



Ministry of Housing,  
Communities &  
Local Government

**The Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP**  
*Secretary of State for Housing, Communities  
and Local Government*

**Ministry of Housing, Communities and  
Local Government**  
4th Floor, Fry Building  
2 Marsham Street  
London SW1P 4DF

Tel: 0303 444 3450

Email:

james.brokenshire@communities.gsi.gov.uk

[www.gov.uk/mhclg](http://www.gov.uk/mhclg)

All MPs

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## **DAME JUDITH HACKITT'S FINAL REPORT**

Dear colleague

It is almost one year since the Grenfell Tower tragedy. 71 people died in the greatest loss of life in a fire in a century. A 72<sup>nd</sup> resident from the tower passed away earlier this year. The Government's immediate priority was to support those affected, and I am determined to ensure that they continue to receive the support they need and deserve. I am also determined to ensure that that we learn from this terrible tragedy so nothing like this can ever happen again.

It is with this in mind that Dame Judith Hackitt was asked to undertake her review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety, which was published yesterday. I am writing to update Honourable Members on the Government's response to this publication and the related announcements made this week.

### Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety

The Hackitt review has shown that in too many cases people who should be accountable for fire safety have failed in their duties. In future, the Government will ensure that those responsible for a building must demonstrate they have taken decisive action to reduce building safety risks and will be held to account. We also agree that the system should be overseen by a more effective regulatory framework, including stronger powers to inspect high-rise buildings and sanctions to tackle irresponsible behaviour. Finally – given the concerns raised following the Grenfell tragedy – we agree that residents must be empowered with relevant information. They must be able to act to make their homes safer. Yesterday I committed to bringing forward legislation that delivers meaningful and lasting change, and ensures residents have a much stronger voice in an improved system of fire safety.

In the meantime, my Department is consulting on significantly restricting or banning the use of “desktop studies” to assess cladding systems. Inappropriate use of desktop studies is unacceptable and I will not hesitate to ban them if the consultation – which closes on 25 May – does not demonstrate that they can be used safely. We are also working with industry to clarify Building Regulations fire safety guidance, and I will publish this for consultation in July.

The cladding believed to be on Grenfell Tower was unlawful under existing building regulations, and should not have been used. I will ensure that there is no room for doubt over what materials can be used safely in cladding of high rise residential buildings. Having listened carefully to the arguments for banning combustible materials in cladding systems on high-rise residential buildings, the Government is minded to agree and will consult accordingly, as we are legally required to do so by the Building Act (1984).

A copy of Dame Judith Hackitt’s report can be found at [www.gov.uk/government/publications/independent-review-of-building-regulations-and-fire-safety-final-report](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/independent-review-of-building-regulations-and-fire-safety-final-report)

### Remediation of ACM Clad Buildings

It is essential that our work to remediate buildings with unsafe ACM cladding continues at pace. Interim measures are in place across all affected buildings in the social sector and work has already started on two thirds of these. But we have been listening to what social sector landlords have been telling us about the cost of ACM cladding systems and know that the expense involved means that social landlords are having to take decisions about how to prioritise important services, repairs and maintenance work and new supply.

We have listened to those concerns, and this week the Prime Minister announced that the government will fully fund the removal and replacement of dangerous cladding on buildings owned by councils and housing associations, with costs estimated at £400 million. We will also continue to offer financial flexibilities for local authorities who need to undertake essential fire safety work. We want to allocate this funding as soon as possible and we will announce more details shortly, including how we will encourage landlords to continue to pursue other parties for costs where they are responsible or at fault.

In the private sector, the Government is clear that building owners and developers should take responsibility for remediating unsafe cladding and not pass costs on to leaseholders. Within the next week I will be calling in representatives from industry and leaseholders to make this clear and establish how the industry can make sure residents are safe and feel safe in their homes, and I am not ruling anything out at this stage.

In addition, I have issued a direction to all Local Housing Authorities to pay particular regard to cladding-related issues when reviewing housing in their areas.

### Fire Doors

You will be aware that a door recovered from Grenfell Tower marketed as meeting a 30-minute fire resistance standard, failed the test after approximately 15 minutes. The Government has been undertaking an investigation into flat entrance 30 minute fire doors supplied by Manse Masterdor, a company that ceased trading in 2014.

The Government sought advice from the independent Expert Panel on Building Safety and this week laid a written statement informing Parliament that the Expert Panel has sufficient evidence to conclude that flat entrance doors supplied by Manse Masterdor do not consistently meet the 30 minute fire resistance standard they were marketed as providing.

I have asked my officials to continue with their investigations into the wider fire door market, and they intend to test fire doors from other door suppliers. My officials have written to affected customers of Manse Masterdor and are writing to all Local Authorities setting out the steps they should take.

The Expert Panel advises that all doors should be assessed regularly to make sure they are likely to meet minimum standards, and an advice note from the Expert Panel on assurance and replacing of flat entrance fire doors can be accessed using the following link [www.gov.uk/government/publications/advice-for-building-owners-on-assurance-and-replacing-of-flat-entrance-fire-doors](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/advice-for-building-owners-on-assurance-and-replacing-of-flat-entrance-fire-doors).

The Government is committed to providing a clear, robust framework to ensure that the construction industry delivers homes that are safe. As Dame Judith rightly notes, most of the industry is already focused on achieving this. But, as she says, the sector needs to go further. The building industry must create a culture that truly puts people and their safety first, while carrying out its vital work building the homes we need. Dame Judith's review and the significant changes that will flow from it are important first steps towards achieving this.



**RT HON JAMES BROKESHIRE**