Informal Interpretation Report
Number 8793

Date November 24, 2026

Edition 2021

Section 503.1

Question:

The FBC states that fire walls are considered separating different buildings. However, it has always been my interpretation that the building systems (i.e. means of egress, sprinkler, fire alarm, mep, etc.) while potentially having different zones, can be single systems. For example, we would need four separate underground sprinkler feeds to the structure to feed four "buildings" separated by fire walls. In essence this made the building separation used for height and area allowances only.

This is also consistent with the ICC, while not the FBC, the IBC code and commentary also supports this. We are trying to determine based on some comment responses if the FBC intends to follow the IBC interpretations as well.

Notice:
The Building Officials Association of Florida, in cooperation with the Florida Building Commission, the Florida Department of Business & Professional Regulation, ICC, and industry and professional experts offer this interpretation of the Florida Building Code in the interest of consistency in their application statewide. This interpretation is informal, non-binding and subject to acceptance and approval by the local building official.