

# [Press release: Independent review of building regulations and fire safety](#)

An independent review of building regulations and fire safety has been announced by the government today (28 July 2017).

This follows the tragic fire at Grenfell Tower, which raised serious questions about the fire safety of high rise residential buildings, and subsequent government testing of aluminium composite material (ACM) cladding from similar buildings across the country.

The [first result from large scale tests](#) of building cladding systems has also been published today. These latest tests simulate a tall building and allow experts to understand better how different types of cladding panels behave with different types of insulation in a fire.

The first system tested, a wall cladding system using an aluminium composite material (ACM) cladding with unmodified polyethylene filler (Cat 3) and foam insulation, failed the test which is set out in current building regulations guidance.

Immediate action is already underway to ensure the safety of residents in these buildings. But the results also make clear that we need to understand how current building regulations and fire safety works in order to make them as effective as possible in the future.

This forward-looking independent review, to be led by Dame Judith Hackitt, Chair of EEF, the Manufacturers' Organisation, will look at current building regulations and fire safety with a particular focus on high rise residential buildings. It will report jointly to the Communities Secretary Sajid Javid and the Home Secretary Amber Rudd.

It will examine:

- the regulatory system around the design, construction and on-going management of buildings in relation to fire safety
- related compliance and enforcement issues
- international regulation and experience in this area

Communities Secretary Sajid Javid said:

Since the tragic Grenfell Tower disaster, the government has been working to make sure people living in high rise buildings are safe.

It's clear we need to urgently look at building regulations and fire safety. This independent review will ensure we can swiftly make any necessary improvements. Government is determined to make sure that we learn the lessons from the Grenfell Tower fire, and to ensure nothing like it can happen again.

As part of the review, Dame Judith will consult the [Buildings Regulations Advisory Committee](#) – which advises the government on changes to building regulations– as well as the construction and housing industry, the fire sector, international experts, MPs and the public.

The review will also work closely with other government departments and the devolved administrations and consider the implications of changes to the regulatory system on other government objectives.

Review Chair, Dame Judith Hackitt said:

I am honoured to be asked by government to lead this important independent review. This review will look at building regulations and fire safety to see what changes can be made for the future to make these more effective.

I am keen to engage widely with industry and the public to inform the recommendations from the review. I want the recommendations to lead to any necessary improvements in the system being made.

Terms of reference for this independent review will be published in summer 2017, once the terms of reference for the Grenfell Tower Public Inquiry have been agreed.

It is expected that the review will present an interim report before the end of the year, and a final report no later than spring 2018. The government will act swiftly on any recommendations from this review to make sure people living in high rise buildings are safe.

## **Short biography of Dame Judith Hackitt**

Dame Judith was Chair of HSE from October 2007 to March 2016. She previously served as a health and safety Commissioner between 2002 and 2005. She was made a Dame in the 2016 New Year Honours for services to health and safety and engineering in particular for being a role model for young women. She was awarded a CBE in 2006.

In April 2016, she was appointed as Chair of EEF, The Manufacturers' Organisation in April 2016.

Dame Judith is a chemical engineer and graduated from Imperial College in 1975. She worked in the chemicals manufacturing industry for 23 years before joining the Chemical Industries Association (CIA) in 1998. She became Director General of CIA (from 2002-2005) and then worked in Brussels for the European Chemical Industry Association (CEFIC).

She was elected as a Fellow of the Royal Academy of Engineering in July 2010 and currently chairs the External Affairs Committee. Dame Judith is a Fellow of the Institution of Chemical Engineers and a member of council. She was President of IChemE from May 2013 to May 2014.

Dame Judith is also Chair of Semta – the Science, Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies Alliance, and a non-executive director of the High Value Manufacturing Catapult.

---

## [News story: First systems test reaffirms actions for landlords](#)

The first of the ‘systems tests’, assessing the fire safety of whole buildings, has been taking place at Building Research Establishment (BRE).

These large scale tests will allow experts to better understand how different types of cladding panels behave with different types of insulation in a fire.

Immediately after the Grenfell Tower fire, the government began a testing programme on aluminium composite material (ACM) on high rise residential buildings, which is one element of a wall cladding system.

Following advice from the Independent Expert Advisory Panel, BRE has now started a further programme to test the wall system of a building in its entirety. Three different types of ACM cladding are being combined with 2 different types of insulation to test their combustibility when taken together, with 6 combinations being tested in total.

Each test involves building a 9-metre-high demonstration wall with a complete cladding system including cladding panels, insulation and cavity barriers. This is then subjected to a replica of a severe fire inside a flat as it spreads out of a window, to see whether it meets the requirement to resist vertical fire spread.

The first test was of a wall cladding system consisting of ACM with polyethylene filler (Category 3) and foam insulation, with fire breaks and cavity barriers in place.

The expert panel advise that the [results show](#) this combination does not meet current building regulation guidance.

- 82 buildings are currently known to have this combination of materials in their wall cladding systems – 47 of which are local authority or housing association owned or managed
- the government has [issued advice](#) to every building owner known to be affected and other interested parties

In a statement, the Independent Expert Advisory Panel said:

This next phase of testing provides further information for landlords to make informed decisions about what actions to take to ensure the safety of residents and reassure the public.

This reconfirms the advice already provided to building owners about the immediate steps they should take to ensure buildings are safe.

Landlords of buildings with cladding using the same combination of materials as in this first full scale test must now act on the additional advice they have been given since this test, to seek professional advice about any necessary remedial work.

---

## **Research and analysis: UK Science & Innovation Contributes to Global Ocean Security**

Together with the University of North Carolina Wilmington and Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute, SIN Boston convened a meeting of leading scientists from the UK and USA to develop a joint deep-sea coral research programme. This work, catalyzed in 2008, has evolved into the €9.3 million ATLAS project, which supports UN Sustainable Development Goal 14 to “conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources.”

---

## **News story: Master of vessel pleads guilty to fishing over quota limits**

The master of the fishing vessel Ocean Rover (SN2) pleaded guilty to 3 offences of fishing over quota limits and 2 offences of being present in a real time closure area at a speed of less than 6 knots.

Newcastle Crown Court heard on 25 July 2017 that marine officers from the MMO used sales note data to prove that the Ocean Rover, skippered by Gerry Lafferty, had landed in excess of its monthly quota allocations in 2015.

In January 2015 the vessel landed 510kg of whiting in excess of its quota and 10,214kg of plaice. Between July and September 2015 it landed 7,272kg of nephrops over quota. The total value of catch which was not within quota limits for 2015 is £23,274.

The court also heard that vessel monitoring system data had shown that the vessel, on two occasions in 2015 had been present in real time closure areas travelling at less than six knots, contrary to conditions in the vessel's licence

Sentencing Lafferty, Her Honour Judge Rippon said:

"These are serious offences and you understand better than most that the regulations are in place to protect the integrity of fish stocks. If they are not enforced this will present difficulties for future generations."

Accepting that the defendant was of very limited means, the judge imposed a sentence of a conditional discharge of 24 months.

---

## **[News story: Master of vessel pleads guilty to fishing over quota limits](#)**

The master of the fishing vessel Ocean Rover (SN2) pleaded guilty to 3 offences of fishing over quota limits and 2 offences of being present in a real time closure area at a speed of less than 6 knots.

Newcastle Crown Court heard on 25 July 2017 that marine officers from the MMO used sales note data to prove that the Ocean Rover, skippered by Gerry Lafferty, had landed in excess of its monthly quota allocations in 2015.

In January 2015 the vessel landed 510kg of whiting in excess of its quota and 10,214kg of plaice. Between July and September 2015 it landed 7,272kg of nephrops over quota. The total value of catch which was not within quota limits for 2015 is £23,274.

The court also heard that vessel monitoring system data had shown that the vessel, on two occasions in 2015 had been present in real time closure areas travelling at less than six knots, contrary to conditions in the vessel's licence

Sentencing Lafferty, Her Honour Judge Rippon said:

"These are serious offences and you understand better than most that the regulations are in place to protect the integrity of fish stocks. If they are not enforced this will present difficulties for future generations."

Accepting that the defendant was of very limited means, the judge imposed a

sentence of a conditional discharge of 24 months.