

Press release: Action to address recent fire door issues

Fire doors from five suppliers have now been identified as failing to meet requisite fire performance standard following an on-going investigation by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).

This highlights broader potential failings within the industry and the Government is taking immediate action to address this.

MHCLG began investigating the fire door industry after it was found that a glazed, composite fire door from Grenfell Tower manufactured by Manse Masterdor failed a 30 minute fire resistance test after approximately 15 minutes. Issues were subsequently identified with doors produced by Masterdor Limited (the successor business to Manse Masterdor). Investigations have continued and in the last few days doors from 3 additional manufacturers have failed fire resistance testing when tested on both sides.

MHCLG is writing to all building control bodies highlighting the need to check that existing building regulations guidance on new fire door installations is followed. The guidance sets out the tests which should be performed – including testing doors on both sides – in order to meet building regulations requirements.

The Secretary of State for Communities has instructed major fire door suppliers to meet this week and agree a clear plan of action to tackle the failings which have been identified, with weekly reports on progress.

The government's Independent Expert Panel and the National Fire Chiefs Council have advised that the additional risk to public safety is low, as even when not meeting full resistance standards fire doors will provide some protection from the spread of fire and are part of layered fire protection systems within buildings.

Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP said:

While the department's investigations are on-going, I now have enough evidence to suggest that there is a broader issue across the fire door market. That is why I am calling on suppliers to meet this week and provide reassurance that they are gripping this issue properly.

I want to see a clear plan of action to rectify existing problems and ensure such failures are not repeated in the future. Whilst our Expert Panel assures me the risk remains low I want to assure the public that the government is doing everything it can to ensure construction products are of the highest safety standards and accurately tested and marketed.

The Secretary of State has also asked National Trading Standards to oversee local investigations which are taking place. MHCLG will also work with third party certification bodies to develop minimum standards of assurance to provide building owners with greater confidence in the fire doors they purchase.

The products which have failed government tests to date were glazed and unglazed doors supplied by Manse Masterdor and Masterdor Limited and glazed composite doors supplied by Specialist Building Products Limited, trading as Permadoor; Solar Windows Limited; and Birtley Group Limited, trading as Bowater by Birtley. All doors that are known to have failed to meet the necessary standards have been withdrawn from the market and the department has informed local trading standards of its findings. Each manufacturer has co-operated fully with the government's investigations, which are continuing.

What is the safety advice for residents?

- The National Fire Chiefs Council has advised that the additional risk to public safety is low.
- In the event of a fire people should follow existing fire procedures for the building.
- Residents should also test their smoke alarms regularly to ensure they work and ensure that their flat front door is fitted with a working self-closing device.
- All doors provide essential protection in a fire if they are properly closed.
- Fire safety advice for residents is available at:
www.nationalfirechiefs.org.uk/High-Rise-Safety-for-Residents