

A prominent system found in a fire compartment are fire resistive doorsets which consists of a door leaf, frame and furniture, commonly called hardware.

Fire-resistive doorsets are typically constructed of steel or wood and fitted with specifically tested hardware including hinges, closers and latching hardware. The door leaves can be solid or filled with various approved materials to provide a fire resistance which dictates what type of door it is.

Fire-resistive doorsets are designed and installed to limit the spread of fire and/or smoke through a building including fire isolated stairwells, fire isolated risers and the like which is why they are required to be closed during a fire. This is achieved by the use of self-closers or automatic hold-open devices with the latter generally interfaced into a fire detection panel or approved standalone electronic hold open devices. The use of "chocks" or other obstructions could lead to the door remaining open in a fire therefore permitting the fire to spread rapidly through the immediate area or building and are therefore not permitted to be used.



It should also be noted that deadlocks, tower bolts and some types of privacy locks cannot be used on fire-resistive doorsets as they have the capability of stopping the door from closing. Overall, hardware attached to the door leaf or frame can only be that which has been approved for the specific type of doorset fitted. Therefore, even though a lock or other hardware is advertised as fire rated, it may not have been tested on the particular door and therefore would be not permitted to be fitted.

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A fire door professional can provide advice on the approved hardware options for particular doors through referencing the manufacturers approved hardware list.

To locate the manufacturer of a doorset, reference the as-installed documentation or look on the spline of the door leaf and the frame. Located in these areas should be a metal tag with the manufacturer's name, install date and fire rating. Should either of these tags be missing, consult your fire door professional. The door leaf and/or frame may need to be replaced if the type of door cannot be ascertained and recertified. Reasons for the tags to be missing are varied however common reasons are removal by painters instead of masking and the tags not being replaced, the door leaf was replaced by a non-compliant leaf, in new builds the door was installed by the head contractor and not certified by the supplier once installed. Any of these reasons and others could lead to significant expense if proper controls are not in place.

Signage on fire-resistive doorsets is required in most cases which advises occupants that the doors are in place for fire safety and that the doors should not be obstructed or held open unless in the case of an automatic hold open device. The signage is also ideal for notifying maintenance staff and contractors that the doors are fire-resistive doorsets and therefore are not treated as general doors. It should be noted that there are some exceptions for signage which are covered within the National Construction Code (NCC) i.e. a door providing direct egress from a sole-occupancy unit in a Class 2 or 3 building or Class 4 part of a building.

As with any fire protection system, inspection and maintenance is vital to ensure all systems operate as intended. Fire-resistive doorsets should be maintained to the appropriate maintenance standards.

For more information 

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Contact us at riskengineering@vero.com.au