

Fire Alarms Standards Campaign 2021 – Evaluation Report

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1. Background

In January 2019 new legislation¹ was introduced to bring about changes to Fire Safety Laws in Scotland. These changes mean that every home in Scotland is required to have interlinked fire alarms installed by 1 February 2022, which will help to save lives, protect property and improve fire safety in Scotland.

To increase awareness of the legislation and actions homeowners are being asked to take, a mass media multi-channel marketing campaign was developed and launched in August 2021. The campaign ran from 19 August – 26 September 2021 across TV, radio, digital (and included PR and partnership activity).

2. Campaign objectives

SMART objectives were set for the campaign on a number of key metrics including campaign awareness, awareness and knowledge of the legislation and action taken in response to the campaign. The SMART objectives, their targets and results achieved are shown in Section 6.

3. Target audience

Driven by the coverage of the new standard ([Fire and smoke alarms: changes to the law - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)), the primary audience for the campaign was all private home owners in Scotland who do not live in a new build house that was approved for construction since 2010, and do not live in a mobile home. Homes built since 2010 should include compliant fire alarm systems as standard.

4. Campaign development and delivery

Preliminary desk research identified that the main barriers to compliance with the new fire alarms legislation were:

- Concern around cost of alarms and installation
- Worry about the fitting of new alarms (particularly among older people)
- A sense among some that it is not necessary ('I have a smoke alarm' already or 'I live in a small property so I will hear my alarm')

A public information campaign was required to communicate the following:

- The date that the new legislation comes into force - 1 February 2022

¹ [Fire and smoke alarms: changes to the law - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#).

- What the legislation entails – that all homes in Scotland require interlinked fire alarms and where there is a carbon-fuelled appliance, such as a boiler, fire or heater, a carbon monoxide detector is also required – this does not need to be linked to the fire alarms.
- The types of alarms that could be installed – sealed battery operated alarms, that you can install yourself and mains wired alarms that required a qualified electrician to install.
- Why interlinked alarms are safer and how they differ from alarms that people already have in their homes.
- And for those that were eligible for financial support, where and how to access it.

It was also recognised that some homeowners may not be able to meet the cost of the alarms or be able to install themselves. Therefore £500,000 was provided through Care and Repair Scotland to help disabled and older people to install alarms in their homes. This money was in addition to the £1 million provided by The Scottish Government to the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service to install alarms in owner-occupied homes identified as being at highest risk.

Independent qualitative creative testing was undertaken with the target audience of homeowners living in properties over 10 year old.

The creative route 'Talking Alarms' which went on to be produced, tested well for the following reasons:

- It clearly conveyed the main messages around the law change, the date and the need to have interlinked alarms in all Scottish homes.
- It delivered a direct message which highlights the benefit of the interlinked system in an easy to understand manner
- It suggested that the alarms can be battery operated which is important in relation to ease of installation and therefore cost (due to disruption/redecorating for hard-wired alarms).
- It made clear that there is a definitive deadline and action needs to be taken before that date.
- It brought a lightness and friendliness to the messaging and this tonal lightness did not negatively impact on message acceptance
- It succeeded in conveying relevance and eliciting a clear acknowledgment of the call to action.

5. Campaign implementation

Some refinements were made following testing, with the final assets shown below. The campaign creative focussed on the fact that Interlinked Alarms talk to each other, the defining difference between those and the type of alarms many people currently have: so when one goes off they all go off, alerting you to danger quicker and saving more lives.



[View the campaign film on YouTube.](#)

[Download all campaign assets and stakeholder toolkit online.](#)

The call to action to find out more directed the audience to mygov.scot/firealarms or to pick up a leaflet at their local library.

Media

The campaign launched on 19 August 2021 across a range of channels including TV, radio and various social media channels (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter). Digital display advertising was also used on relevant websites and PPC (Pay Per Click).

PR and partnerships

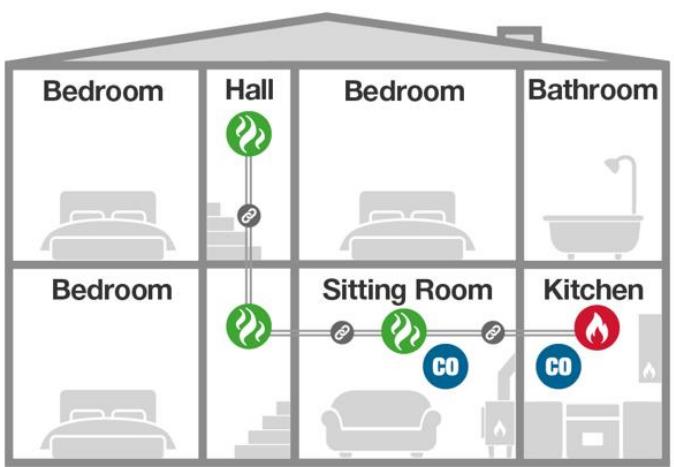
The campaign was supported by PR and partnerships to extend the reach of the campaign. This included social posts across Scottish Government Facebook and Twitter channels and an explainer video outlining the change in law, date, types of alarms that are available and where to get more information and support.

**Interlinked fire alarms
are safer. When one
goes off they all go off,
alerting you to danger
quicker no matter where
you are in your home.**



mygov.scot/firealarms

3 bedroom house



mygov.scot/firealarms

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, alongside Care and Repair Scotland also featured in two additional videos which outlined the importance of the new legislation and guidance on support including a case study testimonial. Links to the videos can be found below:

- [Scottish Fire and Rescue Video](#)
- [Care and Repair Video](#)
- [Campaign Explainer Video](#)

The full campaign toolkit was shared with 500+ partners, the toolkit included key campaign messaging and a link to a web page where all campaign assets were available for download - including social media posts, infographics, explainer video, poster and leaflet. Assets are available in different formats and languages.

Over 96,000 leaflets were distributed across all local libraries in Scotland and additional leaflets were available on request to anyone who should require them.

Website

Dedicated web pages were created on mygov.scot/firealarms which housed all information and contact details for supporting services. Including where to get financial help should you need it.

5. Evaluation

Methodology

Pre and post campaign evaluation was carried out by independent research agency, Progressive Partnership Ltd. This took the form of an online survey before and after this initial burst of the campaign, with a sample of private homeowners (in a home built prior to 2010). Sample was sourced from panel provider Panelbase.

Quotas were set on age to provide an even split across age groups rather than a representative spread: aiming for an approximately even split across the following groups: 16 to 34 year olds, 35 to 44s, 45 to 59s and over 60s to coincide with life stage². Pre and post waves were matched on this and other parameters.

Pre wave fieldwork was carried out 2-11 August, with a sample size of 500. Post wave fieldwork was carried out 16 September – 1 October with a sample size of 509.

² The following profiles were achieved: 16 to 34 year olds (19% pre, 17% post), 35 to 44 year olds (27% pre, 27% post), 45 to 59 year olds (26% pre, 28% post), over 60s (29% pre, 28% post)

SMART Objectives – Results Against Targets

SMART objective	Pre-wave	Target set	Achieved
Prompted campaign recognition (<u>all homeowners interviewed</u>)	n/a	45%	63%
10-percentage point increase in awareness of the legislation from the pre-wave (<u>all homeowners interviewed</u>)	43%	53%	76%
Agreement <u>among homeowners who had seen/heard the campaign</u> that the advertising has made them more aware of what is required of homeowners in order to comply with the new fire and smoke alarm legislation	n/a	50%	86%
Agreement <u>among homeowners who had seen/heard the campaign</u> that they know where to go to find out more information about what is required from the new fire and smoke alarm legislation	n/a	50%	76%
Action taken by <u>homeowners who had seen/heard the campaign</u> as a result of the advertising to ensure that they are compliant with the new fire and smoke alarm legislation	n/a	30%	70%

Overview of results

Overall the campaign performed very strongly, with clear evidence of the campaign engaging the target audience, driving awareness of the new legislation and encouraging action. Further detail is provided below.

Advertising

Spontaneous recall of advertising about fire alarms or fire alarm legislation rose from 28% at the pre wave to 73% post, with campaign sources mentioned by 65% of those who said they had seen some activity at the post wave. Most of those who had seen or heard activity on the topic described something thought to be related to the campaign when asked what they had seen or heard (79%), indicating that the campaign was being noticed and conveying a clear message.

Prompted recognition of the campaign at 63% was ahead of target and made up as follows³:

- TV ad/online film: 50%
- Radio advertising: 23%
- Social/digital advertising: 32%
- Leaflet: 21% (and 18% said they had read at least some of this).

³ TV and radio ads were played in full to measure recognition; examples of social/digital static ads were shown as were images of the leaflet

Social/digital advertising was more likely to have been seen on Facebook (18%) than elsewhere (Twitter 6%, Instagram 4%, other social media site 4%, elsewhere online 11%).

There was fairly even campaign recognition across demographic sub-groups, although it was higher among women than men (68% vs 58%) and among households with children (70% vs 60% among households without children).

The multi-channel approach worked well, with more than half of campaign recognisers (57%) seeing or hearing two or more channels. Those who had seen/heard at least two channels were more likely than those who had only seen/heard one to have taken action as a result (at 82% and 54% respectively).

Reactions to the campaign were also very positive, especially around clarity of message (see SMART objectives) but also credibility (77% agreed that they believe what the advertising says to be true) and relevance (70% agreed that it's aimed at people like me).

Action taken / planned

Claimed action as a result of the advertising was high, at 70% among those who saw/heard the campaign, with actions taken (from a prompted list) including:

- Talked to family or friends about the legislation – 33%
- Researched what I have to do to install a new compliant alarm system – 29%
- Visited mygov.scot/firealarms – 18%
- Search elsewhere online for information - 8%
- Encouraged a friend/family member to get a new compliant system – 14%
- Called a tradesperson to get a quote – 11%
- Purchased a new compliant alarm system – 10%
- Installed a new system /had one installed – 8%
- Started saving/budgeting for purchase/installation - 9%

Among the total sample, 78% said that they would take action in future, as a result of the campaign, with actions at similar levels to those above but purchase at 20%, installation at 21% and visiting mygov.scot/firealarms at 24%.

Legislation awareness and likelihood to comply

The campaign has played a clear role in increasing awareness of the new legislation:

- Awareness of the new fire alarms legislation increased from 43% to 76% (at 88% among those who had seen/heard the campaign (recognisers) vs 55% among non-recognisers)
- Spontaneous awareness of the correct date (February 2022) for legislation coming into effect increased from 8% to 39% (at 48% among those who had seen/heard the campaign vs 24% among non-recognisers).

The campaign also impacted on likelihood to comply:

- Those who have alarms that already comply or say they are likely to comply increased from 48% to 57% (with 'very likely' up from 15% to 24%)

- Those who have alarms that already comply or say they are likely to stands at 60% among those who had seen or heard the campaign compared with 52% among non-recognisers.

Attitudes and barriers

Reflecting actions taken, there was an increase pre to post in agreement that:

- I keep up to date with the latest guidance on fire safety equipment for the home from 44% to 55% (62% among campaign recognisers vs 44% non-recognisers).

However, the research also highlighted cost as an ongoing barrier to compliance:

- Agreement that they would worry about the cost of having to put in new smoke and heat alarms to comply with new legislation rose from 53% pre to 62% post
- Agreement that the costs associated with new legislation like this are likely to impact their ability to comply rose from 37% pre to 46% post.

6. Results of omnibus study December 2021

Further research was carried out in December 2021 to update measures on awareness of the new fire alarms standards and intention to comply.

Questions ran on the online YouGov omnibus survey between 9 and 13 December 2021⁴ and showed that 88% of the homeowners interviewed were aware of the new fire alarms legislation⁵, and 53% were aware that the legislation comes into force in February 2022⁶.

43% of homeowners interviewed said they were already compliant (17%) or were very likely to comply (26%) by 1 February 2022, rising to 66% when those saying 'fairly likely' are included⁷.

⁴ Total sample size was 1017 adults, of which 562 were homeowners (whose homes were built prior to 2010). Fieldwork was undertaken between 9th - 13th December 2021. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all Scotland adults (aged 18+).

⁵ Question asked: Have you heard of the new fire alarms legislation the Scottish Government has introduced to improve fire safety standards in Scottish homes?

⁶ Question asked: To the best of your knowledge, when does this new legislation come into force? Please answer in the following format MM/YYYY.

⁷ By 1st February 2022, the new legislation will require homeowners to have:

- One smoke alarm installed in the room most frequently used for general daytime living purposes.
- One smoke alarm in every circulation space (on each storey), such as hallways and landings.
- One heat alarm installed in every kitchen.
- All alarms ceiling mounted and interlinked.
- A carbon monoxide detector where there is a carbon-fuelled appliance (such as a boiler, fire (including open fire) or a flue, (which does not need to be linked to the fire alarms).

Overall, how likely are you to comply with all aspects of the new legislation by 1st February 2022?

Due to the different methodology employed, direct comparisons cannot be made to the post-campaign evaluation, but these results too, paint a positive picture in terms of awareness and likely compliance.

In December an additional question was asked of those who were less than very/fairly likely to comply about the length of time they think they are likely to take to comply:

- A further 9% of homeowners interviewed said they would be likely to comply within 6 months of 1 February, taking the total complying or likely to 74%
- 8% said they would be likely to comply within 6-12 months of 1 February, taking the total complying or likely within 12 months to 82%
- A further 3% said they would be likely to comply more than a year after 1 February, taking the total to 86%
- 7% said they were not likely to comply at all and 8% didn't know.

7. Media and digital metrics

The positive evaluation results are further supported by other metrics:

- Media analytics show that the campaign reached 95.2% of all adults across Scotland with 84.8% of those seeing the campaign at least 3 times with this vital public information message.
- From 19 August – 26 September, just under 290,000 visits were made to relevant Fire Alarms pages on the site, resulting in over 394,00 page views.
- The campaign achieved an additional 241,000 reach through partner twitter channels.

8. Conclusion

The public information campaign has worked well to communicate the key messages for the campaign and exceeded the SMART objectives. Awareness levels among the target audience of the changes to the legislation and date they come into force are high, as are claimed behaviour impacts. A further survey undertaken in December 2021 confirmed that they have remained at a high level.



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This publication is available at www.gov.scot

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The Scottish Government
St Andrew's House
Edinburgh
EH1 3DG

ISBN: 978-1-80201-924-7 (web only)

Published by The Scottish Government, January 2022

Produced for The Scottish Government by APS Group Scotland, 21 Tennant Street, Edinburgh EH6 5NA
PPDAS1008678 (01/22)

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