

FSBS FIRE SAFETY BUSINESS SALES

Proving fire safety competence in 2027

The records behind the certificate

2027 edition 9-minute read

By Simon Read, Founder & Managing Director

A practical guide with a competence and certification continuity worksheet

Images are illustrative.

The whole guide on one page

Start with the services the business sells. For each one, join the organisation's scope, the people doing the work and the records that show what happened.

The question	Seller prepares	Buyer verifies
1. Match each service to its scope	Current certificate and module schedule	Entity, service and modules agree
2. Name the people behind the scope	Role map and competence evidence	Accepted cover for the actual work
3. Follow a job through its records	Installation, handover and service records	A clear trail between stages
4. Separate the duties	Premises and building-work roles	Which rule applies to which person
5. Ask what the sale changes	Actual proposed changes and issuer questions	Written answers, with gaps still open

Use the two-page worksheet to record the evidence and assign each unanswered question. It is a preparation exercise, not a certificate of compliance.

Bring the unresolved line

Take the worksheet to a free first conversation about preparing the business for sale or checking an acquisition.

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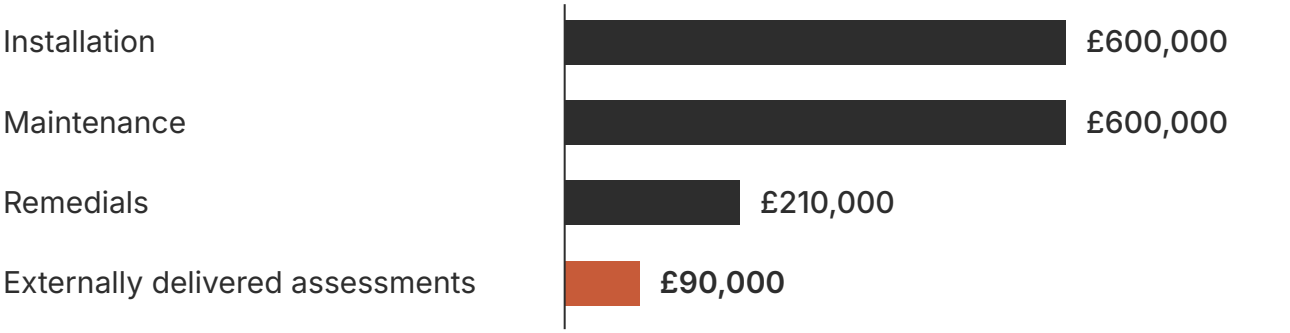
Speak with Simon

One business, several kinds of work

Fenmere Fire Protection is fictional and its figures are illustrative. Its annual revenue is £1,500,000, divided as follows.

Fenmere's illustrative annual service income

Illustrative



£600,000 + £600,000 + £210,000 + £90,000 = £1,500,000.

Use each income line to choose the certificate schedule, role map and customer terms to read.

Income line	Start the evidence trail here
Installation	Service scope, people and completed job records
Maintenance	Scope, signed terms and visit records
Remedials	Defect record, agreed work and completion evidence
Externally delivered assessments	Delivery agreement, assessor identity and reports

The commercial question is whether each service can still be delivered after the proposed changes. The pages that follow help you assemble the answer and identify the evidence still needed.

An acquirer's annual report records the purchase of a fire and security installation and maintenance business completed in April 2023. It reports £2.0 million revenue after completion in the year ended March 2024 [9]. This supplies a smaller-business transaction example alongside the service-evidence questions in this guide.

What to check

Choose a representative job from each service sold. Put the record beside the scope claimed for that service.

1. Match each service to its scope

A company logo is a starting point. Read the certificate and the services it actually covers.

What good looks like

BAFE separates extinguisher servicing, risk assessment, fire detection and alarms, and emergency lighting. Its SP203 schemes are modular [1].

Fenmere's service map

Illustrative

For Fenmere's £600,000 installation income, request the service breakdown before deciding which scheme and modules to check. Do not assume the income proves certification.

Seller prepares	Buyer verifies
Certificate and schedule	Correct legal entity, service and modules
Current registration details	The entry agrees with the claimed scope
Customer's stated requirement	The evidence meets that particular requirement

For SP203-1, BAFE registration requires certification for the selected modules. Continued registration depends on valid certification and scheme compliance [2].

Both sides of the question

The seller can explain the services behind a broad description. The buyer can then check each scope without treating one certificate as cover for everything.

What to check

Keep a separate line for each service and module. Ask the issuer about anything the schedule does not make clear.

2. Name the people behind the scope

Keep organisation certification and individual competence in separate columns. Then show how they meet on the work being sold.

What good looks like

BAFE's SP203-1 version 8.0 summary introduced module Lead Individuals [3]. Its version 8.0.1 update makes lead roles subject to certification-body acceptance and surveillance [4].

Fenmere's people question

Illustrative

For Fenmere's installation and maintenance services, ask who covers each relevant module now, and who would cover it under the proposed ownership and staffing plan.

Seller prepares	Buyer verifies
Named role and service map	Relevant module and actual responsibilities
Competence and assessment records	Evidence relates to the work undertaken
Proposed staffing arrangements	Issuer's answer on any changed arrangements

Do not turn a person's qualification into a claim about every service the organisation provides. Ask for the organisational scope as well [1].

Both sides of the question

The seller may have capable people whose responsibilities are not written down. The buyer can ask to see those responsibilities and the evidence behind them.

What to check

Record missing evidence separately from a missing person. Each needs its own action and owner.

3. Follow a job through its records

Read the work as a sequence. Installation, commissioning and maintenance raise different document questions.

What good looks like

BAFE's version 8.0 summary describes management records and certificate models [3]. The version 8.0.1 update names a commissioning/handover module [4].

Fenmere's job trail

Illustrative

Fenmere's £210,000 remedial income prompts a separate question: which recorded defects led to the work, and what evidence shows the agreed work was completed?

Seller prepares	Buyer verifies
Installation record	Work, location and responsible people are identifiable
Commissioning/handover record	It relates to the installed system and agreed stage
Service and remedial records	Outstanding actions can be traced to an owner

For required fire precautions in England, Home Office guidance describes suitable maintenance and competent testing or maintenance contractors [5]. Use the relevant records to test the work, rather than inventing a visit interval.

Both sides of the question

The seller can explain how jobs move between teams. The buyer can follow one job across those handovers and ask about a break in the record.

What to check

Choose the actual job documents. This table is a due-diligence exercise, not a mandatory statutory pack.

4. Separate the duties

Write down who owes a duty before asking whether the evidence meets it. A contractor, a building-work dutyholder and a premises' Responsible Person are different roles.

What good looks like

For applicable design and building work in England, the regulator distinguishes individual competence from an organisation's capability [6].

Evidence category	Seller prepares	Buyer verifies
Building-work duty	Role and project scope	The building-regulations rule applies
Premises duty	Customer role and supplied records	The relevant Responsible Person is identified
Scheme or contract	Certificate or signed requirement	Its own scope and conditions

Home Office Section 156 guidance covers Responsible Persons' assessment records and information for an incoming Responsible Person at premises within the Fire Safety Order [7]. Selling the contractor alone does not show that this premises role changed.

Fenmere's assessment income

Illustrative

Fenmere's £90,000 externally delivered assessment income calls for the assessor's identity, delivery arrangements and reports. It does not identify the customer premises' Responsible Person.

Both sides of the question

The seller can show which role the firm accepted. The buyer can ask the customer and advisers to resolve a different or unclear role.

5. Ask what the sale changes

Set out the proposed legal entity, people, services and operating arrangements. Send the relevant change question to each issuer.

What good looks like

BAFE's published material ties registration to valid certification and scheme compliance [2], and lead roles to certification-body acceptance [4]. An issuer's answer is the evidence to seek for a changed arrangement.

Fenmere's open question

Illustrative

For Fenmere's externally delivered assessments, put the delivery agreement beside the proposed arrangement after sale. Ask what needs consent or confirmation; leave an unanswered point open.

Seller prepares	Buyer verifies
Actual proposed change	The issuer answered that change
Written reply and conditions	Any action has an owner and due date
Evidence of completed action	The reply has not merely been filed

The government's March to June 2026 consultation on fire risk assessors proposed legislation [8]. That consultation does not supply a 2027 commencement date.

Both sides of the question

The seller can raise a gap early. The buyer can consider clarification, training, revised delivery arrangements or narrower scope without assuming an automatic price deduction.

What to check

Use the worksheet to distinguish a legal duty, scheme condition, customer term and proposal. Record the document that settles each point.

Competence and certification continuity worksheet

For the business you are considering, record evidence references against each service sold. Put "open" where an answer is missing. This is a preparation worksheet, not confirmation of compliance.

Business and review date

Service sold	Scope / module reference	People / job evidence	Customer / duty reference
Fire alarms			
Emergency lighting			
Extinguishers			
Risk assessments			
Remedials			

Open evidence lines to take to the action plan

Include the relevant legal duty, scheme condition or customer term in your reference. Use a separate copy where one service has several modules. Continue unanswered points on the action plan.

Type your answers in and save a copy, or print the page and fill it in by hand. Nothing you enter is sent to us.

Continuity action plan

For each unanswered point, identify the issuer or customer to ask, the exact proposed change and the person responsible for obtaining the reply. A blank reply remains open.

Business and proposed transaction / staffing change

Question area	Issuer / customer and question	Action owner / due date	Reply / conditions / date
Service scope			
People / roles			
Customer term			
Assessment delivery			
Other change			

Next actions, unresolved points and the adviser who will assess their effect

Record the reply's conditions as well as its date. Agree with the appropriate technical or legal adviser how an unresolved point affects the actual service or transaction.

Type your answers in and save a copy, or print the page and fill it in by hand. Nothing you enter is sent to us.

Sources and validity

1. BAFE: What areas of fire safety does BAFE cover?, publication date not stated. Scheme distinctions, not a universal statutory licence.
2. BAFE: SP203-1 assessment and registration process, publication date not stated. Selected modules and registration conditions.
3. BAFE: SP203-1 version 8.0 summary of key changes, August 2023. Published summary, not the complete scheme.
4. BAFE: SP203-1 version 8.0.1 update, October 2023. Published update; no automatic sale-transfer conclusion.
5. Home Office: Guide for persons with fire-safety duties, September 2023, sections 13 and 18. England; duties depend on role and control, with assistance exceptions.
6. Building Safety Regulator: Design and building work: meeting building requirements, updated Mar 2024. England, applicable building-regulations work; additional higher-risk-building requirements are distinct. Not every maintenance visit.
7. Home Office: Fire-safety responsibilities under Section 156, updated Oct 2023. Used for England premises and roles within the Fire Safety Order.
8. MHCLG: Fire risk assessors profession consultation, published Mar 2026; consultation closed June 2026. Dated consultation history only; no final reform position or commencement timetable is asserted.
9. Marlowe plc: Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024, note 12, printed page 93, hosted by Morgan Fire. Accounts authorised August 2024; separate publication date not established. Acquisition of all Victory Fire Limited equity completed April 2023. £2.0 million is post-completion revenue in the year ended March 2024, not prior annual turnover or sale price. Smaller-business scale is an editorial inference, not an exact match to Fenmere. No certification premium, transfer, finance or multiple is inferred.

Checked Oct 2026. We review every guide after the Autumn Budget in October 2026. The edition year is not a regulatory deadline. Check current requirements with the relevant issuer and advisers before relying on them in a transaction.

The example. Fenmere Fire Protection is invented, not a Reads client or a real sale. Its figures show a service-income map, not market evidence or a certification premium. The worksheets are documentary questions. The images are illustrative.

Bring the evidence line you cannot close



Bring your worksheet and the document behind the unresolved question to a free first conversation. There is no obligation to go further.

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FSBS
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