

SUCCESS STORY

TEXTILE MANUFACTURER INSTALLS AN INSURER APPROVED VERY EARLY WARNING DETECTION SYSTEM - VESDA

THE CHALLENGE

Alliance Elastics is a privately owned and operated family company with 37 years of experience supplying products to the textile industry in domestic and export markets.

The requirement for the installation of an improved level of fire detection throughout the premises was a condition posed by Alliance Elastics' insurance carrier upon reassessment of the existing risk. In view of the type of building construction and the type of product manufactured, the insurer required that an 'approved' fire detection system be installed and monitored via a direct line to the Queensland Fire Service or alternatively by a security company. The installation and maintenance of such a system was also required to satisfy the relevant Australian Standards.

Alliance Elastics operates in premises of less than 2000 square metres with a ceiling height of approximately 7 to 8 metres. At the time of construction, there was no requirement under the BCA (Building Code of Australia) or by local AHJ's (Authority Having Jurisdiction) to install a sprinkler or automatic fire detection system. Fire extinguishers and hose reels were the only mandate. In many similar applications and premises of this size, 'smoke alarms' are often installed by the security system installer and connected to a central station monitoring service.

However, the fire risks in a facility the size of that operated by Alliance Elastics can be just as significant as those in larger facilities. Evaluating the risks in these instances is left almost entirely up to the insurer, who generally reassesses the risk when insurance renewal is due. And this is exactly what happened to Alliance.

On receiving the updated requirements from the insurer after the risk assessment, Alliance Elastics sought advice from their security alarm system installer, Alarmquip. Evan Richardson, Alarmquip's security manager, investigated various options for fire detection through a number of industry contacts including Xtralis Pty Ltd.

THE SOLUTION

Since the insurance company specified an 'approved' detection system, options were restricted to approved equipment used in the fire industry and installed to comply with standard AS1670.1 2004.

VESDA was the ideal choice given its very early warning capability and its superior performance in large open spaces and areas with excessive roof heights where smoke dilution and maintenance are often issues. The alternatives to VESDA were point or beam detectors, which were both deemed to require connection to an approved fire panel and the entire system installation undertaken by an approved licensed fire contractor.

VESDA®



A primary issue posed by the new insurance requirement was the associated costs that Alliance Elastics had not considered. The installation of a fire panel and possible OWS (Occupant Warning System), including ongoing charges for direct line monitoring to the fire services, were a concern. Maintenance of the entire system in line with AS1851 would also have been a requirement.

The insurance risk assessor was familiar with VESDA and recognized the benefits of very early warning to mitigate risk. Providing the system was installed in compliance with the set requirements and commissioned by a licensed fire technician, the insurance company was amenable to the solution and its monitoring by the security company, without the need for a fire panel.

THE RESULT

Alliance Elastics requested that Alarmquip undertake the VESDA installation. A VESDA accredited technician and fire system installer completed the final testing and commissioning. The system was connected to the existing security panel to be monitored at a central security station.

On completion of the installation, Sharon Grant, Manager of Alliance Elastics, approached the insurer to discuss the newly installed fire detection system. Since the installation now incorporated a 'state-of-the-art' monitored very early warning fire detection system, which reduced the fire risk to the premises, a reassessment of the company's insurance premium was requested.

The insurer acknowledged the installation of VESDA and a new premium was negotiated with a substantial discount.

"As a result of the risk improvements achieved from the installation of a Very Early Warning smoke detection system, our company will save valuable dollars from reduced insurance premiums and reassurance that the building and contents are protected."

Sharon Grant
Manager, Alliance Elastics

Project:

Alliance Elastics

End User/Location:

Queensland, Australia

Industry:

Textile manufacturer

Solution:

VESDA VLP
VESDA VLC