

G61-21

IBC: 403.5.3

Proponents: Ali Fattah, representing City of San Diego Development Services Department (afattah@sandiego.gov)

THIS CODE CHANGE WILL BE HEARD BY THE MEANS OF EGRESS CODE COMMITTEE. SEE THE TENTATIVE HEARING ORDER FOR THAT COMMITTEE.

2021 International Building Code

SECTION 403 HIGH-RISE BUILDINGS.

Revise as follows:

403.5.3 Stairway door operation. *Stairway* doors other than the exit discharge doors shall be permitted to be locked from the *stairway* side. *Stairway* doors that are locked from the *stairway* side shall be capable of being unlocked simultaneously without unlatching ~~a~~ upon one of the following:

1. A signal from the fire command center.
2. Activation of a fire alarm signal in an area served by the stairway.
3. Failure of the power supply.

Staff Note: Proposals E47-21, G60-21 and G61-21 addresses requirements in a different or contradicting manner. The committee is urged to make their intentions clear with their actions on these proposals.

Reason Statement: This is an important code change for high rise buildings that propose to lock stairway doors from the side opposite to the side from which egress is sought. It is not unusual during an emergency or power outage that building occupants need to access other stories of a building through the stairways. The IBC seems to include provisions for unlocking of locked stairway doors by fire fighting personnel when they arrive at the scene of the incident and assess the situation; it might be quite some time until someone trapped in a vertical exit way can exit the enclosure that may for example be blocked at the bottom.

Frequently door locking systems are connected to emergency backup power sources or battery systems and as a result door do not unlock during an emergency. For example, during a power outage, fire department personnel may need to access floors from stairways to perform rescue or evacuation operations for elderly persons who may have difficulty evacuating the building. My jurisdiction had a vandalism incident where hose valves for standpipes serving an 8 level plus two basement building were simultaneously opened, and the fire department was not able to access stories from the stairwell side. The remote unlocking location was not accessible due to flooding and water flow put the building into alarm and evacuation was initiated. Occupants were trapped in the stairways due to rising water level at the discharge level. While not common, this incident highlights that there may be cases where occupants may require options prior to the arrival of fire rescue personnel at at the fire command center.

The Southern Nevada Building Officials have adopted the same requirement see attached.

We request that the General Committee vote to approve this sensible code change prompted by an actual incident in our jurisdiction albeit in a non-high rise building.

Cost Impact: The code change proposal will not increase or decrease the cost of construction

The proposed code change will require that the door unlocking mechanism also connect to the fire alarm system however in most cases it already is either through the fire command center or due to common practice when a fire alarm system is present.

G61-21

FLOOR MODIFICATION

G61-21-FATTAH-4

Proponent: Ali Fattah, representing City of San Diego Development Services Department (afattah@sandiego.gov)

2021 International Building Code

SECTION 403 HIGH-RISE BUILDINGS

Revise as follows:

403.5.3 Stairway door operation *Stairway* doors other than the exit discharge doors shall be permitted to be locked from the *stairway* side. *Stairway* doors that are locked from the *stairway* side shall ~~be capable of being unlocked simultaneously~~ unlock without unlatching upon one of the following:

1. Be capable of being unlocked simultaneously upon a ~~A~~ signal from the fire command center.
2. Unlock simultaneously upon activation Activation of a fire alarm signal in an area served by the stairway.
3. Failure of the power supply to the electric lock or locking system.

FLOOR MODIFICATION # 1872
G61-21-FATTAH-4