



Federation Newsletter

Winter 2019

Number 4

EVENTS

- Approved Document B – Call for Evidence – Review Meeting
20 February
- Board Meeting
7 March 2019
- Third Party Certification Symposium
7 March 2019

Directors

Michael Harper - Chair
Andrew Lynch
Dave Russel
Dennis Davis
Jon O'Neil
Mike Wood
Paul Fuller
Ronnie King
Susan Lowrie
Tom Roche

Links

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Government Responds to Hackitt report An Implementation Plan

On 18 December 2018 the Government published its response to the Hackitt report in a 62-page document that laid out both commentary and actions designed to meet each of Dame Judith's Interim and Final Report recommendations. It also expressed its own view on progress so far in responding to the Grenfell Tower fire; an approach to creating a safer future; and the next steps.

Generally welcomed by many including the Federation the response is certainly challenging and as the secretary of State questions and highlights in the foreword "What makes a place feel like home?"..... "it is somewhere you feel safe"

The report 'agrees with the Review's (Hackitt) diagnoses' and 'intends to trial a new regulatory framework' (through a Joint Regulators Group) as well as 'improve levels of competence' and 'create the right environment'.

Aspirations of this kind of course are exactly what members have called for over many years and all our hopes must be that the government driven safer building programme initiative and this new approach will add real substance in law. At the same time through changes in culture and with reinforced systematic, rigorous and accountable processes, that can help eradicate that 'race to the bottom' that destroyed lives and fundamentally challenged the reputation of UK fire safety. Get this right and without doubt people will be able to sleep safer - miss the moment and all that we hold dear as an industry will again be left trying to assert.

Bristol City Council

In a welcome announcement Bristol City Council has said its 59 tower blocks will have sprinklers installed inside flats in the next over five years at the cost of £7.3m starting with high-rise blocks with the most older and disabled people or with single stairwells.

Despite none of the 59 high-rise blocks have the form of ACM cladding seen at Grenfell Tower and every bin room already has sprinklers, initial works, costing £300,000 will spearhead a programme that has £1m to be spent the following year and £2m each of the three years after that up to 2024.

Government News

MHCLG

Approved Document B
volume 1 and volume 2:
circular 03/2018

Building Safety
Programme: monthly data
release - December 2018

Construction Products
Regulation if there is no
Brexit deal 2

Electrical safety in the
private rented sector
gov.uk.email@

notifications.service.gov.uk

Response to Technical Review of ADB

On the 18th December 2018 the government announced a call for evidence in support of the technical review of Approved Document B of the Building Regulations. The technical review is something that the Federation has been pushing for some time and we are heartened to see several issues raised by the Federation reflected in this document.

Tom Roche is leading our response to the call and already one virtual meeting has been held highlighting a series of open questions around property protection; economic costs; proportionate application; linkages to risk and the collation of evidence from studies to lead on this item and to draw the submission together. With a deadline for submissions set at 1st March 2019 contact Tom (thomas.roche@fmglobal.com) to contribute your thinking.

Fire Response Times

Home Office Fire Statistics are looking for feedback on whether to include fires where heat and/or smoke damage only occurs into future publications. These fires, of which 2/3 are in dwellings, could add nearly 13,000 fires to current annual fires.

The deadline is 17 April 2019 and Dennis Davis is likely to respond suggesting their inclusion given it will provide a more robust statistic on FRS average attendance times; so if you have a view let him know.

HCLG Committee

The Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee have been taking an active interest in fire safety. This week saw them take evidence from Dame Judith Hackitt and the Minister Kit Malthouse MP. Members may be interested to watch their responses here.

At the same time the committee has invited submissions by the end of this month on Modern Methods of Construction with items such as:

- What are the benefits of MMC, and how can they sustainably boost the housing supply?
- What are the primary risks to increasing the use of MMC?
- How could the Government, Homes England and local authorities (a) increase demand for MMC to meet its homebuilding targets and, (b) support the construction industry in increasing the use of MMC?

A response has been made on behalf of the Federation by Dennis Davis highlighting the concerns on MMC from the perspective of fire. The response is based on the principles of the Federation regarding the need for appropriately tested products/systems and a view that includes avoiding disproportionate damage.