

# Press release: Government completes large-scale fire safety testing programme

The final wall cladding combination has passed and meets current Building Regulations guidance.

The final wall cladding combination tested as part of the government's series of large-scale fire safety tests has passed and meets current Building Regulations guidance.

This [final test](#) was of a wall cladding system consisting of Aluminium Composite material (ACM) cladding with a limited combustibility filler (category 1 in screening tests) with stone wool insulation.

The [government's expert panel advises](#) that the results show that this combination of materials can be compliant when installed and maintained properly. While government has not been informed of any tall buildings over 18 metres in England using this particular combination of materials in their wall system, it could offer a possible solution for some buildings with other cladding systems which have been identified as a fire hazard through previous large-scale tests.

The clear advice from the expert panel remains that building owners need to continue to take professional advice regarding remedial work that takes into account the specific circumstances of their building.

The purpose of this testing programme is to develop a better understanding of how different types of cladding panels behave with different types of insulation in a fire. This is so building owners and their professional advisors can make informed decisions. Results of all 7 large-scale tests are [available](#) and government will shortly publish consolidated advice to landlords based on all the 7 tests.

The government announced an [independent review of building regulations and fire safety](#) on 28 July 2017. This forward-looking review will examine the regulatory system around the design, construction and on-going management of buildings in relation to fire safety as well as related compliance and enforcement issues.

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# **News story: Disclosure and Barring Service is introducing new online services**

In the coming months, we'll be introducing several new digital services for you to use. We know that you'd like more online services, which will improve our processing times and help you manage your information quickly and easily.

## **Barring**

In early September, our new barring referral system will be available. Employers and organisations will be able to submit barring referrals online and:

- register to create an online account with DBS
- manage one or several barring referrals online
- share information with DBS through a secure government platform

In addition, people who have been referred to DBS will be able to set up an account to communicate confidentially with us about their case.

## **Basic criminal record checks**

If you live or work in England or Wales you'll be able to apply online for a basic criminal record check through DBS from January 2018. As part of the online application you'll need to prove your identity through GOV.UK Verify.

These checks are currently managed by Disclosure Scotland, who'll continue to process them for anyone living or working in Scotland.

A basic criminal record check shows unspent convictions. Anyone can apply for basic criminal record checks. Many employers also use them as part of the recruitment processes. If you're self-employed you can also apply for a basic check.

## **Standard and enhanced criminal record checks**

Also in 2018 we will be introducing online standard and enhanced checks for employers and organisations.

The system will allow you to:

- register to create an online account with DBS
- manage DBS check applications online
- track the progress of DBS applications online and do status checks

These checks are needed for certain roles, especially when working with children and vulnerable adults. We'll continue to keep you updated about DBS

online services over the coming months. Use our eligibility tool to find out which criminal record check is right for you.

## GOV.UK email alerts

You can [sign up for GOV.UK alerts](#), which will notify you of any updates to our web content.

You'll be asked for an email address to create a subscription, and can choose how often you'd like to be alerted when DBS publishes web updates.

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## [News story: Licence stripped from holiday sickness firm](#)

Intelligence gathered by the Claims Management Regulator (CMR) officers revealed that Lancashire based Allsure Ltd had encouraged holiday-goers to fabricate or embellish symptoms of gastric illness to get compensation. Further evidence showed the firm had used deceptive sales scripts – exaggerating expected pay-outs to entice consumers.

This conduct has led to the firm's licence being cancelled. This means that it can no longer offer regulated claims management services to new or existing clients.

Kevin Rousell, Head of the Claims Management Regulator said:

We will take firm action against claims businesses which engage in serious misconduct.

Seeking to encourage false claims will not be tolerated.

CMR, based at the Ministry of Justice, regulates companies that offer to help people claim compensation for issues such as personal injury and mis-sold financial products.

The action taken against Allsure Ltd is the latest in a series of moves by government to crackdown on fake sickness claims, following concerns from the travel industry of a surge in insurance claims for gastric illnesses like food poisoning being brought by British holidaymakers.

In July ministers stepped in to reduce cash incentives in bringing spurious claims against package holiday tour operators. Under these proposals tour operators would pay a prescribed sum depending on the value of the claim, making the cost of defending a claim predictable.

## Notes

- during an audit, CMR identified potential systematic failings in Allsure Ltd's sales scripts and call recordings
  - following an investigation which commenced in February, Allsure Ltd was found to have breached the conduct rules when making marketing calls to consumer for holiday sickness claims by:
    - making false or unsubstantiated claims and misleading statements about the amounts due to consumers
    - trying to coach consumers in providing the answers needed to meet the criteria for making a claim
  - Allsure Ltd is based in Preston, Lancashire and has been operating in the personal injury claims sector since 22 April 2014.
  - [information on the cancellation](#) is available on the Justice website
  - the business can appeal the cancellation of their authorisation, and they have 28 days to make their representations to the First-Tier Tribunal.
  - in July ministers announced a [crackdown](#) on fake holiday sickness claims
  - further information on the action CMR is taking to tackle misconduct in holiday sickness claims can be found in the [CMR quarterly enforcement update](#)
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## News story: Trainee lawyer convicted of providing illegal immigration advice and services

Mr Babar Khan, of Mylis Close, Sydenham, London was convicted on 24 August 2017 at Southwark Crown Court of providing unregulated immigration advice and services. On 25 August 2017, Mr Khan was sentenced to 18 months imprisonment suspended for two years. He was ordered to perform 200 hours of unpaid work and was disqualified from holding any company directorship for eight years. He was also ordered to pay prosecution costs of £500.

Mr Khan was employed as a trainee solicitor. However, at the time of these offences he was not suitably qualified or regulated as required by law. He introduced himself as a solicitor to three clients and submitted immigration applications on their behalf. He charged fees for his services without disclosing that he was not qualified to do so. His misconduct came to light when a complaint was lodged with the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC).

Sentencing Mr Khan, Her Honour Judge Korner QC said:

"Evidence heard in this case shows that you had no qualification whatsoever during the period of your activities, which goes back to 2012. The fact that

your company was named Prime Legal Solicitors demonstrates that you intended to deceive people as you deliberately held yourself out to be a solicitor. For vulnerable applicants the right to remain in the UK is extremely important to them and their families. It is therefore equally important that they are represented by suitably qualified people. Immigration Tribunals in the UK are struggling to cope with the number of unmeritorious appeals because of illegal advisers like you. You took advantage of the desperation and vulnerability of these applicants. This is a seriously dishonest offence that crosses the custody threshold. There are no mitigating factors other than your hitherto good character.”

Speaking about the decision, the Immigration Services Deputy Commissioner Commissioner, Dr Ian Leigh said:

“The OISC is here to ensure that people seeking immigration advice are treated fairly by qualified people they can trust. Babar Khan chose to operate outside the law, and without regard for the protection of his clients. I am delighted with the outcome of this case, and I hope it sends a clear message to anyone considering providing unregulated immigration advice and services.”

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## [News story: Update on the Secretary of State's consideration of the proposed merger between 21st Century Fox Inc. and Sky Plc.](#)

Following the Secretary of State's request for advice and clarification in light of representations received in relation to the proposed merger between 21st Century Fox and Sky, Ofcom have, today, submitted additional advice to the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State will now carefully consider that advice before making her decision on referral on the basis of all the evidence before her, and will do so as soon as is reasonably practicable. The Secretary of State's request to Ofcom will be published in due course. Ofcom intends to publish its advice at the same time.