

Closing out ceiling - timely installation

The During most construction projects there comes a time to fit the ceiling grid to enable light fittings and diffuser grilles to be fitted before commencing tiling. This activity is often badly planned and the interaction and communication between the construction element (the fixing of the grid) and the M & E element (working above the ceiling grid) does not happen adequately.

The solution involves simple planning and discussions around the timing of the grid fitting. In addition a simple closing-out meeting should be arranged (involving all relevant parties) prior to the ceiling being closed off. The ceiling grid below has been fitted too early, prior to much of M & E work above (second fix electrical and mechanical connections, fire detections, audio visual equipment, insulation etc..)

Items to consider before fitting grid:

- Completion of smaller power and electrics
- Testing of small power and electrics
- Bracketry for any final fix equipment (audio/visual/ceiling grids/cassette units)
- Pressure testing of mechanical pipework
- Pressure testing of mechanical ductwork
- Insulation of mechanical ductwork and pipework
- Completion of all fire alarms cabling and fitting of ceiling void detection

Better still- do you really need a ceiling grid at all?

Benefits

Health and safety ~ holding back the installation of the ceiling grid until the ideal time can greatly increase health and safety giving safer simpler access for all engineering contractors. If communicated correctly, there should be little or no need to access through the grid to carry our work without correct handrail protection or the need to use stepladders. Therefore the risks of falls at this critical time on the project is greatly reduced.

Speed ~ work before the fitting of the ceiling grid is far more efficient than after. Holding the fitting of the grid until the ideal time can actually reduce the overall programme. This has been successfully tried and tested on a number of projects.

Reduced damage ~ the closing out meeting will encourage contractors to complete the above grid. Therefore it is less likely for the need for contractors to require access above the ceiling once it has been fitted.

Tried and tested ~ this simple but effective planning and co-ordination has been successfully tried and tested on a number of projects.

