



T: 0131-244 0692 F: 0131-244
E: stephen.garland@gov.scot

Local Authority Chief Executives

Copy to

Local Authority Building Standards Managers
Registered Social Landlord Chief Executives
Local Authority Heads of Housing
Scottish Federation of Housing Associations
Glasgow, West of Scotland Federation of Housing
Associations
Property Managers Association Scotland
All Registered Property Factors
Chief Executive Scottish Housing Regulator

19 January 2018

Dear Chief Executive

STRUCTURAL DESIGN OF CLADDING SYSTEMS

My colleague Stephen Pathirana wrote to you on 9 November as part of the Scottish Government's on-going building safety programme to make you aware of a risk that has been identified with certain types of cladding systems and to share with you advice and guidance on what action is required. (a copy of that letter and pro forma are attached for information) The letter of 9 November and guidance were for the attention of anyone responsible for the maintenance of a building with external insulation finished with render or brick-slips. The letter and guidance relate particularly to those buildings with a storey at a height of more than 18 metres above the ground or in an exposed location, but are applicable to any buildings with the stated external insulation systems.

The advice and guidance within that letter on what actions building owners should consider and undertake remains current. A number of building owners have however since sought further information on whether it is possible to assess what buildings are most likely to fall within the scope of the guidance. Due to the possible effect of any deficiencies, high rise buildings in exposed locations will be at a higher risk than low rise buildings in sheltered locations and it is reasonable that building owners should focus their attention on these buildings first.

The letter of 9 November asked that local authorities consider circulating this advice to other relevant building owners in their area. In order to help identify initial relevant buildings, I would ask you to check your building warrants for any buildings in your area that have been constructed with external wall insulation systems with a rendered (or brick slip) finish at any time, or those that have been retrofitted with these systems within the last 15 years, and advise the relevant building owners accordingly

I appreciate that this will involve additional work for your building standards service particularly coming after the much appreciated work that many have undertaken to help identify the presence of Aluminium Composite Material (ACM) cladding in high rise domestic buildings. To minimise additional work to buildings standards services and to help prioritise work for building owners it would be most helpful to focus initially on checking warrants for buildings with a storey at a height of more than 18 metres. The warrants for this group will presumably have been checked recently as part of the review to identify the presence of ACM cladding.

Where a building is in private ownership the Factor for the building may also be an appropriate point of contact. The register of property factors held by the Scottish Government may be used to identify the relevant Factor where this information is not held by the local authority. The register may be accessed through the Scottish Government website at - www.scotland.gov.uk/propertyfactorregister. Enquiries about the register can be directed to the Scottish Government by calling 0131 244 9965.

Building owners should of course satisfy themselves that all of their buildings with external wall insulation finished with render or brick slips are properly installed and maintained. They should therefore thereafter review lower level buildings with external insulation finished with render or brick-slips as soon as practicable focussing first on those buildings in exposed locations.

The letter of 9 November asked for returns by building owners to BFSresponse@gov.scot by 31 January, this may also be undertaken by owners' authorised representatives. I would very much hope that this has been enough time to do visual inspections and establish whether further checks on any buildings are necessary or not. I understand that some building owners have stated that, where this is appropriate, they may not however be able to undertake physical surveys by a suitably qualified expert by that time. If building owners, or their authorised representatives are unable to provide a full return, they should please indicate how far they have got in following the guidance annexed to the 9 November letter and when they expect to be able to complete the process.

Thank you again for your assistance.

Stephen Garland

Stephen Garland

