



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

To:

The Chief Executive:
Unitary, Metropolitan, District and London Borough Councils in England
County
The Town Clerk, City of London
The Clerk, Council of the Isles of Scilly
The Sub-Treasurer, Inner Temple
The Under Treasurer, Middle Temple

The Head of Building Control:
Unitary, Metropolitan, District and London Borough Councils in England
County
City of London
Council of the Isles of Scilly

Approved Inspectors

Fire Industry Association
Institution of Fire Engineers
Society of Façade Engineering

cc: The Chief Executive:
County Councils in England
National Park Authorities in England

Chair: National Fire Chiefs Council

9 March 2021

Dear Sir or Madam

Retraction of three tests carried out on Kingspan K15 insulation

Introduction

I write to you to remind you that in December 2020 the Independent Expert Advisory Panel (“IEAP”) was contacted by BRE with regards to the retraction of three test reports by Kingspan Insulation Ltd (Kingspan). This followed a letter from Kingspan to the Building Research Establishment dated 23 of October 2020 which was published by the Grenfell Tower Inquiry.

Issue

In this communication the IEAP and the Department were informed that three test reports of Kingspan K15 insulation were retracted as Kingspan recognised that the products placed on the market were different to the products tested, and that there were inaccuracies in the test reports. The retracted tests relate to:

- K15 + cement particle board carried out in 2005
Test Report No 220876 carried out in 2005 to BS 8414-1 - Dated December 2005
Classification Report No P101812-1000
- K15 + “standard” HPL carried out in 2014
Test Report No 293940 dated 2014 to BS 8414-2
No classification due to early termination
- K15 + terracotta tiles carried out in 2014
Test Report No 297099 carried dated 2014 to BS 8414-2
Classification Report No 291642

Further details on the test can be found in the letter published by the Grenfell Tower Inquiry:

https://assets.grenfelltowerinquiry.org.uk/KIN00024104_Letter%20from%20Kingspan%20%28Adrian%20Pargeter%29%20to%20BRE%20%28Debbie%20Smith%29%20concernin%20Kingspan%20withdrawing%20a%20number%20of%20BS8414%20and%20BR135%20Reports.pdf

In their letter Kingspan declare that they have now re-tested all the above combinations with K15 insulation as currently sold on the market.

The retracted tests may have formed part of an assessment (direct or extended application) carried out by competent professionals to justify the use of Kingspan K15 on a range of different combinations on various building projects before the retraction of the tests.

Actions

Fire safety professionals and buildings control bodies should review their records to check that any assessments (direct, extended application or fire engineering assessment) they have carried out using these tests are identified and revisited in light of Kingspan’s announcement.

It is also important that fire safety professionals fully consider the tests that failed to achieve a BR135 Classification via a BS8414 test, which are now published on the Kingspan website. It should be noted that Kingspan confirm that there is no successful BS8414 test, that they are aware of, featuring a combination of Kooltherm K15 and a “FR grade” (generally class B) HPL product. This aligns with the guidance that has been published by MHCLG in relation to HPL panels, following advice from the Expert Panel.

Where they identify an assessment, which relies on the information provided by these tests, fire safety professionals and building control bodies should make all reasonable efforts to revisit the conclusions of their assessment and that the materials used are appropriate.

The information presented during the Public Inquiry shows that several variations of K15 insulation have been supplied on the market over the years. Fire safety professionals and building control bodies should confirm which of these was supplied on projects where the assessment has been relied upon and ascertain what test evidence of the variation of K15 is available. This is likely to require them to contact Kingspan to assist with the identification the insulation and relevant test evidence to support the assessment that was made.

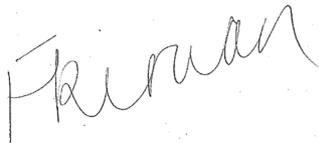
Finally, where necessary fire safety professionals or building control bodies should contact the relevant clients or building owners to inform them of the situation.

I trust that you will be circulating this information to all of your members about this important matter.

Enquiries

Telephone enquiries on this letter should be addressed to Technical Policy Division on 0303 444 0000 and all e-mail enquiries to enquiries.br@communities.gov.uk.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'F Kirwan', written over a faint circular stamp.

F Kirwan

Deputy Director

Technical Policy Division
Building Safety Portfolio