

FIRE SAFETY BUSINESS FOR SALE

Selling Your Fire Safety Business

A Confidential Guide for Owners

Introduction

If you have built a fire safety business, you have done so in one of the UK's most regulated and compliance-driven sectors. Whether you run a fire alarm maintenance business, a suppression installation company, or a full-spectrum fire safety contractor, the value of what you have built may be higher than you think.

This guide is for fire safety business owners who are thinking about an exit in the next one to five years. It covers the current market conditions, what drives your valuation, how a confidential sale works, and what accreditations matter most to buyers.

Why Now Is a Strong Time to Consider Your Exit

Three forces have converged to make the current period particularly favourable for fire safety business owners thinking about selling.

The Post-Grenfell Compliance Boom

The Grenfell Tower fire triggered the most significant overhaul of fire safety regulation in a generation. The Fire Safety Act 2021 and the Building Safety Act 2022 created new obligations for responsible persons and accountable persons across commercial and residential properties. Mandatory fire risk assessments, the golden thread of building information, and evacuation alert system requirements have all driven significant increases in compliance spend. This has expanded the addressable market for fire safety contractors and raised valuations alongside it.

PE Consolidation

Marlowe plc, Chubb Fire and Security, and a number of PE-backed platforms have been acquiring fire safety businesses systematically. They are building national coverage by acquiring well-run regional operators. This means there are more qualified buyers with capital actively looking at fire safety businesses than at almost any previous point.

BADR Tax Changes

Business Asset Disposal Relief (BADR) rates are changing: 14 per cent currently, rising to 18 per cent in April 2026. On a qualifying gain of £1.5m, that is £60,000 more tax. Owners who were already considering an exit have a tangible reason not to delay beyond April 2026.

Market context:

34,150 fire safety businesses in the UK are considered exit-ready. Post-Grenfell compliance demand has driven approximately 15 per cent annual growth in compliance spend, creating a strong acquisition environment.

What Determines Your Valuation

Fire safety businesses are typically valued at 4 to 7 times EBITDA, with the multiple determined by the quality and predictability of your revenue, your certifications, and how dependent the business is on you personally.

BAFE Certification

BAFE (British Approvals for Fire Equipment) third-party certification is the most significant accreditation signal for buyers. BAFE SP203 covers fire detection and alarm system design, installation, commissioning, and maintenance. SP101 covers portable fire extinguisher maintenance. SP207 covers fire risk assessments. Holding multiple BAFE certifications signals that your work is independently verified, your processes are documented, and your clients are less likely to switch provider, all of which reduce risk in the buyer's eyes.

Maintenance Contract Book

Recurring maintenance revenue is the foundation of a premium valuation. A business deriving 70 per cent or more of its income from annual maintenance contracts will achieve a significantly higher multiple than one relying on installation project work. Buyers are acquiring predictable cash flow. The maintenance book is the asset.

FIA Membership

Fire Industry Association membership signals professional credibility. PE buyers treat FIA membership as a proxy for engagement with industry standards, training, and technical development.

Engineer Headcount and LPCB / NSI Approval

Qualified fire alarm engineers are scarce. A larger team means more capacity and less key-person dependency. LPCB and NSI Gold or Silver accreditation adds further credibility, particularly for commercial and public sector clients.

How the Sale Process Works

A managed fire safety business sale typically takes four to six months from first conversation to completion.

Initial Conversation

Private, no commitment, no fee. We understand your business, timeline, and what a successful exit looks like for you.

Indicative Valuation

We provide a realistic market assessment based on your financials and sector comparables. This is an honest view of what your business is likely to achieve in the current market, not a formal valuation report.

Confidential Marketing

We create an anonymised profile and approach our registered buyer list. Your identity is protected throughout this stage.

NDA, Offers, and Completion

Interested buyers sign NDAs before receiving any identifying information. You approve the buyer list. Offers are received, negotiations managed, and we guide you through heads of terms, due diligence, and legal completion. Our fee is paid by the buyer. You pay nothing upfront and nothing if a sale does not complete.

Accreditations That Matter to Buyers

BAFE SP203

Third-party certification for fire detection and alarm system design, installation, commissioning, and maintenance. The most significant certification for fire alarm businesses. Buyers will pay a measurable premium for BAFE-certified businesses because the certification independently validates quality and compliance.

BAFE SP101

For portable fire extinguisher maintenance. Relatively easy to obtain but adds credibility for multi-service contractors.

BAFE SP207

For fire risk assessment. Increasingly in demand following the Building Safety Act 2022 and new responsible person obligations. Businesses with SP207 can capture ongoing risk assessment review revenue.

FIA Membership

Fire Industry Association membership. Signals engagement with training, technical standards, and professional development. PE buyers treat it as a baseline quality indicator.

NSI Gold / LPCB

For intruder alarm and CCTV elements (NSI Gold) or loss prevention certification (LPCB). Premium signals for commercial and insurance-related clients.

Tax Considerations

Business Asset Disposal Relief (BADR) is the primary relief available when selling a trading business. It applies a reduced CGT rate to qualifying gains, subject to a £1 million lifetime allowance. The rate is currently 14 per cent, rising to 18 per cent in April 2026. Your accountant can advise whether your specific circumstances qualify.

Note:

This guide does not constitute tax advice. Always take independent advice from a qualified accountant before making decisions based on BADR or any other tax consideration.

Protecting Confidentiality

The managed process is specifically designed to protect confidentiality at every stage. Buyers sign NDAs before receiving any identifying information. Staff typically only find out at the point where heads of terms have been agreed, often less than four weeks before completion. Clients are notified after completion as part of a managed handover.

Your engineers are protected by TUPE regulations, which transfer their employment terms, training records, and competencies to the new owner automatically. Most buyers actively want to retain qualified fire alarm engineers, as they are one of the most valuable assets in the business.

Getting Ready to Sell

The businesses that achieve the best valuations prepare in advance. Here is what a well-prepared fire safety business looks like before going to market.

- Three years of clean, accountant-prepared accounts showing consistent profitability
- Maintenance contract book documented with annual values, renewal dates, and client breakdown
- All BAFE certifications current and renewal dates tracked
- FIA membership active
- Engineer certifications (BAFE, FIA, ECS cards) documented and up to date
- Key customer relationships not solely dependent on the owner
- No significant outstanding disputes or liabilities
- Clear split of recurring maintenance vs one-off installation revenue
- Fire risk assessment portfolio documented (if applicable)

Next Steps

The first step does not require a firm decision. It requires a conversation.

Free Confidential Valuation

We offer a free indicative valuation and initial consultation with no commitment and no cost to you.

Phone: 01256 486999

Email: simon@firesafetybusinessforsale.co.uk

Web: firesafetybusinessforsale.co.uk/valuation

Fire Safety Business For Sale

A division of Reads Advice Partners Ltd

Company No. 12124192

7 Bell Yard, London, WC2A 2JR

01256 486999 | simon@firesafetybusinessforsale.co.uk

This guide is for general information only and does not constitute financial, legal, or tax advice.

© 2026 Reads Advice Partners Ltd. All rights reserved.