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To: Local Authority Chief Executives

Building safety

After the Grenfell Tower fire, the Government set up the Building Safety programme. As part of that local authorities identified all high-rise residential buildings with Aluminium Composite Material (ACM) cladding systems across both the social and private sector. In addition, a screening programme for building owners was established to test the fire safety of cladding systems used on high-rise buildings. Buildings which were found to have systems which failed the combustibility test were expected to be remediated by the building owner. The Government has since pledged £600m to ensure both private and social sector building owners take appropriate action to replace ACM cladding with safe systems.

This programme of work continues and many local authorities have been especially proactive and engaged in the challenge of assessing building safety. The efforts of your staff are very much appreciated and are contributing directly to ensuring the safety of residents.

Data collection exercise on External Wall Systems in high-rise residential buildings

The Building Safety programme continues to consider safety risks to high-rise buildings and supports action if there is a risk to public safety. The department is therefore asking all local authorities to complete a data collection exercise to identify external wall materials and insulation on all high-rise residential buildings 18 metres and over within their area.

This exercise is part of an ongoing programme of work to enable the department to build a more complete picture of high-rise residential buildings and the variety of external wall systems in use. This will help local authorities and fire and rescue services to prioritise their inspection and protection work to ensure that building owners are taking the right steps to keep their residents safe. It will also provide an evidence base for the new regulatory arrangements proposed in our recent



consultation '*Building a Safer Future: proposals for reform of the building safety regulatory system*'. The data exercise is structured in such a way that additional questions could be added in the future if this would develop our data set to support this work.

The Local Government Association are supportive of this safety critical work and in line with the New Burdens Doctrine we will be seeking to provide additional resource. It is also worth highlighting the powers within the Housing Act 2004 which support local authorities to acquire relevant information.

I would take this opportunity to remind you of the direction from the Secretary of State on 17 May 2018, which asked local authorities to identify all high-rise residential buildings 18m and over and to notify MHCLG of any inspections or assessment of hazards identified as part of this.

Building identification and use of DELTA

The department will be using the DELTA platform for the data collection process and the attached technical guide can be used to support the exercise. Please note that this exercise covers social and private residential housing stock (with the exception of housing association properties), hotels and student accommodation. Local authorities are not required to report on social housing association buildings and I am separately writing, in similar terms, to housing associations asking them to complete this exercise for social buildings they are responsible for.

Thank you for your ongoing cooperation and support in taking this important work forward.

Neil O'Connor
Director, Building Safety Programme

cc
Leader of the Council

Encs.