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Benefits of MEP Validation

The validation of a building's mechanical, electrical and public health services is increasingly becoming a key part in pre-construction packages or post tenancy agreements. In this article, we explore this fast-growing sector and explain the benefits of validation, who benefits most and when is the right time to undertake these surveys and inspections.



So, what is this fast-growing service? We at Banyards have found it best to describe validation surveys with the 3 big 'C's' - **Condition, Compliance** and **Capacity**. Clients' requirements vary from project to project and there are many reasons for undertaking a validation survey e.g. to assist an M&E Consultant in forming the basis of design, to form a dilapidations schedule or to assist in the purchase or sale of a building, but generally these requirements fall into one of the 3 above categories.

Taking ownership of a building or installation with unknown faults will likely result in increased maintenance costs and potentially result in loss of revenue should a significant failure occur. A validation report can focus on the condition of MEP services with a view to advising the client on the level of remedial work required to restore an installation into a maintainable, energy-efficient condition. This may include advice on the economic life expectancy of plant, with recommendations for replacement where necessary, to guide designers in their specifications.

Condition reporting is carried out by thoroughly testing and inspecting services against industry standard codes of practices such as BSRIA, CIBSE and the various electrical regulations, the results of which can be measured against industry assessed life expectancy guidelines. Testing can include the measurement of plant performance, non-destructive testing and integrity testing amongst many other technical assessments to determine condition and identify possible points of failure.

With testing and inspecting of services comes the ability to report on the compliance of an installation against industry standards. Compliance reporting is particularly key for clients looking to occupy space that requires additional works, as the existing non-conformities can be addressed by including remedial work into the fit-out works.



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Compliance is particularly important for systems that are currently in service and looking to remain as such. Key services such as fire detection, emergency lighting and electrical installations, as well as water treatment monitoring, are required to be regularly tested to validate insurances and ultimately reduce liability. Compliance inspections may include the verification of documentation by an incumbent service provider to witness adherence to statutory regulation, something that in our experience should not be taken for granted.



Another area of compliance where **validation has proved essential** is the performance of a system against its original design criteria. Such inspections range from the measurement of flow rates against design figures for mechanical systems to verifying the accuracy of as installed drawings, another area which has huge benefits to Consultants seeking to modify existing designs.

Capacity of a system can be a key factor for many clients looking to extend an existing system or increase occupation to a space, an issue affecting all disciplines. Measuring the performance or capacity of a system

and comparing against occupational requirements can provide essential information for future expansion and support budgets/specifications for upgrading services.

The benefits of validation have been recognised by industry experts at all stages of the building services life cycle. Design consultants, project managers, contractors, architects, commercial and retail end users, facilities managers and high end residential managers are just some of those benefactors who can **save time and money** through an **increased awareness of the condition of their building services.**

Timing is always crucial for the validation survey of a fit out /refurbishment project as there is a limited window for which it is of benefit to the client. Usually, for a space that is currently occupied and about to be taken over by an incoming tenant, the inspections are required to be carried out around the sitting occupants either out of hours, or with their cooperation. We at Banyards have 30 years' experience in this specific field, working quickly and efficiently to turn reports around so that high level decisions can be made before works commence whilst maintaining the least amount of disruption for all parties.

