



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Jeremy Pocklington, CB
Permanent Secretary

**Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local
Government**
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF



Infrastructure
and Projects
Authority

Nick Smallwood
Chief Executive

Infrastructure and Projects Authority
1 Horse Guards Road
London SW1A 2HQ

To: Alistair Watters

Senior Responsible Owner (SRO)

Remediation Programme

By email

01 July 2021

Dear Alistair,

APPOINTMENT AS SENIOR RESPONSIBLE OWNER (SRO) FOR MHCLG'S REMEDIATION PROGRAMME

I am writing to confirm your appointment as Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) for MHCLG's Remediation Programme, which took effect from 19 April 2021.

A signed copy of this letter will be published on Gov.UK. This is a requirement of all projects that are part of the Government Major Projects Portfolio (GMPP).

SRO Accountabilities

As SRO you have personal responsibility for delivery of the Remediation Programme and will be held accountable for the delivery of its objectives and policy intent; for securing and protecting its vision, for ensuring that it is governed responsibly, reported honestly, escalated appropriately and for influencing constructively the context, culture and operating environment of the programme.

In this role, you are directly accountable to Richard Goodman, Director General for the Safer and Greener Buildings Group with oversight from the Permanent Secretary and the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government. For the duration that you hold this position, this should be one of your principal roles within the Civil Service.

In addition to your internal accountabilities, you should also be aware that SROs will now be held personally accountable to Parliamentary Select Committees. You will be expected to account for and explain the decisions and actions you have taken to deliver the Remediation Programme.

In your case this means that from the date of your appointment, you will be held personally accountable and could be called by Parliamentary Select Committees for delivery of the Remediation Programme.

It is important to be clear that your accountability relates only to implementation: it will remain for the Minister to account for the relevant policy decisions and development. Detailed SRO roles and responsibilities are attached in the Annex. You should follow the guidance in that document. You should also make sure you understand:

- The [guidance](#) for civil servants on “Giving Evidence to Select Committees”;
- The Infrastructure and Projects Authority (IPA) [guidance](#) on management of major projects;
- The IPA SRO accountabilities [guidelines](#).

More details on SRO roles and responsibilities can be found in the **Annex**.

Tenure of Position

You should note that an SRO should remain in place throughout the programme or be replaced only when a distinct phase of delivery is completed. Any change in the role of SRO must be agreed with the Director General (DG) for the Safer and Greener Buildings Group, with oversight from the Permanent Secretary and the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government.

You should make sure that you have appropriate knowledge management arrangements in place and could manage an orderly handover to a new SRO if required.

Your role within MHCLG will be split between two Programmes and it is expected that this role will take approximately 50% of your time, with the other 50 % on the Grenfell Site and Programme.

Objectives and Performance Criteria

MHCLG’s Outcome Delivery Plan sets out the department’s objective to deliver ‘More, better quality, safer, greener and more affordable homes,’ and more specifically to

- ‘Support building owners to take action to ensure safety of residents in existing high-rise residential buildings.

The Remediation Programme deliverables consists of.

- Removal of ACM cladding from all identified High-Rise Residential Buildings (England only, 18m+).
- All buildings funded by the Building Safety Fund (for non-ACM cladding) to have completed cladding remediation work.
- Installation of Fire-Alarm systems in buildings with unsafe cladding, replacing Waking Watch measures in buildings waiting to have unsafe cladding removed.
- Preparing and publishing Fire Door report and agreeing a coordinated way for building owners to approach manufacturers reference remediation of fire doors that have failed tests, including tracking unsafe fire doors and contacting building owners to ensure they are replaced.
- External Wall Systems (EWS) data collection project to identify the materials used for the external walls of buildings across the country. In particular, looking for those buildings with High Pressure Laminate (HPL), which can then be flagged and included in the BSF.

Your personal objectives and performance criteria must include the successful delivery of the Remediation Programme within the programme's vision and objectives.

The vision and objectives of the programme should be regularly reviewed and agreed with your Director General.

Governance in the programme is continually reviewed to ensure that the structure remains relevant and reporting provides quality, timely information to enable the most effective decision making possible. The main governance board for the Programme is the Remediation Programme Board with escalations going to the Director General's Group Delivery Board.

Proposed changes to the programme's scope which would affect the policy intent or benefits realisation must be authorised by your Director General. The objectives and vision of the programme should be regularly reviewed and agreed with your Director General.

Extent and Limit of Financial Accountability

(1) Finance and Controls

Your financial and commercial delegated authority are set out separately from this letter, in your budget delegation letter. You may have been delegated financial and commercial authority and thereby have authority to approve expenditure in accordance with the published scheme of delegation. You are responsible for seeking authority from relevant budget holders for spend on this project, where it is in excess of your own delegated financial authority.

HMT spending controls will apply on the basis set out within your Department's delegated authority letter. Where the Remediation Programme exceeds the delegated authority set by HMT, the Treasury Approval Point process will apply, and the details of each approval process must be agreed with your HMT spending team. You should consult departmental finance colleagues throughout this process.

You should also note that where expenditure is considered novel, contentious, repercussive or likely to result in costs to other parts of the public sector, HMT approval will be required, regardless of whether the programme expenditure exceeds the delegated authority set by HMT. If in doubt about whether approval is required you should, in the first instance, consult departmental finance colleagues before raising with the relevant HMT spending team. You should always operate within the rules set out in [Managing Public Money](#). In addition, you must be mindful of, and act in accordance with, the specific Treasury delegated limits and Cabinet Office spending controls relevant to the Remediation Programme.

(2) Delegated Departmental/Project Authority

- You are authorised to approve expenditure as defined in your delegated authority issued by MHCLG Finance;
- You are authorised to agree programme rescheduling as required and to protect the end quality of the project; and

- You are also responsible for recommending to the Remediation Delivery Board the need to either pause or terminate the programme where necessary and in a timely manner. Where issues arise which you are unable to resolve, you are responsible for escalating these issues to the Director General at the Group Delivery Board.

Programme Status

The Programme Status at the date of your appointment is reflected in the most recent quarterly return on the Programme to the Infrastructure and Projects Authority. This is the agreed position as you assume formal ownership of the programme.

Major Projects Leadership Academy (MPLA)

We are aware that you are already an MPLA candidate and an accredited Major Project reviewer. As part of this role you are expected to lead or participate in such reviews for other Government departments, the wider public sector or other areas of MHCLG as appropriate. You will be required to participate in such reviews at least once every 12 months to maintain your accreditation.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish you success in your role as SRO.

Yours sincerely,



JEREMY POCKLINGTON
PERMANENT SECRETARY
MINISTRY OF HOUSING,
COMMUNITIES & LOCAL GOVERNMENT



NICK SMALLWOOD
CHIEF EXECUTIVE
INFRASTRUCTURE & PROJECTS
AUTHORITY

I confirm that I accept the appointment including my personal accountability for implementation of the project as detailed in the letter above.

Name of SRO: Alistair WATTERS

Signature of SRO:



Date: 02 July 2021

Annex A – SRO Role and Responsibilities

The Role of the Senior Responsible Owner (SRO)

You are personally accountable for ensuring the ongoing delivery of the Remediation Programme. You are accountable for the programme meeting its objectives, delivering the required outcomes and realising the required outcomes within the agreed timescales and costs and is accountable directly to the Accounting Officer (AO) and Director General (DG). The SRO needs to advise The DG and AO of any significant issues relating to regularity, propriety, feasibility and value for money, as well as any significant deviations from the approved business case, which might lead them to reassess the programme.

You will be personally accountable to Parliamentary Select Committees and be expected to explain the decisions and actions you have taken. This could include where a Minister has intervened to change the programme during the implementation phase in a way which has implications for the cost and/or timeline of implementation. You will be able to disclose your advice about any such changes.

You must ensure the effectiveness of the governance, assurance and project management arrangements and maintain them throughout the life of the programme. You should adopt best practice and be prepared to justify any deviation from it, in line with guidance published by the Cabinet Office (Efficiency and Reform Group 19).

An SRO will:

- Be a visible, engaged and active project leader, not a figurehead;
- Deliver the agreed outcomes to agreed timescales and costs;
- Create an open, honest and positive culture committed to delivering at pace;
- Challenge senior officers and Ministers when appropriate and escalate quickly;
- Provide appropriate support, steer and strategic focus to the Project Director and ensure that they have a clear and current letter of appointment , and;
- Have sufficient time, experience and the right skills to carry the full responsibilities of the role.

Specific SRO Accountabilities:

Ensure that the programme is set up for success

- Provide overall leadership, decisions and direction. Be available to the Programme Director to coach, advise, provide strategic direction, assist with conflict resolution and make timely decisions.
- Ensure that the programme is set-up to make an unambiguous and demonstrable link to strategic policy;
- Translate this policy intent into clear deliverables which are established and agreed with senior stakeholders;
- Carry out a robust and commercially viable options appraisal, which balances risk with opportunity, as part of initial project feasibility;
- Establish a firm business case for the programme during the initiation/definition phase and ensure that any planned change continues to be aligned with the business;
- Identify and secure the necessary investment for the business case (this includes both budget and operational resource), and;

- Design and implement robust, appropriate and transparent programme governance; Build strong and effective relationships with key stakeholders, justifying their trust and retaining their confidence.

Ensure that the programme meets its objectives and delivers the required outcomes

- Gain agreement to the programme objectives and benefits amongst stakeholders, including Ministers where appropriate;
- Understand the broader government perspective and its impact on the programme;
- Ensure the strategic fit of the programme objectives and outcomes;
- Agree a clear and simple approach to performance management and monitor delivery of the objectives and outcomes, taking appropriate action where necessary to ensure their successful delivery, and;
- Engage and communicate with the internal and external stakeholders and the community to enable successful delivery.

Develop the programme organisation structure and plan

- Own the overall design of the programme and the temporary organisation needed to deliver it;
- Ensure that there is a coherent organisation structure and appropriately detailed programme plan;
- Build the right team, securing necessary resources and skills and providing clear lines of accountability, and;
- Provide appropriate support, steer and strategic focus to the Programme Director.

Monitor and take control of progress

- Monitor and control the progress of the programme at a strategic level, being honest and frank about programme progress, risks and issues;
- Ensure that any changes to agreed programme objectives are flagged appropriately within programme governance and that the business case is updated accordingly (throughout project life-cycle);
- Ensure that the integrity of the programme is maintained and speak truth to power – including to Parliamentary Select Committees, and;
- Communicate effectively with senior stakeholders regarding programme progress and provide clear, appropriate and delivery-focused decisions and advice to the Programme Director.

Ensure problem resolution and referral processes are appropriate and effective

- Identify, understand and drive the successful mitigation of programme risks;
- Escalate serious issues quickly and with confidence to senior management and/or Ministers;
- Develop strong and effective engagement between the programme team and its stakeholders and sponsors, and;
- Ensure that communication processes are effective, and that the programme's objectives and deliverables continue to be consistent with the organisation's strategic direction.

Ensure that the programme is subject to review at appropriate stages

- Recognise the value of robust programme review and ensure it occurs at key points in the programme lifecycle, particularly at the pre-initiation (feasibility) and initiation stages;
- Make certain that any recommendations or concerns from reviews are met or addressed in a timely manner, and;

- In the event of a “red” or “amber-red” review or a red or amber-red quarterly GMPP review rating, ensure that the Permanent Secretary has been made aware of the situation and has been briefed accordingly.

Manage formal programme closure

- Formally close the programme and ensure that the lessons learned are documented within the final evaluation report and disseminated to key stakeholders;
- Ensure that the post implementation review takes place and that the output is communicated to the appropriate stakeholders, and;
- Ensure a plan for both long term outcomes and on-going sustainability is agreed