

Simon Hunt
Greater Manchester County Fire and Rescue Service
Headquarters
146 Bolton Road
Swinton
Manchester M27 8US

12 May 2005

Dear Simon

Fire at the Edge development; 6th January 2005

You have asked if we could provide you with our report regarding the above incident.

Fire investigators at BRE carry out examinations of fires of national interest and other selected fires under a framework contract for the Buildings Division of ODPM. This work has been undertaken for many years with the purpose of learning lessons about buildings which may lead to improved regulations or guidance and when appropriate, reporting back to Ministers.

We only rarely examine the cause of the fire since our efforts focus on the effects of the fire on the building, the behaviour of occupants and the performance of the fire safety systems. In this our investigations complement those of other investigators, in particular fire service investigators and forensic scientists.

Our reports to ODPM are typically confidential since they are intended to inform policy matters with regards to the Building Regulations, Approved Document B and research, and because our investigations treat fire incidents as "generic examples" which may lead to conclusions or conjectures which are not of immediate relevance to the actual incident.

As you are aware, the fire at the Edge was examined by us on behalf of ODPM following your invitation to visit. As you know, two of my colleagues visited the scene on 18th January 2005. We very much appreciate the assistance of you and your officers who are conducting your investigation. For our part, we trust that our examination of the building may assist you in your work. We have provided officials in ODPM with a briefing of our initial findings, but we appreciate that there may be some further relevant information coming from yourselves as your own investigations proceed.

Anthony Burd at ODPM has agreed that we can provide you with a copy of our report since we understand that this may be of assistance to your investigations. Whilst it has not generally been ODPM policy to circulate such specific briefings, we have received permission on this occasion to forward a copy of our report to the Fire and Rescue Service and to the relevant Building Control Body, as it is felt it could be useful to all concerned on this particular occasion.

I hope these comments are helpful and we would be pleased to discuss them further.

Regards

Martin Shipp BSc CEng FIFireE CPhys MInstP, Associate Director
For and on behalf of BRE Fire and Security

cc. Mr R Lewis, NHBC, Milton Keynes