Further CIBSE information](#) on re-occupying buildings is available.

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This document is based on the best knowledge available at the time of publication. Due to the rapidly evolving nature of the COVID-19 epidemic this guidance should be read in conjunction with the relevant government guidance, in particular that relating to [“Working safely during coronavirus \(COVID-19\)”](#)

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