

# Press release: Interim report into the Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety

The Chair of an independent review into building regulations and fire safety has found that a “universal shift in culture” is required to rebuild trust amongst residents of high-rise buildings and significantly improve the way that fire safety is assured.

Dame Judith Hackitt, who was appointed by government to lead an Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety following the Grenfell fire, has [published her interim findings](#) today (18 December 2017).

Alongside her interim report, Dame Judith is calling on the construction industry, building owners, regulators and government to come together to address the ‘shortcomings’ identified so far.

The interim report finds that:

- a culture change is required – with industry taking greater responsibility for what is built – this change needs to start now
- the current system for ensuring fire safety in high-rise buildings is not fit for purpose
- a clear, quick and effective route for residents to raise concerns and be listened to, must be created

Chair of the review, Dame Judith Hackitt said:

I have found that the regulatory system for safely designing, constructing and managing buildings is not fit for purpose. The current system is highly complex and there is confusion about the roles and responsibilities at each stage. In many areas there is a lack of competence and accreditation.

While this does not mean all buildings are unsafe, it does mean we need to build a more effective system for the future. That is why I am today calling for the construction industry, building owners, regulators and government to come together to identify how to overcome these shortcomings together.

The [interim report](#) sets out 6 broad areas for change:

- ensuring that regulation and guidance is risk-based, proportionate and unambiguous
- clarifying roles and responsibilities for ensuring that buildings are safe
- improving levels of competence within the industry

- improving the process, compliance and enforcement of regulations
- creating a clear, quick and effective route for residents' voices to be heard and listened to
- improving testing, marketing and quality assurance of products used in construction

Dame Judith has consulted widely in developing her interim report and will continue to do so in the coming months before making her final recommendations.

She continued:

I have been deeply affected by the residents of high rise buildings I have met and I have learned so much from them. These buildings are their homes and their communities. They are proud of where they live, but their trust in the system has been badly shaken by events of the last few months. We need to rebuild that trust.

The independent review will now undertake its second phase of work – including targeted work in partnership with the sector and other stakeholders.

A summit involving government and representatives from the building industry will take place in the New Year and a final report will be published in spring 2018.

See the [Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety: interim report](#).

The 6 broad areas for change are outlined in summary from page 9 of the interim report and in greater detail from paragraph 1.6 on page 16.

## **Consultation**

In producing her interim report, Dame Judith Hackitt has:

- issued a call for evidence which received more than 250 responses
- held a series of round-table discussions with industry representatives, professional bodies, tenants and landlords organisations and residents' groups
- held a series of bi-lateral discussions

## **About the Review**

The Review was [commissioned in July 2017](#) and the [terms of reference](#) were published in August 2017.

It is reporting to the Communities Secretary Sajid Javid and the Home Secretary Amber Rudd and is examining:

- 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

The Review is complementary to the [Public Inquiry](#). It is forward looking and focused on ensuring a sufficiently robust regulatory system for the future and to provide further assurance to residents that the complete system is working to ensure the buildings they live in are safe and remain so. The work of the Review will be shared with the Inquiry team.

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

Dame Judith was Chair of the Health and Safety Executive 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, and 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.

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 to 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.