



MHCLG's Written Closing Submissions

1. MHCLG has been following the progress of the Inquiry closely and reiterates its commitment to supporting the Inquiry in achieving its objectives: to get to the truth, and to ensure that lessons are learned, so that a tragedy like the Grenfell Tower fire can never happen again.
2. Dame Judith Hackitt's Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety highlighted that the current system is "not fit for purpose". Nothing is more important than ensuring that people are safe in their homes: MHCLG is determined to learn the lessons from the Grenfell Tower fire and bring about a fundamental change in the building safety system. The Government will set out how it intends to take forward the recommendations of the Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety by the end of the year.
3. So that everyone is safe and feels safe in their homes, a comprehensive Building Safety Programme was put in place within days of the Grenfell Tower fire and MHCLG is taking action to speed up the replacement of unsafe cladding, like the type used on Grenfell Tower. The Government is fully funding the replacement of unsafe ACM cladding on social sector buildings 18 metres or more in height. In the private sector, the Government is supporting local authorities to take decisive enforcement action where remediation plans for high-rise buildings with unsafe cladding are unclear. This includes providing additional guidance on assessment of such buildings and setting up a Local Government Association hosted Joint Inspection Team. Local authorities are also getting the Government's full backing, including financial support where this is necessary, to enable them to carry out emergency remedial work on affected private residential buildings with unsafe ACM cladding. They will recover the costs from building owners.
4. MHCLG wishes to ensure that all Core Participants are aware, before the 14 December deadline for submitting their submissions on proposed interim recommendations, that the Department has acted to impose a clear ban on combustible cladding for high-rise and some other buildings.



5. While MHCLG is clear, having taken advice from experts, that unmodified polyethylene cored ACM cladding does not comply with the requirements of building regulations, concerns have been expressed that combustible cladding is not explicitly banned under statute. Following a detailed consultation earlier this year, which attracted more than 400 responses, MHCLG laid regulations on 29 November 2018. Under the new regulations, building work must be carried out so that only materials which meet classification A1 or A2-s1,d0 under the European standard EN13501-1, other than certain components which are exempted, become part of an external wall of buildings 18 metres or more in height and which contain one or more flats, a hospital, a residential care premise, a dormitory in a boarding school or student accommodation.
6. In the meantime, the Government is not waiting for legislative change to begin fixing the system – it is supporting the remediation of existing buildings with unsafe cladding, testing and improving the safety of fire doors and working with Early Adopters to test new approaches and achieve change on the ground as soon as possible.
7. MHCLG acknowledges that the Inquiry has written and oral evidence from a number of experts. MHCLG will address the issues raised by the experts in their subsequent evidence as appropriate during Phase 2.
8. MHCLG stands ready to help the Inquiry in any way that the Inquiry sees fit and will take account of all issues raised by the Inquiry as it takes forward the Building Safety Programme.