

### 3.8.6 Emergency lighting

Emergency lighting is provided for use when the main lighting fails for whatever reason. There are two types: escape lighting and standby lighting.

#### Escape lighting

The Fire Precautions Act 1971 and the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act of 1974 make it obligatory to provide adequate means of escape in all places of work and public resort. Emergency lighting is generally considered to be an essential part of this requirement. *BS 5266 Code of Practice for the Emergency Lighting of Premises* lays down minimum standards for the design, implementation and certification of emergency lighting installations.

Escape lighting is provided to ensure the safe and effective evacuation of the building. It must:

- indicate clearly and unambiguously the escape routes
- illuminate the escape routes to allow safe movement towards and out of the exits
- ensure that fire alarm call points and fire equipment provided along the escape route can be readily located.

See CD for more information on emergency and escape luminaires.

#### Standby lighting

It may not be possible, or in some cases desirable, to evacuate some building areas immediately in the event of an emergency or power failure. This may be because life would be put at risk, as in a hospital operating theatre, or in some chemical plants where safe shutdown procedures must be used. In shops and offices, for instance, it may be advisable to determine the nature of the emergency before deciding upon evacuation. To evacuate a large store for a simple interruption of the public supply is to risk panic and the loss of stock by opportunist thieves. In these circumstances, standby lighting is required to allow appropriate actions to take place or activities to continue. The level of standby lighting will depend upon the nature of the activities, their duration and the associated risk, and can range from 50–100 per cent of the maintained illuminance according to circumstances.

Standby lighting can be regarded as a special form of conventional lighting and dealt with accordingly. Escape lighting requires different treatment.

This section on emergency lighting is split into the following headings:

- Escape lighting requirements
- Marking the route
- Illuminating the route
- Other important factors
- Systems and calculations