

FIRE CENTER CONSTRUCTION

Understanding the risk

Highrise building fires present many challenges for fire suppression personnel, including the coordination of built-in fire protection systems and equipment. The building codes provide requirements for Fire Command Centers (or Central Control Stations) where Incident commanders (IC's) can oversee the systems' operations.

Controlling the hazard

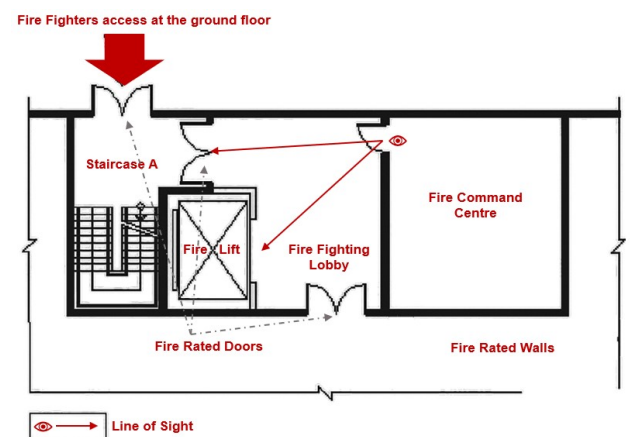
The International building and fire codes require that the Fire Command Center be at least 96 sq. ft. with a minimum dimension of 8 feet, and separated from the rest of the building by 1-hour fire-resistive construction.

The NFPA building code has no construction specifications, but leaves it to the fire department to specify an approved location.

Contents of the room should include:

- The emergency voice/alarm communication system, fire detection and alarm system, sprinkler valve and water-flow detection annunciator units;
- The fire department communications unit and public address system controls;
- Visual annunciator showing elevator locations and operating status;

- Air handling system, smoke management, and stairway door unlocking controls;
- Fire pump and emergency generator status indicators; and
- A worktable and schematic building plans.



Reference

For additional information, refer to NFPA 5000, building construction and safety code , chapter 33; international building code@ chapter 9; and international fire code@ chapter 5. Building construction.

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