

DBULLETIN

Fire Safety - Taking the Right Steps for High Level Construction

Health and safety is a key area of compliance in all areas of the UK construction industry. Of acute importance is the issue of fire safety. This was very clearly demonstrated in the July 2009 tragedy at Lakanal House where a fire developed and spread through a number of flats in a twelve storey block killing six people.

It is vitally important to ensure that all buildings, in particular high risk forms of construction (such as timber frame), are thoroughly checked during the construction phase to ensure that fire stopping, fire separation and the other essential fire safety elements of construction are completed satisfactorily.

As employer or developer, you must ensure that you are contractually covered for all fire associated risks.

The contract documents should include a requirement to increase security on high risk sites to minimise the risk from intruders, ensure that all health and safety measures are taken and that there has been full compliance with statutory and regulatory fire safety requirements.

The employer and contractor should be fully aware of the fire safety implications and risks of the building design, particularly with high risk schemes. This may mean appointing a fire safety specialist to review fire risks and strategy pre-construction.

To assist with ensuring that you comply with health and safety and fire requirements, we

recommend a review of your consultant appointment documents. Employer's Agents, in particular, should become your eyes and ears for fire stop up and security. It should be clear in their appointment that monitoring fire safety is an essential part of the service to be provided and that they sign off on fire compliance. Building contracts should also be reviewed to ensure they adequately cover all fire compliance requirements.

If you would like any assistance in this regard, or any further information in relation to health and safety or other construction issues, please contact a member of our construction team:

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