

## Public Sector Equality Duty

# Equality analysis for Removal of National Classification System of Tests for Reaction to Fire and Fire Resistance

This document records the analysis undertaken by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to fulfil the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) as set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. This requires the department to pay due regard to the need to:

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
3. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The protected characteristics which should be considered are:

- age
- disability
- sex
- gender reassignment
- marriage or civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation.

Please note that in relation to the protected characteristic of marriage and civil partnerships the department is required to have due regard only to the first point in the first paragraph above.

The template below should be used when carrying out work on policies and services. This might include any new or existing policy, strategies, functions, work programmes, projects, decisions about budgets and other issues, procurement, commissioning or de-commissioning of services, allocating resources, and service design and implementation. The aim is for policies and services to be accessible and to meet different people's needs.

You should consider PSED before and during policy or service formation, and to monitor how the policy or service is working once a decision is implemented. Considering equality in this way should be part of normal day-to-day activity and not a one off exercise.

## SECTION 1

### 1.1 Policy/Service

The policy under review proposes the removal of the national classification system (BS476) from Approved Document B (ADB), which provides statutory guidance for fire safety in new building work. Currently, ADB operates a dual system, including both the National Classes (BS 476) and the European Standard (BS EN 13501 series). The policy aims to transition entirely to the European Standard (BS EN), deemed more current and robust than the National Classes, which hasn't been updated in two decades.

## SECTION 2

### 2.1 Summary of the evidence considered in demonstrating due regard to PSED

A number of sources were considered such as: detailed consultation responses from industry, stakeholder engagement with a range of industry groups and government bodies, market analysis, research and viability modelling. It was identified that the majority of industries have already transitioned away from using the National Classes, and only a few outlier industries remain using the outdated test standards. Overall, it is assessed that this policy will have a positive impact on people in all categories of protected characteristic.

#### **Age**

This characteristic will benefit directly from the simplification of compliance and use of the more robust European Standard. The Ministry does not consider this characteristic to be negatively impacted by the removal of the National Classes.

#### **Disability**

This characteristic will benefit directly from the simplification of compliance and use of the more robust European Standard. The Ministry does not consider this characteristic to be negatively impacted by the removal of the National Classes.

#### **Sex**

This characteristic will benefit directly from the simplification of compliance and use of the more robust European Standard. The Ministry does not consider this characteristic to be negatively impacted by the removal of the National Classes.

#### **Gender reassignment**

This characteristic will benefit directly from the simplification of compliance and use of the more robust European Standard. The Ministry does not consider this characteristic to be negatively impacted by the removal of the National Classes.

#### **Marriage or Civil Partnership**

This characteristic will benefit directly from the simplification of compliance and use of the more robust European Standard. The Ministry does not consider this characteristic to be negatively impacted by the removal of the National Classes.

#### **Pregnancy and Maternity**

This characteristic will benefit directly from the simplification of compliance and use of the more robust

European Standard. The Ministry does not consider this characteristic to be negatively impacted by the removal of the National Classes.

**Race**

This characteristic will benefit directly from the simplification of compliance and use of the more robust European Standard. The Ministry does not consider this characteristic to be negatively impacted by the removal of the National Classes.

**Religion or belief**

This characteristic will benefit directly from the simplification of compliance and use of the more robust European Standard. The Ministry does not consider this characteristic to be negatively impacted by the removal of the National Classes.

**Sexual orientation**

This characteristic will benefit directly from the simplification of compliance and use of the more robust European Standard. The Ministry does not consider this characteristic to be negatively impacted by the removal of the National Classes.

## 2.2 Assess the impact

The Department does not believe that there will be any negative impact of the intervention based on age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, or sexual orientation.

There will be positive benefits across all sectors of society as a removal of the national classes will ensure industry is testing products to a more robust standard.

## 2.3 Summary of the Analysis

Providing one route to compliance via the European Standards does not disproportionately impact any particular groups who share a protected characteristic compared to those that don't share the characteristics. In other words, the removal of the national classes would benefit all. The benefit provides the potential for all to experience greater protections through the use of more robust standards.

# SECTION 3

## 3.1 Decision Making

This analysis supports a decision to proceed as planned with the intervention as there is improved safety for all residents when the changes are implemented.

### 3.2 Monitoring arrangements

The impact on equalities will be reviewed regularly following an analysis of relevant data and regular stakeholder communications.

*(The sign-off is for internal accountability and not publication. We recommend getting SCS sign-off.)*

### 3.3 Sign-off by the decision-maker

**Name:**

**Job Title:**

**Date:**