PROCEDURE FOR CALCULATING THE MAXIMUM OCCUPANCY CAPACITY IN LICENSED PREMISES

Note: This is for general guidance only. For issues regarding specific occupancy levels the local licensing authority should be contacted.

Introduction

As part of the new licensing process the applicant will, in many cases, be required to provide maximum occupant capacities for their premises as part of the operating schedule.

In premises that already have a maximum occupancy capacity under their existing public entertainment licence, or other similar licences, that number would normally suffice on the new application.

Calculating Occupancy

For premises that have no maximum occupancy capacity, the following guidelines should be followed: -

1   Applicants responsible for premises that have recently been structurally altered or are new should refer to the occupant capacity guidelines given in the Building Regulations 2010 (Approved Document B) (ISBN 10-1-85946-262-6)

2   Applicants responsible for existing premises should refer to the "Fire Safety Risk Assessment– Small and Medium Places of Assembly". (ISBN 978 185112 820-4), downloadable from the www.communities.gov.uk website.

3   As an alternative to 1 and 2 above occupancy figures for relatively simple premises may be determined by the following method.

Step 1-Potential Occupancy

Calculate the available **licensed area** in square metres. Areas occupied by fixed seating, pool tables, stages, bar serveries, etc, should be excluded from the calculation.

From this figure an occupancy figure can be determined by allowing $1m^2$ per person for restaurant/dining areas, $0.5m^2$ per person for general drinking areas and $0.3m^2$ within 2m of the server.

Add to this figure the number of fixed seats and the numbers of staff/performers who may be present and you now have the total potential occupancy.

Step 2-Determine the number of exits required

For a maximum occupancy of **up to 60 persons** a single door may be sufficient providing it has a clear width of 750mm (the door may open inwards or outwards). However, no person should have to walk more than 18m to reach the exit.

For numbers over 60 there should be 2 doors and it is assumed that the largest exit door will be unavailable should a fire occur. Therefore, for occupancies **up to 100**, two 750mm doors, sufficiently far apart and both opening in an outwardly direction will be required.

For numbers **up to 200**, two outwardly opening doors of 1050mm will be required. Alternatively, three doors of 750mm would suffice.

For numbers **over 200** doorway widths should be increased by 75mm for every additional group of 15 people. However, at this point, advice should be sought from the above guidance documents if numbers are substantially more.

The Fire Authority should be consulted if the occupancy figures appear to exceed the available doors or exit widths

<u>Example</u>
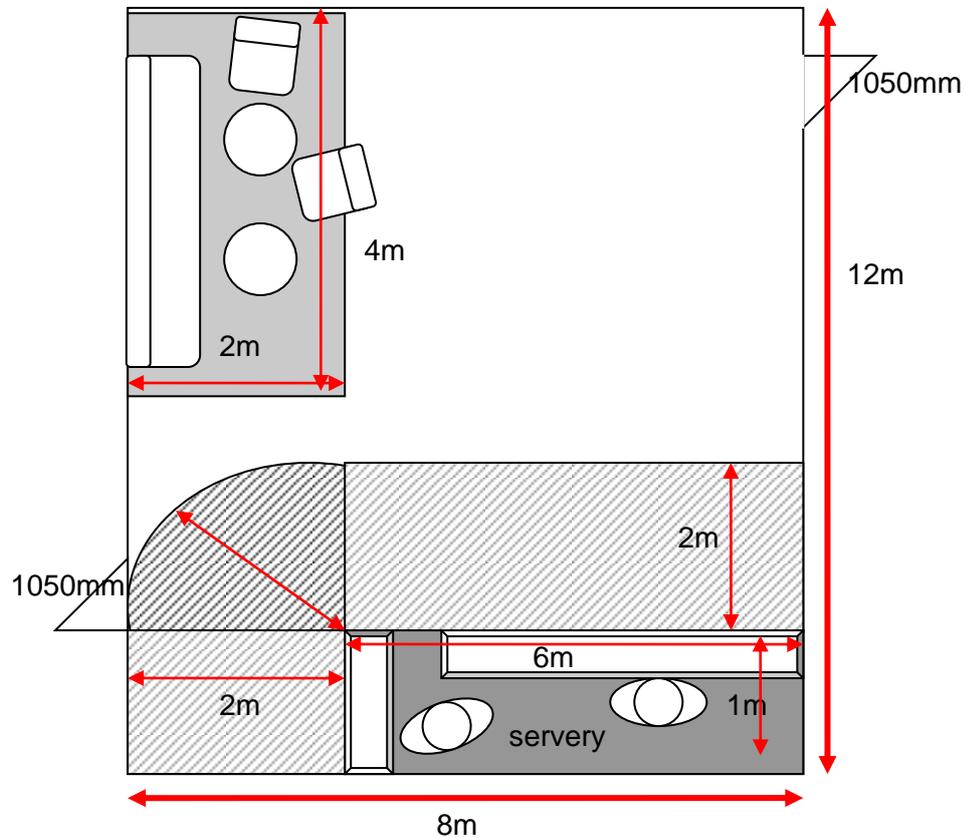
Measure the available area of the room.
Do not include fixed seating, pool tables and bar serveries etc.

$$12 \times 8 = 96m^2$$
$$4 \times 2 = -8$$
$$6 \times 1 = -6$$

Floor area = 82m²

People could be closer together within 2 metres of the bar so subtract that from the overall floor area
$(2 \times 6) + (2 \times 1) + (\pi \times 2^2/4) = 12 + 2 + 3 = 17m^2$

$82 - 17 = 65m^2$

Standing in the room 0.5m² (65m² divided by 0.5)	=	130
Plus next to the bar 0.3m² (17m² divided by 0.3)	=	+56
Plus the number of seats	=	+ 6
Plus the number of staff	=	+2
Therefore potential occupancy	=	<u>194 people</u>.

But can this many people get out safely?

If the best door is not available because of a fire then alternative exits must be available.

Width of escape routes and exits	
Maximum number of persons	Minimum width (mm)
60	750
110	850
220	1050
More than 220	+5mm per person

Up to 220 people can escape through the 1050mm wide door so occupancy of 194 is acceptable.