

# Safer Buildings for Queensland

## What's happening across Australia?

### Building Ministers' Forum

The Building Ministers' Forum (BMF) is a ministerial-level body consisting of Commonwealth, State and Territory Ministers responsible for building and plumbing policy. The BMF is responsible for overseeing governance of the built environment and considering other policy issues impacting the building and construction industries.

The Queensland Minister for Housing and Public Works, Minister for Digital Technology and Minister for Sport, the Honourable Mick de Brenni MP, is the Queensland representative on this ministerial forum.

#### BMF actions

The BMF has been active in addressing the inappropriate use of combustible cladding materials in Australia.

On 6 October 2017, the BMF agreed to use the available laws and powers in their respective jurisdictions to prevent the use of combustible cladding in a range of buildings depending on their class and number of storeys.

In April 2018, the BMF reaffirmed their commitment to prevent the inappropriate use of potentially hazardous aluminium cladding on Australian buildings. Consultation with industry will soon commence on possible options for a new system of permanent labelling for cladding products.

For more information on the BMF visit [www.industry.gov.au/BMF](http://www.industry.gov.au/BMF).

### Jurisdictional actions

Following the 2017 Grenfell Tower tragedy in London, Australian jurisdictions announced audits to establish the prevalence of combustible cladding and to develop responses to address its presence.

#### Queensland

The Non-Conforming Building Products Audit Taskforce (the Taskforce) was established in June 2017 to develop a risk-based management approach to deal with potentially problematic buildings built from 1994. The Taskforce combines the expertise of staff from Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES), the Department of Housing and Public Works (HPW), and the Queensland Building and Construction Commission (QBCC).

The Taskforce began conducting a detailed audit of all government buildings and is working collaboratively with Local Government Authorities (LGAs) to identify any privately-owned buildings that may be in scope.

Also, in 2017, new legislation was introduced to address the issue of non-conforming building products, including cladding. Duties were established on building products supply chain participants, from building product designers through to installers. The responsible

Minister can now issue a warning statement or recall for a NCBP. The QBCC was given expanded powers to investigate and rectify NCBPs.

On 17 May 2018, the Taskforce Status Report was tabled in parliament and included six key recommendations now being carefully considered by the government, including regulatory measures to map the path forward for the private sector. In parallel with the report, two continuing professional development (CPD) courses developed for fire engineers, in conjunction with The University of Queensland (UQ), have been successfully conducted to provide a better understanding of façades subject to fire. Work is also underway to establish a materials library – the first of its kind in Australia – to assist industry professionals to quickly and cost-effectively identify the fire behaviour of cladding products.

#### New South Wales

New South Wales (NSW) established a taskforce in mid-2017 with a focus on assessing the scope of residential buildings with cladding. NSW is developing a new regulation, which if it becomes law, will require building owners to electronically register their properties. Owners would also be required to submit a statement about the type of cladding material installed on their buildings.

#### South Australia

South Australia is undertaking a three-phase building audit in collaboration with local councils. Information has been published for building owners and occupiers and for local governments regarding combustible cladding and building fire safety. On 12 March 2018, new regulations came into effect requiring certain information be provided to the relevant local government where any Aluminium Composite Panelling (ACP), regardless of the core material, is proposed for the building types identified above by the BMF.

#### Victoria

Victoria established a taskforce to undertake further work, building on an earlier cladding audit of the Melbourne CBD in 2015. The Victorian Cladding Taskforce identified 1,400 buildings as 'most likely' having potentially combustible cladding materials and the Victorian Building Authority is continuing with the statewide audit. A guideline and Fire Safety Advisory Note have also been published.

#### Western Australia

Western Australia is undertaking a statewide audit in three phases, and as part of phase two, will assess building information and begin site inspections. This builds on an earlier 2015 audit that found no buildings of concern as the cladding identified had fire resistant cores.

#### Tasmania

Tasmania has undertaken an audit finding one building required rectification works which have now commenced. New regulations commenced on 27 December 2017 restricting the use of potentially combustible cladding in the future.