

## The House of Commons Library recently published (on 11 May 2018) Briefing Paper Number CB 8305 titled - Grenfell Tower Fire: Background

This blog post looks at the Government progress made to date in respect of the various reviews and investigations following the Grenfell tragedy and the relevant next steps.

---

<b>Submitted</b>	15 May 2018
<b>Topic</b>	Construction
<b>Contact</b>	Emily Monastiriotis, Frances Gordon-Weeks

---

The paper briefly summarises the Government progress made to date in respect of the various reviews and investigations following the Grenfell tragedy. The paper also outlines the relevant next steps. These are summarised below:

### Police investigation

The Metropolitan Police is leading a criminal investigation to seek to establish what happened to the 71 people the Metropolitan Police have stated lost their lives. In order to do this, the Metropolitan Police are working closely with the Fire Service. The remit of the investigation will include looking at how the Grenfell Tower was managed and maintained and will consider (in this context amongst others) whether any criminal offences have been committed.

### Building Safety Programme appointed by the Department for Communities and Local Government

The government appointed an expert panel lead by Sir Ken Knight to advise the Government on the appropriate interim measures following the Grenfell tragedy. The interim measures implemented to date are as follows:

- identify buildings "of concern" - review buildings over 18m and establish what type of ACM panel has been installed. Please refer to our [blog post](#) on the government's latest data release concerning the outcome of this review, and
- testing of various types of cladding and insulation panels in line with British standards 8414. In summary the BRE test concluded the following in respect of buildings over 18m:
  - ACM cladding with unmodified polyethylene (category 3) filler presents a significant fire risk regardless of type of insulation used
  - ACM cladding with fire retardant polyethylene (category 2) filler presents a "notable fire hazard". However it can be safe if non combustible insulation is used in addition to other measures, and
  - ACM cladding with A2 filler (category 1) can be safe if specific types of insulation are used, and the Building Regulations guidance is followed, amongst other matters.

In all instances it is recommended that professional advice is obtained.

Reference was also made to Dominic Raab, Minister for Housing's comments made during the House of Commons debate on 06 March 2018 whereby comment was made that "the government had not provided clear guidance on the materials for remediation".

## The Hackitt review

A summary of the key points from the Hackitt report are referred to including concerns about Approved Document B; that clarity in respect of roles and responsibilities is required; and that current methods for testing and certification of construction products requires clarity. Reference was also made to recommendations made to the Government set out in Dame Hackitt's interim report including restricting the use of desktop studies and that fire risk assessments should be shared in an accessible way with residents. Reference is made to Dame Hackitt's final report which will be published in Spring 2018.

## The Public Inquiry

A public inquiry was announced by the Prime Minister on 15 June 2017. Sir Martin Moore-Bick was appointed by the Prime Minister to carry out the inquiry. The terms of reference for the inquiry are broad reaching and include examining the response of the London Fire Brigade; the immediate causes of the fire; and the design and construction of the building. It was noted that, as of 20 April 2018, 519 individuals and 28 organisations had been awarded the status of "core participants". This gives these entities rights to access certain information and to question witnesses.

## E-petition

[E-petitions](#) ask for a specific action from the Government or the House of Commons. The e-petition needs to be supported by at least six people and is likely to be put forward for debate at the House of Commons if it receives over 100,000 signatures. The e-petition in question called on the Prime Minister to "take action to build public trust in the Grenfell Tower Inquiry". In particular, bereaved families and survivors called upon the Prime Minister to exercise her powers pursuant to the Inquiries Act 2005 to appoint additional panel members to the Grenfell Tower Inquiry. The petition attracted 156,601 signatures as of 10 May 2018.

## Grenfell Recovery Task Force

On 26 July 2017 the Government announced the creation of the Grenfell Recovery Task Force. The focus of the Task Force is to monitor the performance of local agencies, including Kensington & Chelsea Borough Council in addressing the aftermath of the fire. Reference is made to the then Secretary of State, Sajid Javid's statement to the House which referred to a number of issues including the failure of a fire door from the tower which was tested as part of the Metropolitan Police Service's investigation. Reference was also made to Government financial support for survivors currently worth £72m.

This document (and any information accessed through links in this document) is provided for information purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. Professional legal advice should be obtained before taking or refraining from any action as a result of the contents of this document.

