Who Are the Police?

A Discussion of Who is in Charge of Making Sure We All Do the Right Things!
Who Are the Police?

- Fire Alarms are Life Safety Systems
  ..........They must work first time every time
- Many Stages in the Lifecycle of a Fire Alarm;
  - Designs
  - Approvals
  - Installation
  - Verification
  - Periodic Testing and Inspection
  - Repairs, Extensions
  - Replacements
Who Are the Police?

- Such a complex chain of events provides opportunity for error…..
- Inattention, ignorance, lack of training, sloppiness, negligence….
- The “Systems” of Rules, Regulations, Codes and Standards is designed to ensure we catch all errors……
- Problems might slip through the system .............
- and that can lead to disaster
Who Are the Police?

Examples:

- Voice evacuation messages not understood because audibility not tested or speakers damaged
- Failure to alarm because by-passes left on
- Loss of signal or communication when parts of the fire alarm are destroyed because cable fire ratings weren’t per Code
- Pull station doesn’t cause an alarm because it is jammed or broken, and is not tested
- Etc....
Who Are the Police?

- Errors occur, the system is designed to ensure we prevent them if possible, but catch them before the fire alarm is needed in any case!!

- Some are confused or uncertain as to who should be “policing” the whole process…
  - Who does one report a problem to?
  - Who may apply disciplinary measures?
  - Who should be overseeing quality, compliance and completeness?

- Who are the people “in charge”?

----------Who Are the Police?'
Who Are the Police?

- The Design and the Designer
  - Must be done by or under the direct supervision of Professional Engineers
  - Must Comply with the provincial Building Code

- Who Polices the Designers?
  - Provincial Engineers Associations, (e.g. APEGBC, APEGGA…)
  - Municipal Buildings Department / Plans Examiners
  - Building Inspectors

- ..What about the Verifying Technician…?
Who Are the Police?

- The Fire Alarm Equipment / System & the Supplier
  - Must be ULC tested, listed and labeled, compliant with the various equipment standards that govern the parts of the system

- Who Polices the Fire Alarm Companies?
  - The Designer
  - The Installer
  - ULC....
  - The Owner
Who Are the Police?

- Installation and the Electrical Contractor
  - Must comply with CAN/ULC - S524, the Design Documents, the Electrical Code and the Installation/Application details from the equipment manufacturer
  - Must be done by licensed electricians / licensed electrical contractors

Who Polices the Installing Contractor?

- The Designer
- The Municipal Building (Permit) Authority
- The Electrical Inspection Dept.
- The Building Inspector
- The General Contractor
- The Verifying Technician
Who Are the Police?

- The Verification & the Verifying Technician
  - Must be properly trained, acceptable to the AHJ, which often means has been factory trained & ASTTBC or CFAA registered
  - Must comply with the Verification standard, (CAN/ULC-S537)
  - Must ensure the Installation complies with CAN/ULC-S524

  - In a sense, we can say the Verifying Technician is the “final policeperson for a new or modified fire alarm system....

  - Must neither be the Designer (or Designer’s Employee), nor be the Installer, (or the Installer’s employee..
### Who Are the Police?

#### STANDARDS BULLETIN 2006-03

**INTERPRETATION: FIRE ALARM SYSTEM VERIFICATION — NUMBER OF ORGANIZATIONS/COMPANIES (PARTIES) REQUIRED**

**CAN/ULC-S537-04, Verification of Fire Alarm Systems**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FIRE ALARM SYSTEM VERIFICATION PROCESS</th>
<th>EXAMPLE SCENARIOS</th>
<th>(Party 1) FIRE ALARM SYSTEM DESIGN AND SIGN-OFF (i.e. by a professional engineer)</th>
<th>(Party 2) FIRE ALARM SYSTEM INSTALLATION AND SIGN-OFF (i.e. by a licensed electrician)</th>
<th>(Party 3) FIRE ALARM SYSTEM VERIFICATION* (i.e. by a fire alarm company technician)</th>
<th>IS A 4TH PARTY REQUIRED FOR THE FIRE ALARM SYSTEM VERIFICATION** (i.e. a knowledgeable, recognized company, or person)</th>
<th>DOES THIS SCENARIO MEET THE INTENT OF THE PREFACE OF CAN/ULC-S537?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scenario #1</td>
<td>By an Independent Designer***</td>
<td>By an Electrical Contractor</td>
<td>By Fire Alarm Company No. 1 Technician</td>
<td>NOT REQUIRED</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scenario #2</td>
<td>By an Independent Designer***</td>
<td>By Fire Alarm Company No. 1</td>
<td>By Fire Alarm Company No. 1 Technician</td>
<td>REQUIRED</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scenario #3</td>
<td>By Fire Alarm Company No. 1</td>
<td>By an Electrical Contractor</td>
<td>By Fire Alarm Company No. 1 Technician</td>
<td>REQUIRED</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scenario #4</td>
<td>By Fire Alarm Company No. 1</td>
<td>By Fire Alarm Company No. 1</td>
<td>By Fire Alarm Company No. 1 Technician</td>
<td>THIS SCENARIO DOES NOT MEET THE INTENT OF THE PREFACE OF CAN/ULC-S537</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* This verification can be done by the same fire alarm company that provided the equipment and programming.

**4th Party: This party is independent from Party 1 and Party 2.

***Independent designer: Designer that is independent from the electrical contractor and the fire alarm company.
Who Are the Police?

- Who Polices the Verifiers…?
  - The Building Inspector
  - The Designer
    - The Installer (…??)
    - The Verifier’s Employer

- What About the CFAA?
Who Are the Police?

Ongoing Testing, Inspection & Maintenance.
.....Policing Building Owners and the Inspect & Test Firms

- Purview of the Fire Code...must comply with CAN/ULC -S536

- In some provinces, Technicians must registered as having completed a specific Education Program acceptable to the Fire Authorities.

- CFAA Education is now a requirement in a number of Canadian jurisdictions.

- The Building Owner is responsible to ensure the work gets done, and carried out by properly qualified personnel.

- The Technician is responsible for ensuring she/he is properly qualified, and for complying with the Inspection Standard...which means complete documentation!
Who Are the Police?

- Who Polices the Building Owner?

- The Fire Inspector / local Authority Having Jurisdiction ensures the Fire Code is being followed, and can issue notices, or press charges, where there are un-rectified deficiencies noted.

- In certain provinces, there is trend toward “zero tolerance” of serious Fire Code and Life Safety violations. Owners are charged and fined on a reasonably regular basis....
Who Are the Police?

…..from The Ontario Fire Service Messenger....

Belleville building owner fined $13,500

On February 26, 2007, the owner of an inn at Belleville was convicted for a multi-unit rental with the Ontario regulations dealing with the rental, building multi-residential and service units. A fine of $2,500 was imposed.

Restaurant chain fined for no fire safety plan

Restaurant owner fined $2,500

Restaurant owner fined $2,500

The owner/operator of a restaurant in Barrie, Ontario, was convicted of a violation of the Ontario Fire Code.

Cabinet and window shutter business fined $9,200

On February 26, 2007, the owner of a business in Barrie was convicted of a violation of the Ontario Fire Code.

October 29, 2008
Canadian Fire Alarm Association
Who Are the Police?

- Who Polices the Test & Inspect Firm …& the Test & Inspect Technician?

  - The **Owner**, must check the Tech’s credentials, must review the Inspection Report, and based on feedback from the local Fire Inspector, may call the Tech or Firm to “account. . .”

  - The **Technician’s Employer**, must ensure the Technician is properly trained, is conscientious, and does a thorough, competent job.

- What about the CFAA?

- What if there is suspected or alleged misconduct, incompetence or negligence…even when the Technician involved is CFAA registered?
Who Are the Police?

- Who *REALLY* Polices the Fire Alarm Technician?
  - We get letters, from various industry participants…
    & there seems to be a natural assumption that the CFAA should have a role…
  - For gross or criminal negligence by a Technician or others involved, there is always a possibility charges may be laid by the local AHJ.

(Yes! AHJ’s ARE the police ..!) or a civil suit may be brought by an injured party …
…regardless of province.
Who Are the Police?

- Who **REALLY** Polices the Fire Alarm Technician?

- Some Industries are “Self Regulating”…
  - Lawyers
  - Professional Engineers
  - Etc.

- Such an approach requires a legal mandate, an infrastructure adequate and appropriate to establish rules, monitor compliance, receive and review complaints, hand out suspensions and revocations, and protect itself against civil suits from those who feel unfairly treated and/or damaged by the discipline taken.
Who Are the Police?

- Who REALLY Polices the Fire Alarm Technician?

- The CFAA is NOT currently set up to be the engine of Self Regulation for the Fire Alarm Industry.

- Two full time, one part time employees, and three Consultants who struggle to keep up with education, registration, AHJ Education, ULC and other “Industry” liaisons, Chapter support, Journal publication, Annual Technical Seminars and distributing incoming questions for answering.

- Everybody else is a VOLUNTEER, and none are “equipped” to handle “Policing” the industry....

So what can we do ???

October 29, 2008

Canadian Fire Alarm Association
Who Are the Police?

Who SHOULD Police Fire Alarm Technicians?

- Some say the CFAA should quit whining and take the bull by the horn... after all, don’t we grant the Technicians licenses??
- NO....we register the fact that Technicians have completed our Education Program.
- We CAN train them about Fire Alarms, Codes, Standards, Technology, Best Practices and what is required to Verify, Test and Inspect....
- We CANNOT attest to or make judgments about;
  - Their competence and thoroughness
  - Their common sense
  - Their character and honesty
Who Are the Police?

- Who *SHOULD* Police Fire Alarm Technicians?
- Can the CFAA do more...?
  - Yes, with more volunteers, more funds, and more staff, over time...
- So what is the answer...?
- ...Who Are the Police?
Who Are the Police?

- You already have the answer to that.....

- Designers / Consultants
- Engineer’s Associations
- Manufacturers
- Fire Alarm Suppliers,
- Service companies
- Building Officials,
- Inspectors,
- Plans Examiners
- Installing Contractors,
- General Contractors
- Verifying Technicians
- Inspect & Test Technicians
- Employers
- Owners
- Fire Inspectors
Who Are the Police?

- We all must go that “Extra Mile” to ensure it all gets done correctly...
- **Designers**...get engaged in system testing..!
- **Owners**...get engaged with the annual inspect and test
- **AHJ’s & Fire Inspectors**...put your concerns in writing!
- **Employers & Supervisors**...
  
  ......get involved with your Techs’ training, development and quality of work...!

Yes, people of the Fire Alarm

 & Fire Protection Industry...

............... **We are ALL the Police..!**
So let’s get out there people....and let’s be SAFE out there...!