



Home Office

Fire Safety Reform

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The Home Office and Fire Safety

- **Since 2016 the Home Office has held policy responsibility for Fire and Rescue Services in England. This includes:**
 - Maintaining a statutory framework (The Fire and Rescue National Framework) within which local fire and rescue authorities in England operate.
 - Setting out the Government's priorities and objectives for fire and rescue services in England.
 - Holding responsibility for the Regulatory Reform Fire Safety Order (FSO) 2005.
- **The FSO is the cornerstone of general fire safety legislation.** It regulates fire safety in non-domestic premises, including workplaces, and the non-domestic parts of multi-occupied residential buildings by placing fire safety duties on persons with control of the premises – the Responsible Persons (RP) - and others (Dutyholders).
- **The FSO principally adopts a risk-based approach to fire safety requiring RPs to ensure that general fire precautions are in place.** In this way the FSO promotes the avoidance of fires and the mitigation of the effects of fires.



Fire Safety Reform: Background

- **In 2019, a Call for Evidence on the FSO was issued** to update the evidence base on how the Order is complied with and enforced, identify any changes to the Order that might be needed and assess how those changes might best be achieved.
- **The Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 1 report**, published in October 2019, made recommendations designed to ensure firefighters have the building information they need to provide an effective operational response to a fire in high rise blocks of flats.
- **A summary of responses to the Call for Evidence was published in March 2020.** Most respondents agreed the FSO generally works well, but suggestions were made to strengthen the Order in a number of areas to improve standards of fire safety in the premises the Order regulates.
- **The Fire Safety Consultation** ran from July - October 2020, setting out proposals to strengthen fire safety in all regulated buildings in England. Responses to consultation published in March 21.





The three stages of Fire Safety Reform

Stage 1: The Fire Safety Bill

- The Fire Safety Bill is a necessary first step in delivering the legislative recommendations from the Grenfell Tower Phase 1 Report.

Stage 2: Deliver primary legislation through the Building Safety Bill to strengthen the FSO and improve compliance

- We will make a number of enhancements to the FSO via primary legislation amendments through the Building Safety Bill (BSB). We are also delivering an overhaul of all of the guidance provided under the FSO.

Stage 3: Develop regulations to implement the GTIP1 report recommendations requiring a change in law

- We intend to deliver our response to the Inquiry recommendations that require a change in law through secondary legislation made under Article 24 of the FSO. We intend to lay the required secondary legislation as soon as possible after the Fire Safety Bill is commenced.



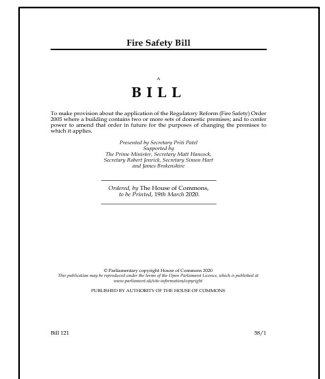
The Fire Safety Bill

The issue

- There is legal ambiguity over whether the FSO covers ‘external walls’ and flat entrance doors for multi-occupied residential buildings. This leaves Responsible Persons, Fire Risk Assessors and enforcing authorities to decide how to interpret the Order for multi-occupied residential buildings, with mixed approaches being applied.

The aim of The Fire Safety Bill

- The Bill clarifies the application of the Fire Safety Order to the **‘external walls’ and flat entrance doors in multi-occupied residential buildings.**
- It also affirms that **action can be taken by enforcement authorities (predominantly Fire and Rescue Authorities)** in respect of these aspects of a building.
- Finally, it enables us to **extend the scope of the FSO in future** without the need to amend primary legislation.





The Fire Safety Consultation

- **The Fire Safety Consultation closed in October 2020.** Responses were published in March 2021.
- **We aim to lay Regulations to the Fire Safety Order later this year.**
- Regulations are likely to require Responsible Persons to:
 - Provide information to their local Fire and Rescue Authority about the design of their building's external walls and materials they are constructed from.
 - Provide up to date building floor plans in a standard format to their local Fire and Rescue Authority highlighting the location of key fire-fighting systems within their building.
 - Undertake checks of flat entrance doors, fire doors in the common parts and the self-closing devices.
 - Carry out regular inspections of all lifts and other key fire-fighting equipment in their building.
 - Produce and regularly review evacuation plans for their building.
 - Use Premises Information Boxes, which will include up-to-date floor plans and other documents as recommended by the Inquiry.
 - Install wayfinding signage in all multi-occupational residential buildings of 11m and over.



Fire Safety Order – further primary legislation in the Building Safety Bill

- **A number of measures from the Fire Safety Consultation will also require further primary legislation, which will mean inclusion of clauses in the Building Safety Bill, and possibly others, on the following topics:**
 - Strengthening the effect of guidance relating to the discharge of duties under the Fire Safety Order.
 - For Responsible Persons in all regulated premises to record who they are and to provide a UK based address.
 - Placement of a new requirement on Responsible Persons for all regulated premises to take reasonable steps to identify themselves to all other Responsible Persons (this could apply for example to a building that houses both commercial and residential units).
 - Requirement that those completing a fire risk assessment must be competent.
 - An obligation on all Responsible Persons to record their completed fire risk assessments.
 - For Responsible Persons to record the name and organisation of those they have engaged to complete the fire risk assessment.
 - That any outgoing Responsible Person be required to pass on all relevant fire safety information with those taking over such responsibilities under the Fire Safety Order.
 - Potential measures to increase fines – particularly with regard to impersonation of an inspector.



PEEPS Consultation

- We will shortly be consulting on Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) in a high rise residential setting.
- We want residential PEEPs to deliver the Grenfell Recommendations and to be:
 - Accessible to those that need them
 - Simple yet thorough
 - Easily updatable.
- Seeking views in consultation.
 - What are good ways for RPs to get residents engaged?
 - What should be included in a PEEP
 - What are the practicalities of putting PEEPs in place



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QUESTIONS?