



The World's No1 Stairway Evacuation Chair

BUY IN HASTE, REPENT AT LEISURE

Buying a non-genuine Evac+Chair may put your operators and passengers at risk, and cost more in the long run.

When evaluating your intended purchase try before you buy, and beware of imitations. They may look the same from a picture but functionality may vary.



1. Deployment

Preparation of the chair for operational use should be fast and simple. Tricky release mechanisms should not be waiting to trap your operator's finger or hand, nor should the operator be expected to balance the chair with one hand whilst releasing skids, buckles or straps when the chair is occupied.



2. Weight of Unit

Weight is a major factor, particularly if the evacuation equipment is located in various parts of the building and needs to be carried to the passenger, or simply removed from its securing location. Weight to strength ratio of the product is an important consideration, particularly with an upward trend in BMI (body mass index) throughout the population.



3. Ease of Transfer

The device must be designed to facilitate ease of transfer. PRM's (person of reduced mobility) may require assistance, and the product must be stable, open on both sides and provide passenger safety at all times. Ideally, where a wheelchair transfer takes place, both the wheelchair and evacuation chair should be of equal height and supported by an operator for extra stability.



4. Manoeuvrability

Most stairways comply with building regulations and provide 1.2 meter width on halls, stairs and landings. A good turning circle is required, and no extra physical exertion should be needed to get around those difficult landings and corners.



5. Speed of Descent

An able-bodied person can descend stairs at normal walking pace at a rate of 0.75 meters per second. An evacuation chair should be able to match this with a competent operator. The Evac+Chair can comfortably achieve two flights of stairs in 15 seconds, or four floors in a minute, without blocking the stairs for other users.



6. Controlled Speed of Descent

The majority of evacuation chairs depend on a rotating belt drive mechanism to span two or more stair nosings. The concept was first invented by David Egen of Evac+Chair Corporation, USA, who designed / registered the Egen Polymatic v-belt as a friction braking device. Using coefficient of friction the greater the weight of the passenger the greater is the friction. This friction is increased by adding leverage to the operator handle. We have found several chair types which have no friction and, therefore, no controlled speed of descent. Other devices require a cable brake and release mechanism. Virtually all cable brake mechanisms use the "dead man brake" principle and are either "on" or "off" and do not provide a graduated increase or decrease of pressure experienced with, say, a bicycle.



7. Assembly Point

On reaching the assembly point the product should be free standing and comfortable. The passenger should never be left unattended or left alone, even with devices which have additional braking mechanisms.



8. After-Sales Support

Finally, check if your supplier can support your training needs and after-sales service. Ask how long the company has traded and where is the manufacturing country of origin.



9. Accreditation

Ask if the evacuation chair is registered with the MHRA (Medical & Healthcare products Regulatory Agency) as a Medical Device Class I. After all, this is a life safety product and someone's life may depend on it.

