

There are three of risk management with solid fuel- burning ovens. The first is pre-fit out which would be the best opportunity to get the ideal risk management position. The second is what would be deemed as “operational”. The third is retro-fit, which is of course much more difficult.

The fact that these ovens pose a much higher fire risk than conventional restaurant cooking facilities. In particular, because of the build-up of creosote in the ducting which ignites more readily when mixed with grease, there is a more significant exposure to a fire within the ducting.

There are a number of essential risk management controls which we should require of tenants as follows:

- Cooker hoods to be protected by an automatic fire suppression system such as Ansul (this is in our fit-out guide requirements anyway but should be enforced rigorously) and perhaps the system extended in the duct (see below);
- Adequate fire cladding to be in place between the fabric of the building and any chimney/ flue (Aviva will be able to advise on this as part of their fit-out advice if specifications are shared in advance);
- Ducting to be cleaned more frequently than would be the case for a “normal” cooking operation. I suggest no less than quarterly and the clean must be a deep one to clear creosote, which also means ensuring that ducting has suitable access points; clearly, we would follow this up through the Ventilate service but initially it relies on tenant co-operation;
- Operationally, the number of wood bricks allowed to be used in an oven at any one time to be restricted (difficult for us to police this but at the least we should bring it to the attention of tenants);
- Tenants to confirm they have in place a robust process for closing down the ovens at the end of a shift or an evening which should involve at least an hour of fire watch/ check after the oven has been shut down.

Our ideal world would be to see a suppression system within the ducting. Ansul manufacture such a product, the cost of which would of course depend upon the type of duct, the length and ease of fitting, but I think we should certainly bear this in mind for these types of cooking equipment. Aviva will no doubt have a view on the effectiveness of such an installation.

Measures should be introduced to avoid too many bricks being loaded into the oven and to ensure that there is adequate and suitable fire cladding between the chimney/ flue and the construction of the property.