

Building Safety update – Fire Protection Board

Purpose of report

For information.

Summary

This report updates members on developments around the Fire Protection Board that have occurred since the FSMC agenda was sent to members.

Recommendation

That the FSMC Chair write to Fire & Rescue Authority Chairs, Fire & Rescue Portfolio Holders and Police, Fire & Crime Commissioners, outlining the LGA's concerns around Large Panel System (LPS) buildings.

Actions

As directed by members.

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Background

1. Subsequent to the sending-out of the FSMC agenda, the Fire Protection Board (FPB) has written to CFOs about its programme of work to increase the pace of inspection across all high-rise residential buildings.
2. Copies of the letter and its attachments are appended to this paper and have been forwarded to all FRA chairs, PFCCs and portfolio holders by the LGA.
3. The LGA is represented on the FPB at senior adviser level and supports the work of the board
4. The LGA officer on the FPB requested that the question set in the Technical Guide include a question on whether the building was a large panel system (LPS) building.
5. The LGA's concerns about this issue stem from the following
 - 5.1. A [fire test](#) carried out at Ronan Point (the LPS block that partially collapsed following a gas explosion in 1968) after it was emptied had to be stopped over fears the building would collapse;
 - 5.2. After the Grenfell Tower fire it was [claimed](#) that had the block been built before the lessons of Ronan Point were learned, Grenfell would have collapsed during the fire;
 - 5.3. Structural Safety issued a SCOSS [report](#) on disproportionate collapse of LPS buildings in a fire earlier this year;
 - 5.4. There is no definitive list of LPS buildings and officers cannot be certain that all owners of LPS buildings know that the building is LPS, whether it has been strengthened and whether that work was carried out effective and remains effective.
6. The FPB decided not to include a question about LPS in the Technical Guide.
7. Given the factors set out in paragraph 4, members may be concerned to ensure that:
 - 7.1. no LPS building is judged to be low risk during the process set out in the appendix
 - 7.2. credible plans are in place to fight a fire in any building that is, or might be LPS

Recommendation

8. That the FSMC Chair write to FRA Chairs drawing the above points to their attention.