

INSULATION



Mr Kit Malthouse MP
Minister of Housing
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
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Phenolic Foam and Fire Safety

Dear Minister,

I watched Steve Reed's adjournment debate on Fire Safety and Cladding and noted the comments made by Jon Cruddas regarding phenolic foam and particularly a 2003 report.

Kingspan is the world's largest manufacturer of cladding and insulation products, including a significant business in the UK, with over 3,000 employees operating across 19 UK facilities. Our product suites include modern high-performance insulation solutions (comprising combustible materials including phenolic foams), as well as traditional mineral fibre (non-combustible) products. We therefore wanted to contact you ahead of your appearance before the Housing, Communities and Local Government Select Committee this afternoon.

Every year, Kingspan invest 1% of our revenue in R&D as part of our commitment to creating better buildings so that people never have to choose between energy efficiency, sustainability, architecture and most importantly safety. As part of this, we have conducted more than 1,800 external fire tests to national and international standards in recent years, and believe that we have carried out more product and full system fire safety tests than any other construction material company. We have also conducted a number of further tests on our phenolic foam products to ensure their safety.

There are many different phenolic foam products available on the market and the performance of each of these products is different. We are concerned that approaching phenolic foam products as the same is analogous to approaching all wood or metal products as the same. We also wanted to assure you that we have found no evidence that any of our phenolic products cause harm to installers who handle them or pose any risk to human health when stored / in place on a building.

Given the important points raised by Mr Cruddas, we are hoping to review the report referenced during last week's debate and would be very grateful if your office might be able to send a copy once it has been given to your Department? We would then be pleased to respond to the issues raised in the report.

Yours sincerely,

Ralph Mannion
Managing Director Kingspan Insulation – Britain & Ireland