

1. Introduction

This document provides an overview on the 2018 International Building Code (2018 IBC) requirements for an Area of Refuge. Key requirements are quoted on the left-hand side in the grey boxes with text highlighted in yellow for key points or information. Products, solutions, or explanatory text are provided next to these grey boxes.

First, an Area of Refuge is defined in **SECTION 202 DEFINITIONS** as:

AREA OF REFUGE. An area where persons unable to use *stairways* can remain temporarily to await instructions or assistance during emergency evacuation.

Talkaphone provides an effective Area of Rescue System as a method for building occupants to communicate from these remote locations to a central control point to request assistance.

Furthermore, **Section 1009.6.5** specifies that a two-way communication system shall be provided at areas of refuge (areas of rescue assistance):

1009.6.5 Two-way communication. *Areas of refuge* shall be provided with a two-way communication system complying with Sections 1009.8.1 and 1009.8.2.

2. Two-Way Communication System – Requirements

1009.8 Two-way communication. A two-way communication system complying with Sections 1009.8.1 and 1009.8.2 shall be provided at the landing serving each elevator or bank of elevators on each accessible floor that is one or more stories above or below the *level of exit discharge*.

Exceptions:

1. Two-way communication systems are not required at the landing serving each elevator or bank of elevators where the two-way communication system is provided within *areas of refuge* in accordance with Section 1009.6.5.
2. Two-way communication systems are not required on floors provided with *ramps* conforming to the provisions of Section 1012.
3. Two-way communication systems are not required at the landings serving only service elevators that are not designated as part of the *accessible means of egress* or serve as part of the required *accessible route* into a facility.
4. Two-way communication systems are not required at the landings serving only freight elevators.
5. Two-way communication systems are not required at the landing serving a private residence elevator.
6. Two-way communication systems are not required in Group I-2 or I-3 facilities.

1009.8.1 System requirements. Two-way communication systems shall provide communication between each required location and the *fire command center* or a central control point location *approved* by the fire department. Where the central control point is not a *constantly attended location*, a two-way communication system shall have a timed automatic telephone dial-out capability to a monitoring location or 9-1-1. The two-way communication system shall include both audible and visible signals.

AOR Series Command Unit Models:

[AOR-8](#) – 8-station Command Unit

[AOR-16](#) – 16-station Command Unit

[AOR-24](#) – 24-station Command Unit

[AOR-32](#) – 32-station Command Unit

Each required location will need an **AOR Series Analog Station** for communication to the **AOR Series Command Unit** (located at the fire command center or a central control point location).

In addition, **Section 403.5.3.1** specifies required locations where applicable:

403.5.3.1 Stairway communication system. A telephone or other two-way communications system connected to an *approved constantly attended station* shall be provided at not less than every fifth floor in each *stairway* where the doors to the *stairway* are locked.

AOR Series Analog Stations:

AOR-CSE-FM – Flush mount analog station

AOR-CSE-SM – Surface mount analog station

3. Signage

1009.8.2 Directions. Directions for the use of the two-way communication system, instructions for summoning assistance via the two-way communication system and written identification of the location shall be posted adjacent to the two-way communication system. Signage shall comply with the ICC A117.1 requirements for visual characters.

AOR Signage:

ETP-SIGN-PFH – Area of Refuge “PUSH FOR HELP” instructional sign

1009.9 Signage. Signage indicating special accessibility provisions shall be provided as shown:

AOR Signage:

1. Each door providing access to an *area of refuge* from an adjacent floor area shall be identified by a sign stating: AREA OF REFUGE.

ETP-SIGN – “AREA OF RESCUE” door sign

2. Each door providing access to an exterior area for assisted rescue shall be identified by a sign stating: EXTERIOR AREA FOR ASSISTED RESCUE.

ETP-SIGN/R – “AREA OF REFUGE” door sign

Signage shall comply with the ICC A117.1 requirements for visual characters and include the International Symbol of Accessibility. Where exit sign illumination is required by Section 1013.3, the signs shall be illuminated.

AOR Signage:

ETP-SIGN/L – “AREA OF RESCUE ASSISTANCE” single-sided illuminated sign

ETP-SIGN/LR – “AREA OF REFUGE” single-sided illuminated sign

ETP-SIGN/LD – “AREA OF RESCUE ASSISTANCE” illuminated sign

ETP-SIGN/LDR – “AREA OF REFUGE” illuminated sign

Additionally, visual characters, raised character and braille signage complying with ICC A117.1 shall be located at each door to an *area of refuge* and exterior area for assisted rescue in accordance with Section 1013.4.

AOR Signage:

ETP-SIGN – “AREA OF RESCUE” door sign

ETP-SIGN/R – “AREA OF REFUGE” door sign

1009.10 Directional signage. Directional signage indicating the location of all other *means of egress* and which of those are *accessible means of egress* shall be provided at the following:

1. At *exits* serving a required *accessible* space but not providing an *approved accessible means of egress*.
2. At elevator landings.
3. Within *areas of refuge*.

1009.11 Instructions. In *areas of refuge* and exterior areas for assisted rescue, instructions on the use of the area under emergency conditions shall be posted. Signage shall comply with the ICC A117.1 requirements for visual characters. The instructions shall include all of the following:

1. Persons able to use the *exit stairway* do so as soon as possible, unless they are assisting others.
2. Information on planned availability of assistance in the use of *stairs* or supervised operation of elevators and how to summon such assistance.
3. Directions for use of the two-way communication system where provided.

AOR Signage:

ETP-SIGN-PFH – Area of Refuge “PUSH FOR HELP” instructional sign