



BULLETIN RB06-019

(Updated 2015 Dec 10)

SIZE OF ACTUATING PADS OR BARS OF EMERGENCY (PANIC) HARDWARE

Reference: Div B, 3.4.6.15.(2) and NFPA 101(2006 Edition), 7.2.1.7.1

Div B, 3.4.6.15.(2) "If a door is equipped with a latching mechanism, a device that will release the latch and allow the door to swing wide open when a force of not more than 90 N is applied to the device in the direction of travel to the exit shall be installed on

- a) every exit door from a floor area containing an assembly occupancy having an occupant load more than 100,
- b) every door leading to an exit lobby from an exit stair shaft, and every exterior door leading from an exit stair shaft in a building having an occupant load more than 100, and
- c) every exit door from a floor area containing a high-hazard industrial occupancy."

NFPA 101(2006 Edition), 7.2.1.7.1 "Where a door is required to be equipped with panic or fire exit hardware, such hardware shall meet the following criteria:

- 1) It shall consist of a cross bar or a push pad, the actuating portion of which extends across not less than one-half of the width of the door leaf.
- 2) It shall be mounted as follows:
 - a) New installations shall be not less than 34 in. (865 mm), nor more than 48 in. (1220 mm), above the floor.
 - b) Existing installations shall be not less than 30 in. (760 mm), nor more than 48 in. (1220 mm), above the floor."

Commentary / Relevant Facts:

The above Code requirement does not specifically state the size of the push pad or bar. N.F.P.A. 101 (2006 Edition) Life Safety Code, under **Article 7-2.1.7.1.(1)**, gives the minimum width of the device to be at least half the width of the door.

However, the above **N.F.P.A.** standard is not mentioned in the ABC 2006 and can therefore be only taken as good engineering practice, and not legally binding.

Conclusion:

There is no minimum size required for the actuating bar or pad in emergency door release (panic) hardware. However, a minimum of half the door width as stated in **N.F.P.A. 101(2006 Edition)** is recommended as good engineering practice.

Note: **NFPA 101** is a referenced document which is enforceable in the Alberta Fire Code 2006. If there is a need to go to Order, the Order to Comply would have to come from a Fire Inspector.

Chief Building Inspector

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Unless stated otherwise, the Code references in this bulletin are to Division B of the Alberta Building Code 2014 (ABC 2014). Bulletins do not overrule the ABC 2014 nor constitute a relaxation of the Code. They serve to clarify the Code in areas where the latter is ambiguous or does not cover a specific topic. Bulletins are City of Calgary clarifications for staff use to enable consistency in the application of the Code. These bulletins should always be read in the context of the appropriate requirements of the Code.