

# media release

SA Metropolitan Fire Service



## City building safely evacuated after acid spill

Friday, 26 August 2011

Up to 1,500 people were evacuated from a city building this afternoon as Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS) firefighters dealt with a hazardous materials incident.

Firefighters were called to the high rise building on the corner of Flinders Street and Gawler Place at about 12.30 this afternoon.

A weak solution of 15 litres of hydrochloric acid had spilled on one of the top floors of the building, causing odour from the acid to travel through the building's air conditioning system.

MFS crews dealt with the acid spill, ventilated the building and used atmospheric detection meters to ensure the building was safe, before evacuated staff were allowed to return to work by 2.30 pm.

Eleven people working on various floors of the building reported breathing difficulties, and were assisted to safety by MFS firefighters.

SA Ambulance Service (SAAS) paramedics treated the patients at the scene, with two people requiring transportation to hospital as a precaution.

MFS Commander, Paul Fletcher commended the building's safety wardens, who ensured the safe evacuation of staff.

"Safety wardens ensured that their fellow staff remained calm and evacuated in an orderly manner. I'd like to thank staff and the building's managers for their cooperation during the disruption to their working day.

"This is a timely reminder to all businesses that well planned and practised evacuation procedures are vital to the health and safety of your staff," Commander Fletcher said.

Traffic to Gawler Place, between Flinders Street and Wakefield Street, was blocked off during the incident.

It's understood the hydrochloric acid was being used to clean air conditioning equipment and the spill was accidental.

While the spill was minor in nature, any workers who develop suspected respiratory issues are encouraged to seek immediate medical attention.

**For media enquiries and interviews call the MFS Media Line on (08) 8204 3770**

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