

The Health and Safety Executive Welcomes Government's Draft Bill to Improve Building and Fire Safety in England

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has welcomed the publication of the government's draft Building Safety Bill, which aim to create the biggest change in building safety for a generation.

The publication of the draft bill, on Monday 20 July, follows the announcement made by Housing Secretary Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP in January that HSE would create a new Building Safety Regulator (BSR), with the aim of implementing reforms that go further and faster to improving building safety following the Grenfell Tower tragedy.

The BSR will oversee the new, more stringent building safety regime for higher-risk buildings, which prioritises blocks of flats more than 18m high or more than six storeys tall in England. It will also have a broader oversight role in the safety and performance of buildings; and in promoting improvements in the competence and organisational capability of all those working in the built environment.

HSE Chief Executive Sarah Albon said: "HSE fully supports the measures set out in the draft bill to move forward and enhance building safety across England.

"HSE is currently working with other parts of government, key regulators and industry to establish how the new legislation can be implemented in a practical way and create a new regime that improves building safety standards and competence across the industry."

HSE will also lead the government's Joint Regulators Group (JRG), which will provide coordinated leadership to local authority and fire & rescue regulators during the transition to the new regulatory regime. It will support the development of close working arrangements between the BSR and local regulators, while continuing to work with early adopters to trial new safety approaches.

The JRG will be chaired by Peter Baker, Director of the Building Safety and Construction Division of HSE said: "The BSR will create a new era for building safety, working with wider government, local regulators, industry and residents we want to ensure that a tragedy like Grenfell Tower never happens again.

"Through appropriate use of its enforcement powers under the new regulatory framework, the BSR will ensure that building safety risks are being properly managed and controlled throughout the lifecycle of a building. It will also hold those with legal duties to account for significant failures."

He added: "In my role as chair of the JRG I will work together with members to ensure that the proposals are both robust and practical."

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