



DEPARTMENT OF BUILDING INSPECTION

City and County of San Francisco
1660 Mission Street, San Francisco, CA 94103

Building Code Interpretation Egress 016

Accessible Means of Egress

Subject: Use of horizontal exits as accessible means of egress for new buildings.	Date: July 21, 2009
San Francisco Building Code Sections: 1002.1, 1007, 1007.2.1, Exception 1, 1007.3, 1007.4, 1022, 1118A.1, 1114B.2	Code Year: 2007
Approved By: Vivian L. Day, Director, C.B.O. Barbara A. Schultheis, Fire Marshal	Signatures: <i>Vivian L. Day</i> 9/30/09 <i>Barbara A. Schultheis</i> 9/30/09
Question: To what extent may horizontal exits serve as a component of the required accessible means of egress?	

Answer:

Horizontal exits that comply with Section 1007.6 may serve as a component of an accessible means of egress to the extent that, where provided in newly constructed, fully fire sprinklered buildings, horizontal exits may be used in lieu of complying elevators as accessible means of egress. This complies with the specific language of SFBC Sections 1007.2.1, Exception 1.

Areas of refuge are not required in areas accessed through horizontal exits, per Section 1007.3, Exit stairways, and Section 1007.4, Elevators. Horizontal exits provide fire separation between building areas and allow egress into fire protected areas that are part of a building's fire resistive egress system.

This interpretation reflects the specific requirements of the Code and is in accordance with the 2006 IBC Q&A Application Guide, page 110 and 111. That Guide states, in part, "When a horizontal exit is incorporated into a building, the intent of the code is that the portion of the building lying on one side of the horizontal exit "wall" serves as the area of refuge for the other side of the wall containing the horizontal exit."

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