



## California State Fire Marshal **CODE INTERPRETATION**

Date Issued	July 29, 2014	Interpretation	14-002
Topic	Separate Buildings Created by Fire Walls & Egress		
Code Section(s)	2010 / 2013 CBC §706		
Requested by	KTTY Group Wilbur Wong, Principal		
Date Received	February 26, 2014		

**Question:** For a building which complies with the egress requirements of Chapter 10 of the California Building Code (CBC), and also contains fire walls solely for area, height, and construction type compliance; does the fire wall language from §503.1 and §706.1 imply that each “separate building” then must comply with the means for egress requirements independently from the rest of the “separate building”?

**Answer:** Fire walls are primarily utilized as a design methodology to “separate buildings” for the requirements set forth in Chapter 5 of the CBC. Fire walls may be utilized for joint service between the two buildings, including egress; with some limitations (refer to CBC Section 1025 Horizontal Exits). If the fire wall is not being used as a horizontal exit, then the exit travel distances would be measured through the fire wall opening to the required exit element. If the “separate buildings” constructed by fire walls were not being used as a Horizontal Exit and the required overall exit access travel distance to an exit was always readily available, then the egress requirements would not be required to be independent of the rest of the “separate buildings.”