

NACOSS TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

Ref. NATM 1

SUBJECT: TIME DELAYS IN REMOTE SIGNALLING OF INTRUDER ALARMS
BY DIGITAL COMMUNICATOR

This Technical Memorandum provides further explanation and clarification in relation to certain aspects of time delays in remote signalling intruder alarm systems, where remote signalling is by digital communicator.

It supersedes two NSCIA circular letters (refs. MJPV/mjc/505 and MJPV/mjc/11/90) both dated 16 November 1990.

The content of this Technical Memorandum is substantially the same as that proposed during 1991 in NACOSS Green Paper NAGR 2.

This Technical Memorandum takes effect as from 31 August 1993.

NACOSS
Queensgate House
14 Cookham Road
Maidenhead
Berkshire SL6 8AJ.

1 June 1993
RCN/mjc/NATM.1

NACOSS TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM NATM.1

TIME DELAYS IN REMOTE SIGNALLING OF INTRUDER ALARMS BY DIGITAL COMMUNICATOR

The Intruder Alarm Policy issued by the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) has been widely adopted by police forces in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Sections 7.4 and 7.5 of the ACPO Policy call for a delay to be provided under certain circumstances, so as to give an opportunity for the central station to attempt to verify the cause of the activation with the alarm user or so as to give the alarm user an opportunity to "abort" the call, before it is passed to the police.

Sub-clause 9.2.3 of BS 4737:Part 1:1986 requires that:

"When an alarm condition is presented, the operation of a digital communicator shall be initiated within a period of 1 second".

The purposes of this Technical Memorandum are:

- (a) to draw attention to the requirement of sub-clause 9.2.3, and
- (b) to point out that this sub-clause of BS 4737 restricts the circumstances in which it is permissible for the ACPO time delay to be introduced at the protected premises.

In the normal "set" mode, it is contrary to BS 4737 to introduce at the protected premises a significant (e.g., 90 second) time delay in signalling by digital communicator. Such a delay would also have implications regarding reduction of system integrity.

Nevertheless, during unsetting, BS 4737 does, of course, allow for time delays at the protected premises. These delays must be in accordance with sub-clause 5.3.1 of BS 4737:Part 1:1986 and they must be agreed in writing between the alarm company and the customer, and evidenced in the system record.

Any delay which contravenes BS 4737 is to be regarded as a serious departure from NACOSS requirements. We ask you to consider whether any such delays have been built into the signalling paths of your installations. Where such delays exist, they should be removed. Gradings awarded by NACOSS Inspectors will in future be affected where such delays are noted.

particular, attention is drawn to section 1.4 of the ABI (Association of British Insurers) Guidelines to the Specification of Intruder Alarm Installations in Commercial Premises which states that:

"Where time delays are incorporated into the entry route (in accordance with clause 5.3.1 of BS 4737:Part 1:1986) the total delay period should not exceed 2 minutes".

The abort procedure may involve voice communication by telephone or use of a keypad, but it should be authorised by suitable code words or numbers. The user code for abort should offer a degree of security not less than that used for setting and unsetting the alarm system.

For suitably equipped control panels, it is permissible to enter a pre-determined user code which initiates an automatic abort signal sent to the central monitoring station via the system digital communicator.

This signal can be accepted by the central monitoring station only if it is received within the designated (90 second) "abort" period.

Installers should note that the ACPO policy does not call for signals from deliberately operated devices (personal attack devices) to be delayed. Such signals are normally signalled and passed to the police without any intentional time delay.