

[Press release: Latest government large scale fire safety test results published](#)

The fourth in the government's series of large-scale fire safety tests, that will allow experts to better understand how different types of cladding panels behave with different types of insulation in a fire, has been completed by the Building Research Establishment (BRE).

This fourth test was of a wall cladding system consisting of Aluminium Composite Material (ACM) cladding with a fire resistant polyethylene filler (category 2 in screening tests) and stone wool insulation (a form of mineral wool). This combination of materials has passed the test.

The government's Expert Panel advise that [the results](#) show that this combination of materials can be compliant with current Building Regulations when installed and maintained properly. It could therefore offer a possible solution for some buildings with other cladding systems which have been identified as a hazard.

However the Expert Panel note that cladding and insulation materials can vary between manufacturers and can have different calorific values. The way materials have been fitted and maintained can also affect the safety of the cladding system.

Therefore the clear [advice](#) from the Expert Panel is that building owners need to continue to take professional advice as to whether any remedial work is necessary to ensure the safety of their building. The test results published today (11 August 2017) will help inform this work but they must also take into account the specific circumstances of their building.

13 buildings over 18 metres tall in England are known to have this combination of ACM with a fire resistant polyethylene filler (category 2) and stone wool insulation. Following initial screening tests, government issued [advice](#) to building owners detailing immediate interim safety measures that needed to be undertaken. These measures have been completed for all 13 of these buildings.

The government announced the [independent review of building regulations and fire safety](#) on 28 July 2017. This forward-looking review will examine the regulatory system around the design, construction and on-going management of buildings in relation to fire safety as well as related compliance and enforcement issues.

Results of the first 3 tests have already been published. Results of all remaining large-scale tests will be published when they are available.

[Press release: Mandatory CCTV in all slaughterhouses under new animal welfare plans](#)

CCTV will be mandatory in all slaughterhouses in England under new plans announced today (11 August 2017) by Environment Secretary Michael Gove, as he outlined a series of measures to cement the UK's position as a global leader on animal welfare.

The proposals will deliver a manifesto commitment for CCTV to be required in every slaughterhouse in England in all areas where live animals are present, with unrestricted access to footage for Official Vets – reassuring consumers that high welfare standards are being effectively enforced.

The Government has also confirmed it will raise standards for farm animals and domestic pets by modernising statutory animal welfare codes to reflect enhancements in medicines, technology and the latest research and advice from vets. The codes will remain enshrined in law and the first to be updated will cover chickens bred for meat.

Environment Secretary Michael Gove said:

We have some of the highest animal welfare standards in the world and the actions I am setting out today will reinforce our status as a global leader.

As we prepare to leave the EU, these measures provide a further demonstration to consumers around the world that our food is produced to the very highest standards.

Consultations on both proposals will be accessible online from 9am on 11 August 2017.

Under the new plans for CCTV, footage would be accessible to the Food Standards Agency's (FSA) Official Veterinarians (OVs), who monitor and enforce animal welfare standards in the slaughterhouse. The FSA has strict processes in place for the approval of slaughterhouses, and specially trained vets carry out checks to make sure the welfare of animals is protected throughout their time in the slaughterhouse. If breaches are found, a slaughterhouse can be given a welfare enforcement notice, have its staff's licences suspended or revoked, or be referred for a criminal investigation.

Welcoming the Government's plans, British Veterinary Association President Gudrun Ravetz said:

Mandatory CCTV in all areas of slaughterhouses will provide an essential tool in fostering a culture of compassion that could help safeguard animal welfare and we are particularly pleased to see a commitment to Official Veterinarians having unrestricted access to footage, which BVA has been calling for. Vets' independence and unique qualifications help ensure that the UK will continue to have the highest standards of animal health, welfare and food safety.

Heather Hancock, Chairman of the Food Standards Agency, said:

The Food Standards Agency takes a zero tolerance approach to any breaches of animal welfare standards in slaughterhouses. Last year, we concluded that it was time to make CCTV compulsory in slaughterhouses, progress on voluntary adoption having plateaued.

I and the Board of the FSA warmly welcome Defra's consultation about making CCTV mandatory. We look forward to the introduction of a comprehensive requirement for using, accessing and retaining footage from CCTV in abattoirs. We see CCTV as an invaluable management tool for business owners to help with compliance with official controls and to improve animal welfare standards across the industry.

Updates to the meat chicken welfare code have been developed to reflect the most up-to-date best practice on poultry farms across the country. Welfare codes on laying hens, pigs, dogs, cats and horses are expected to be updated over the next year.

[News story: Matchmaking scheme helps businesses find £4 million of finance](#)

Over the past 9 months, 230 small businesses from beauticians to forklift truck training companies, which were rejected for loans by some of the UK's biggest banks, have gained £3.8 million from alternative lenders.

The government-backed bank referral scheme, [launched in November 2016](#), requires 9 of the UK's biggest banks to pass on the details of small businesses they have turned down for loans to three finance platforms – Funding Xchange, Business Finance Compared and Funding Options. These platforms then share their details with alternative finance providers and go on to facilitate a conversation between the business and any provider who expresses an interest in supplying finance to them.

The Economic Secretary to the Treasury, Stephen Barclay, said:

Small- and medium-sized businesses are the backbone of Britain's economy and it is right they have access to a wide range of sources of finance.

A refusal from a big bank should not be the end of the line for a small business and, thanks to our match-making scheme they have another avenue to try for funding.

Over 200 businesses from beauticians to forklift truck training firms have received the money that they need to grow and we expect this number to increase as the scheme matures.

Loans resulting from this scheme ranged from £200 to £500,000, with an average size of £16,000. A number of sectors have benefited including construction, retail, technology and science.

A fourth finance platform, Alternative Business Funding, will join the scheme from 1 November 2017 to widen further the options available to businesses. The government will continue to work with banks to embed and improve their referral processes.

Mike Cherry, National Chairman, Federation of Small Businesses, said:

FSB championed the proposals for a mandatory bank referral scheme, to diversify the lending market and boost the provision of alternative finance to those turned down by the main traditional banks. We welcome that Government has delivered the three platforms and congratulate the scores of firms that have benefited in the scheme's early stages. To provide further economic benefit across the UK the scheme must now scale-up, with more referrals and more businesses successfully securing finance as a result.

Keith Morgan, CEO of the British Business Bank, said:

As highlighted by our recent 2017 Small Business Finance Markets report, the most common response from smaller businesses when they do not get the full amount of finance applied for is to give up or cancel their plans. This can mean businesses missing potential expansion opportunities, with a knock-on effect on UK economic growth. It is therefore heartening to see the positive start made by the bank referral scheme.

Research shows that 71% of businesses seeking finance only ask one lender and, if rejected for finance, many simply give up on investment rather than seek alternative options. In 2016 220,000 small and medium sized business

sought a loan or overdraft, 25% of these were initially declined by their bank and only 7% of those declined were referred to other sources of help.

[Inspection work in progress](#)

Published 10 August 2017

Last updated 19 October 2022 [+ show all updates](#)

1. 19 October 2022

Two reports have been published today. An inspection of the use of hotels for housing unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and an inspection report on Country of Origin Information – Afghanistan and China.

2. 12 October 2022

The Chief Inspector has launched a re-inspection of ePassport gates.

3. 30 September 2022

Third annual inspection of 'Adults at risk in immigration detention' (30 September 2022) has been sent to the Home Secretary.

4. 28 September 2022

The Chief Inspector has submitted his 'inspection report on the immigration system as it relates to the agricultural sector' to the Home Secretary.

5. 22 September 2022

The Chief Inspector launches an 'inspection of Home Office operations to effect the removal of Foreign National Offenders'

6. 20 September 2022

Two new inspections have been added to the work the live inspections list.

7. 20 July 2022

The Chief Inspector is launching a review of ePassport Gates, which focusses on the Home Office's progress against the recommendations made in the 'Inspection of ePassport gates' (June 2020 – January 2021) report.

8. 11 July 2022

An inspection of the Hong Kong British National (Overseas) visa route has been sent to the Home Secretary for publication.

9. 9 June 2022

Today the Chief Inspector has sent his inspection report on the use of hotels to house unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC), to the Home Secretary.

10. 21 March 2022

David Neal, the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration, has launched three new inspections: – A short re-inspection of Napier Barracks – An inspection of the use of hotels for housing unaccompanied asylum-seeking children – An inspection of GPS electronic monitoring of Foreign National Offenders

11. 1 March 2022

The Chief Inspector's report on his inspection of the initial processing of migrants arriving via small boats at Tug Haven was sent to the Home Secretary on Thursday 24 February 2022.

12. 16 February 2022

The Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration has submitted his Inspection Report on the Home Office's use of contingency asylum accommodation, to the Home Secretary.

13. 1 November 2021

Update – The ICIBI's report following his inspection into the effectiveness of Border Force's role in Project Kraken at small seaports has been set to the Home Secretary.

14. 28 September 2021

The Chief Inspector's report on his 'short inspection of Border Force queue management at Birmingham Airport', has been sent to the Home Secretary.

15. 14 September 2021

The following ICIBI inspection reports have been sent to the Home Secretary: 1. An inspection of Asylum Casework 2. A short inspection of reporting events at Becket House Immigration Reporting Centre based upon onsite observations 3. An inspection of UK Visas and Immigration Front End Services

16. 16 July 2021

EU Settlement Scheme 3 went to the Home Secretary.

17. 1 July 2021

Inspection reports sent to the Home Secretary.

18. 25 January 2021

Added the inspection 'The use of hotels and barracks as contingency asylum accommodation' to live inspections'.

19. 16 December 2020

The Chief Inspector has submitted his latest Inspection report on country of origin information (El Salvador and Sudan) to the Home Secretary.

20. 22 October 2020

Added an update about the Intelligence Inspection

21. 21 October 2020

The Chief Inspector has sent his inspection report on the Home Office's use of sanctions and penalties to the Home Secretary.

22. 14 October 2020

The Chief Inspector sent the Home Secretary his inspection report on the Home Office's Country of Origin Information products relating to Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity or Expression, September 2020. (13 October 2020)

23. 18 May 2020

The Chief Inspector submitted his inspection of the Home Office's use of language services in the asylum process to the Home Secretary on Thursday 14 May 2020.

24. 16 March 2020

ICIBI work in progress webpage updated following the submission of the Chief Inspector's report, on the Home Office's response to in-country clandestine arrivals ('lorry drops') and to irregular migrants arriving via 'small boats', to the Home Secretary.

25. 24 January 2020

Administrative reviews report has been sent to the Home Secretary.

26. 31 October 2019

Reflects publication of the inspection report on Glasgow and Edinburgh airports, the re-inspection report on the Right of Abode being sent to the Home Secretary and the commencement of the Sanctions and Penalties and Resettlement Schemes: VPRS, VCRS and Community Sponsorship inspections

27. 8 October 2019

Two reports have been sent to the Home Secretary and Disruption and prosecution of perpetrators of modern slavery has been added to the live inspections list.

28. 18 June 2019

Page amended to reflect reports that have been published and sent to the Home Secretary.

29. 9 May 2019

Updated work in progress.

30. 4 February 2019

An update of work in progress

31. 31 October 2018

The ICIBI sends his report on Home Office (Borders, Immigration and Citizenship System) collaborative working with other government departments and agencies to the Home Secretary.

32. 27 September 2018

Work in progress updated with new inspections.

33. 10 August 2018

Change to reflect sending the South Coast Ports and Asylum Accommodation reports to the Home Secretary.

34. 13 June 2018

New inspection "Charging for Services" added

35. 8 May 2018

Change to list of work in progress following publication of Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme inspection

36. 12 April 2018

Updated work in progress for the inspectorate.

37. 6 March 2018

Page updated with current work in progress

38. 10 August 2017

First published.

[News story: Grenfell Tower fire response: what charitable grants are available](#)

Information about charitable grants for individuals and families affected by the Grenfell Tower fire.

A considerable amount of funds have been donated to help people that have been affected by the Grenfell Tower fire. Information can be found here about the initial [Grenfell charitable financial support](#) (PDF, 418KB, 1 page) that is available for those affected, along with how it can be accessed.

This information forms the basis of the initial distributions that have been made, however significant funds remain. Charities are now trying to work with the survivors and those affected to discuss how the rest of the funds should be distributed to meet the short, medium and long term needs of those affected by this awful tragedy.

We have also published [transparency information](#) about the total funds that have been raised and how much has been spent so far. This information will be updated on a weekly basis.