

# Concise Guide to Alarm Monitoring Service

## SCOPE

This guide provides contact, administrative and alarm response information in a concise format and is supplemental to the full SMC Custodian Administrative and Operational Booklet.

It is intended as a quick reference guide to fire & intruder alarm monitoring for Alarm Companies and their clients' and not a replacement of the full booklet.

### Terms in this document:

'Company' - the organisation that provides service and maintenance to alarm systems or pays for the monitoring service, e.g. Alarm Company, National Account or End User.

'ARC' – Alarm Receiving Centre (NSI Gold, BS5979, Cat. II).

## CONTACT

### Crocus Street, The Meadows, Nottingham, NG2 3EJ

**Head Office** T 0844 879 1701

Mon-Fri 08.30-17.00

**Sales Hub** T 0844 879 1702 Opt 1

Mon-Fri 08.30-17.00 E [uk\\_sales@smc-monitoring.com](mailto:uk_sales@smc-monitoring.com)

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**Customer Support** E [orders@smc-monitoring.com](mailto:orders@smc-monitoring.com)

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E [URN@smc-monitoring.com](mailto:URN@smc-monitoring.com)

E [data-changes@smc-monitoring.com](mailto:data-changes@smc-monitoring.com)

E [cancellations@smc-monitoring.com](mailto:cancellations@smc-monitoring.com)

**Touch helpdesk** E [touch.estate@smc-monitoring.com](mailto:touch.estate@smc-monitoring.com)

**ARC Nottingham** E [csm-nott@smc-monitoring.com](mailto:csm-nott@smc-monitoring.com)

Operations (24/7)

SmartTEST (VRT)

T 0844 879 1706

### ARC Leeds, 5 Canal Place, Armley Road, Leeds, LS12 2DU

Operations (24/7) T 0844 879 1710

SmartTEST (VRT) T 0844 879 1711

### SMC Vision, Crocus Street, The Meadows, Nottingham, NG2 3EJ

Operations (24/7) T 0844 879 1911

E [rvt@smc-monitoring.com](mailto:rvt@smc-monitoring.com)

Sales

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E [uk\\_sales@smc-monitoring.com](mailto:uk_sales@smc-monitoring.com)

### ARC Dublin, Birch Avenue, Stillorgan Industrial Park, Dublin, Ireland A94 A2C4

Operations (24/7) T +353 1 2952366

E [ie\\_monitoring@smc-monitoring.com](mailto:ie_monitoring@smc-monitoring.com)

SmartTEST (VRT) T 0818 776 333

## BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

Prior to connecting systems to our ARC's for the first time you will need to have agreed a monitoring contract with us. Should a contract not be in place please contact our sales hub.

To provide consistency & minimise errors it is preferred that all applications for monitoring, subsequent data changes and cancellations are submitted electronically via our standard SmartForms which are available to authorised Service Companies via [SmartPac](#) or [TOUCH](#) - click on these links or see our website <https://smc-monitoring.com> for further details.

We will aim to process all administration requests within 24hrs of receipt. The normal working day is defined as: 0830-1700, Mon to Fri excluding 'English' bank holidays.

## CONNECTING SYSTEMS TO OUR ARC

**Application for Monitoring** - Our ARC Admin. Dept. should be in receipt of the appropriate application form at least 24 hours in advance of commissioning the system and longer periods where third party signalling services are required, i.e. Redcare, Dualcom, etc.

**Commissioning Systems** - To commission the system contact our ARC Admin. Dept., identify the system you require to commission and request that it is placed "in-service" and "on-test".

Test each alarm and restore signal, including single and dual path failures, call us on completion to confirm each alarm signal and restore condition has been received in the same order as sent.

Check all proposed alarm responses meet your end user's expectations and provide any missing information that may inhibit our ability to respond to an alarm correctly, i.e. Contacts/Keyholders, Police URN's, etc.

On completion of commissioning, provided you have not instructed us to take the system "out-of-service", a graded commissioning certificate and report will be issued based upon the completeness of information supplied and satisfactory transmission of all required test signals.

More detailed instructions in respect of commissioning particular communication products and the bulk transfer-in of systems can be found within the SMC Custodian Administrative & Operational Booklet and associated Monitoring Datasheets.

## DATA CHANGES

Contact/Keyholder details, site telephone & postcodes can be amended through [SmartPAC](#) or [TOUCH](#) or by submission of the appropriate form to our ARC Admin. Dept.

Cancellations, URN and Alarm Response Plan changes will only be accepted in writing on the appropriate form directly to our Administration Department.

We will accept verbal requests from customers (following password validation) for Contact/Keyholder, password or open/close schedule changes.

We will always try to accommodate verbal requests from engineers, (following engineer code validation) but not for complex changes.

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## REPORTS

Our ARC provides various reports via SmartPAC, TOUCH or on a request basis (daily/weekly/monthly) to assist alarm companies in managing their alarm systems monitored at SMC ARC's.

## DATA ACCURACY & SYSTEM STATUS LIABILITY

It is vital that the alarm information we hold is complete and accurate to ensure a correct response to alarm conditions. It is therefore important that the reports we send are reviewed to identify and amend any missing or incorrect details.

We would also recommend you carry out, as a minimum, an annual audit of your Contacts/Keyholders, URN's, alarm response, etc. and as a matter of course review all data held and system status at maintenance and corrective site visits

## ALARM MONITORING RESPONSE

**Signal Priorities** - All alarms are assigned a priority as indicated in the table below. In the event of multiple alarm signals, only the highest priority alarm will be processed.

Item	Priority	Item	Priority
Fire	1	Comms Fault	5
PA	2	Trouble	6
Confirmed Intruder	3	Environmental	7
Intruder	4		

We can only act on alarm signals received at the ARC. We accept no liability for signals lost for whatever reason by suppliers or their agents.

**Filtering Policy** - Alarm signals are filtered in accordance with NPCC & Police Scotland Policies, BS5979, BS8243, SR25 & IS228 or where not specified by industry standards for the periods stated for the type of alarm event below. The purpose of a filter period is to prevent the calling of emergency services and keyholders unnecessarily whilst ensuring that should an applicable second signal be received during this period that the signal is upgraded to a confirmed alarm on release from the filter or aborted in the event of mis-operation or applicable restore signal.

**Mis-Operation Signals** - All systems should either send an unset/set (open/close) signal or be capable of generating a secondary signal to indicate that the alarm system has been mis-operated.

Where we are unable to identify whether the system is unset/set (open/closed) we will action as "closed" and then respond to alarms in the following way:

All intruder alarm conditions are delayed in accordance with the relevant agency policy, if the ARC receives an open or abort signal prior to processing the alarm it will automatically be aborted.

**Open/Close with monitored line communications** - Where the communication path is monitored, alarm transmission equipment must be programmed to send open & close signals to the ARC. If the status of the alarm system is unknown we will be unable to pass incidents that involve transmission of faults to the emergency services.

**Alarm Response Performance** - We aim to meet the standards for contacting the emergency services as set out in BS5979 for Category II ARC's:

Fire - 30 seconds for 80% of signals received & 60 seconds for 98.5% signals received.

PA - 30 seconds for 80% & 60 seconds for 98.5% signals  
Intruder - 90 seconds for 80% of signals and 180 seconds for 98.5% of signals received.

These targets are exclusive of any imposed filtering period and exceptional circumstances such as extreme weather conditions and the associated abort signals received under these conditions. Alarm processing may be dispatched via an immediate automated notification method, i.e. text\*, email, telephone.

**Fire Alarm Processing** - Fire alarms are processed in accordance with the appropriate Fire Authority Policy and the table below indicates our default response to these signals.

Type of Alarm	Action taken
Fire Alarm none (CFOA) region	Fire Brigade & Contacts
Fire Alarm (CFOA) region	Premises, Fire Brigade & Contacts (if required)
Fire Alarm no Brigade requirement	Premises or Contacts

**Hold-up Alarm Processing** - Hold-up alarms are normally extended directly to the Police without delay provided a URN is in place, Police response has not previously been lost and the alarm confirmation requirements of BS8243 are to apply.

Type of Alarm	Action taken
Hold-up Alarm (confirmation is not required)	Police only
Unconfirmed Hold-up Alarm (with sequential confirmation)	Contacts Only
Unconfirmed Hold-up Alarm (with sequential confirmation & telephone call back)	1. Call Premises and/or 2. Police or Contacts
Unconfirmed Hold-up Alarm (with audio or video confirmation)	1. Premises (via Audio or Video) and/or 2. Police or Contacts
Sequentially confirmed Hold-up Alarm	Police only as confirmed

**Intruder Alarm Processing** - All police calling systems must have a unique reference number (URN) for the ARC to be able to dispatch to the Police.

All new intruder alarm systems and systems that have had police response withdrawn, but now require police response reinstating, must incorporate confirmation technology. Intruder alarms are normally filtered for a period of 2 minutes.

Type of Alarm	Action taken
Unconfirmed Intruder Alarm	Premises or Contacts
Confirmed Intruder Alarm when closed within re-arm period or audio or visual verification	Police and Contacts (as confirmed)
Confirmed Intruder Alarm when open	Premises or Contacts
Unconfirmed Intruder alarm followed by an Open or Abort signal	No action taken

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**Path Failure Processing** - The response to path failure conditions changes when the system is set or unset as described within the table below. Single path failure conditions are normally filtered for 60 minutes.

Type of Alarm	Status	Action taken
Single path failure	Open or closed	Report notification by email (Alarm Company or customer)
Dual path failure	Open	Premises or Contacts
Dual Path Failure	Closed	Police and Contacts (as confirmed)
Single Path failure with a single intruder or vice versa	Closed	Police and Contacts (as confirmed)

**Faults and Advisory Alarm Processing** - A selection of the standard response to common fault and advisory alarm signals are stated below. All system faults & advisory signals, e.g. power fail, low battery, trouble, tamper etc, are normally filtered for 60 minutes.

Type of Alarm	Status	Action taken
AC Mains Fail	Open or closed	Premises or Contacts
Low Battery Grade 4	Open or closed	Contacts
Low Battery Grade 2 & 3 & Non Graded	Open or closed	By auto report only
System Fault, Trouble, Tamper & Other	Open	Premises or Contacts
System Fault, Trouble, Tamper & Other	Closed	Contacts only
Zone Omit following an intruder alarm within the previous 60 minutes	Closed	Contacts only
Zone Omit following a hold-up alarm within the previous 20 hours	Closed	Contacts only

As part of SMC's continuous improvement program, all faults & advisory signals will be notified utilising an intelligent automated process, e.g. by telephone, email or text\* services.

**\*Text messages are dispatched upon signal receipt at the ARC, prompt receipt of these messages are dependent on the signal availability to your device.**

Type of Alarm	Status	Action taken
Late to Close – LTC (more than 30 minutes after scheduled closing time)	Open	Premises or Contacts (via automated process)
Early to Open – ETO (more than 30 minutes before scheduled opening time)	Closed	Premises or Contacts (via automated process)

**Calling Contacts/Keyholders** - In accordance with Police requirements there should be a minimum of two keyholders, unless a 24-hour keyholding service is utilised, who have transport available and reside within 20 minutes travelling distance of the protected premises.

If Contacts/Keyholders are unavailable at the time of the incident we may make further attempts to contact them up to one hour after the event.

If we are unable to speak to an authorised Contact/Keyholder we will normally leave a text\* message for the first Contact/Keyholder and notify the Company, the next working day by report, that no one was available. Answer phones are not normally an acceptable form of contact.

When the ARC initiates the telephone call to the Contact/Keyholder we normally ask for the named person but we don't require a Password at this point.

Once legitimate contact has been made, the incident will be closed. Should they decline to attend the premises it will be their responsibility to contact another authorised Contact/Keyholder.

It is recommended that contacts have mobile communications to ensure they are available at all times and to permit updates to be passed should the alarm status change whilst attending an alarm call.

The response to an alarm event by the ARC may be made by an ARC agent telephoning the authorised Contact / Keyholder or as part of an automated process.

Our ARC uses non-geographic telephone numbers therefore Contacts/Keyholders should not restrict calls from these numbers.

**Calling Premises** - If the premise's number is required to be contacted as part of the call plan the number will normally be rung for up to one minute. If an answer phone is encountered we will not leave a message and will continue with the call plan. We normally request a password to verify the identity of an authorised user for security related incidents, for none security related incidents a password is not normally required.

## PLACING SYSTEMS ON-TEST

**TOUCH** – engineers can place systems on/off test via their smartphone, PDA or tablet and view alarm history and test results in real-time. Register at:

<https://touch.estate/register.aspx>

**SmartTEST** (VRT) – an automated telephone system that enables engineers to place systems on/off test, extend test periods and receive vocalised results. To register contact your local ARC, then use the SmartTEST number listed on page 1.

**Via an operator** – call your local ARC number listed in the contact section of this guide.

**End user Fire Test** – via SmartTEST (following set up via the local ARC) or via an operator on a dedicated line Nottingham: 0906 802 0160, Leeds: 0906 802 0162 (Calls cost 60p per minute from a standard BT line other suppliers may vary, mobiles may be higher).

For ARC Dublin customers: 0818 776 333 (Standard call rates apply).

**On-test expiry conditions** - all test periods expire automatically at the end of the period set on commencement. If the ARC monitors restore conditions and a test expires but the system has not been restored and remains in alarm, such conditions will normally be reported to the party initiating the test so they can be reviewed. The ARC will not accept any liability for tests that expire with unrestored alarm conditions.

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## REMOTE RESTORE (REMOTE RESET)

If you subscribe to this service, we can issue a remote restore dependant on the following criteria:

### Remote Restore (Alarm was not Policed)

- The end user has been identified by predetermined password
- The alarm was caused by client error or was a genuine alarm
- There is no requirement for an engineer's visit.

### Remote Restore (Alarm was Policed)

- The end user has been identified by predetermined password
- The alarm was caused by client error or the cause is known not to be with the alarm system
- There is no requirement for an engineer's visit
- The number of alarms policed has not exceeded two within the last 12 Months.

It is ARC policy not to remotely restore a genuine alarm that has been extended to the police due to the possibility of the end user's insurance cover being invalidated if it is subsequently found that the alarm system is not fully working.

## ADDITIONAL SERVICES

**Out of Hours Emergency Demand Service Calls** - We offer, under a separate contract, an additional chargeable service to the Company for the handling of service requests from their clients outside of normal working hours. This service is available from 17:00hrs until 08:30hrs weekdays, all weekends and recognised Bank Holidays.

**Keyholder Care** – Is a chargeable service offering peace of mind to those responsible for providing a duty of care to keyholders. If the keyholder fails to respond to the ARC within a set time window the chosen emergency contact will be alerted.

**Lone Worker Monitoring** – Our ARC's are inspected and approved by the NSI for the monitoring of Lone Worker Devices to BS8484. We can provide monitoring of approved Lone Worker Devices and pass verified alarms to the emergency services or an emergency responder.

**Telecare Monitoring Services** - Our Leeds ARC is inspected and approved to the Telecare Service Association Quality Standards Framework (QSF) under the scope of recognition for the remote monitoring of Telecare services. Telecare is a service that enables people, especially the elderly or vulnerable, to live independently in their own home and to call for assistance at any time of the day or night if required.

**Mentor CASH** - (Contract Administration and Service History) is a business management solution for security installers. It allows installers to run their business from sales enquiry to install and billing and has real-time links to engineer handheld devices and our ARC's.

**SMC Vision** - offers a comprehensive selection of CCTV related services by using a wide range of transmission technologies, including: remote surveillance; remote verification; remote service; remote interactive; remote control; remote tours.

Contact your Account Manager for further details.