



# WATCH TOWER

BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF BRITAIN

THE RIDGEWAY LONDON NW7 1RN

TELEPHONE 020 8906 2211

TAK:TSC August 20, 2010

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS

Re: Inspections under the *Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005*

Dear Brothers:

The *Kingdom Hall Manual* states that the above *Order* is directly applicable to Kingdom Halls. Very large fines for breaches of the *Order* have recently been levied against retail premises even where there were no injuries or deaths. So, fire safety officers and the courts are taking a very robust approach to the application of this *Order*. We write to ensure you are well prepared for visits of fire officers so that they form the right impression.

Kingdom Halls are low-risk premises. The arrangements specified in the *Kingdom Hall Manual* are designed to save you work in contrast with the many pages of documentation being proffered as necessary in order to comply with the *Order* by some service providers. Nevertheless, the arrangements in the *Kingdom Hall Manual* satisfy the requirements of the *Order*.

When a fire officer inspects your Kingdom Hall, the brother appointed to meet him needs to know what is in the *Kingdom Hall Manual* and how it is implemented. This includes: the preparation of the fire risk assessment, the various checklists and records required, the evacuation drills, the electrical and gas installation inspection records, the records of tests of illuminated emergency exit signs and fire alarm systems (if these have been installed), the arrangements for maintaining the fire extinguishers, and the training of appointed persons carried out at our assemblies.

If the brother speaking to the fire officer is unfamiliar with the above, the fire officer might decide that fire is not properly addressed and initiate serious action. The congregation would then be on the defensive. We would, therefore, urge the elders to choose carefully the right person to meet the inspector. The brother selected must take the time to familiarize himself with the *Kingdom Hall Manual* and its implementation before speaking to the fire officer.

If the Kingdom Hall is not of a conventional design, for example, if it is part of a residential complex, or if it is situated near high-risk premises (such as a liquefied petroleum gas store), then professional advice should be sought on the risk assessment.

We take this opportunity to convey our warm Christian love and greetings.

Your brothers,

*Watch Tower B. & J. Society*  
OF BRITAIN

PS to the secretary: This letter should be retained in the congregation file along with other letters relating to the Kingdom Hall.