

Inaugural conference for new building safety regulator

- **The new Building Safety Regulator held its first conference in Westminster**
- **Over 900 practitioners attended the event to prepare for the new building safety regime**
- **Minister for Building Safety, Lee Rowley said: “We need to ensure that those working in the building industry have the knowledge and confidence to properly engage with this new regime and make it a success.”**

The Building Safety Regulator (BSR) held its first national annual conference to support industry and dutyholders prepare for new building safety regulations in England.

The event, held at the Methodist Central Hall in Westminster, saw more than 900 practitioners come together including architects, landlords and building control professionals – all keen to raise their awareness and understanding of what the BSR will expect from them over the next 18 months.

This is the largest event held by the regulator since being established, and as such it provided the first opportunity for representatives from across the industry to engage with those leading the regime.

The conference featured a topical programme of information, learning and interactive Q&A sessions with senior BSR policy leads, and key industry representatives, who offered delegates valuable insights into the robust regulatory regime and guidance on the legal duties and requirements under the Building Safety Act 2022.

A notable session was headlined by Dame Judith Hackitt on the Industry Safety Steering Group’s third report in which she discussed culture change in the built environment industry.

The conference comes at a ‘milestone moment’ for building safety as the registration process for high-rise residential buildings (HRBs) is set to begin in April.

Owners and managers of approximately 12,500 HRBs in England will have until the 1 October 2023 to register with the Building Safety Regulator or face investigation and prosecution.

Key information around this crucial registration stage was covered in detail throughout the event to help dutyholders better understand how to comply. Other sessions that proved popular with delegates included presentations on the HRB planning, design and construction gateways and the drive to increase competency across the industry.

In his keynote speech, Minister for Building Safety, Lee Rowley MP set out the importance of collaboration to delivering better standards: “We need to

ensure that those working in the building industry have the knowledge and confidence to properly engage with this new regime and make it a success.”

HSE Chief Executive Sarah Albon said: ““Over the past 18 months, we have been talking directly to residents and to resident groups – listening to their concerns, trying to understand what would give them the reassurance they need, and to make sure we take the steps needed to get this right. People must be safe in their own homes – and they must feel safe too.

“You all have a really important part to play in ensuring that we can set up this new regime successfully and that HSE can continue, through the BSR, to protect people and places.”

Chief Inspector of Buildings Peter Baker said: “The regulatory reforms that will start from April will ensure that you all lead the behaviour change that is needed and do what is required to protect residents. They also introduce a new regulator ‘with teeth’ to hold to account those who chose not to learn the lessons and improve.”

Conference sessions will be available to view online in the next few weeks.

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About BSR: The Building Safety Regulator (BSR) is an independent body established by the Building Safety Act, 2022, and is part of the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). BSR will raise building safety and performance standards and oversee a new stringent regime for high-rise residential buildings, as well as overseeing the wider system for regulating safety and performance of all buildings and increasing the competence of relevant regulators and industry professionals.

About HSE: The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is Britain’s national regulator for workplace health and safety. We prevent work-related death, injury and ill health through regulatory actions that range from influencing behaviours across whole industry sectors through to targeted interventions on individual businesses. These activities are supported by globally recognised scientific expertise.

About the Building Safety Act, 2022: The Building Safety Act gained Royal Assent on the 28 April 2022 and makes ground-breaking reforms to give residents and homeowners more rights, powers and protections. The Act overhauls existing regulations, creating lasting change and makes clear how residential buildings should be constructed, maintained, and made safe. Full implementation of the Act is in October 2023, which means each building owner should have their building safety regime in place by this time.

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