

Health and Safety Services
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To Vice-President/Deans, Heads of Schools
From Dr Melanie Taylor, University Safety Advisor
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cc Prof M Case, Prof M Hebbert, Dr S A Robson, Dr D Barker, T Graham, R Valentine, School Safety Advisors & Safety Representatives
Reference Circular 6/2007

Fire Safety - green emergency break glass boxes

During a recent visit by Greater Manchester Fire Service, our attention was drawn to the need to explain more fully the operation of the green "break glass box" electromagnetic security device override switches. These small green boxes provide persons evacuating in an emergency with a means of releasing the door or turnstile magnet should the mechanism have failed to danger (ie in the locked position). Many of these green "break glass boxes" already exist on campus, but their appearance and purpose is probably not familiar to many of us.

In some circumstances, electro-magnetic locks will release automatically upon the operation of the building fire alarm, but this is not always the case. Should anyone encounter an electro-magnetically secured door or turnstile which has not released automatically and needs to escape through it in an emergency they should press the centre of the glass panel firmly in the adjacent green box. This will release a micro switch, isolating the power to the magnet and allow the door or turnstile to be opened. Under no circumstances should these lock releases be used routinely to operate the doors.



Each green box will eventually be provided with an instruction sign similar to that shown, but this circular is to publicise further what people are expected to do if they need to use one. The information will be provided in future induction packs, but please circulate this widely within your own faculty / school / directorate to all staff and students.

Dr Melanie Taylor
University Safety Advisor