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**LONDON ASSEMBLY LABOUR**



**Andrew Dismore AM**

Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP  
Secretary of State for Housing,  
Communities and Local Government  
2 Marsham Street  
London SW1P 4DF

Dear Mr Jenrick,

**Date:** 24 October 2019

I write regarding the target dates for remediation of aluminium composite material (ACM) cladding on tall residential buildings, which were set by your predecessor at the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government.

First, may I thank you for your response to the consultation submission I previously wrote to you about, in my capacity as chair of the London Assembly Fire, Resilience and Emergency Planning Committee. I write today on a different, though related, topic, in my role as Labour Assembly Member representing Barnet and Camden and Labour spokesperson on Fire and Resilience.

On 18 July 2019, James Brokenshire MP presented a written statement to the House of Commons which detailed two deadlines to remove and replace the ACM cladding still present on hundreds of tall buildings across the UK.<sup>1</sup>

For buildings in the social sector, Mr Brokenshire promised “other than a small handful of exceptional cases, remediation will be completed by the end of the year” – i.e., before the start of 2020.

Acknowledging the appalling delay which has characterised works in the private sector, Mr Brokenshire set a staged process for completion of remediation on these buildings. All relevant private sector buildings were expected to have a remediation plan, with start and finish dates, in place by the end of 2019. The finish dates in these plans should be no later than June 2020, according to Mr Brokenshire. He promised “enforcement action” against private sector building owners who did not comply with the end of December deadline.

Applications to the private sector cladding remediation fund also faced a December 2019 deadline, presumably to align with the plan completion date.

There are around 4,600 social sector homes<sup>2</sup> and 10,600 private sector homes<sup>3</sup> in London affected by ACM cladding, so I welcomed the clear, if belated, statement of

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<sup>1</sup> Building safety: ACM cladding, House of Commons, 18 July 2019 <http://bit.ly/32BzORN>

<sup>2</sup> High rise flats: insulation: written question – 252869, House of Commons, 1 May 2019  
<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-05-10/252869/>

intent from the Secretary of State at the time. However, given the evident delays in works so far, I was concerned about the realism of his targets.

The Greater London Authority is responsible for administering the remediation funds for our city, and so has a good understanding of the reality of the process. I asked the Mayor of London for his assessment of the deadlines set by Mr Brokenshire.

On remediation of social sector buildings, the Mayor said: “Based on the estimated dates of completion from social landlords, this commitment will not be met. It was an unrealistic and irresponsible deadline”.<sup>4</sup> In a response to a further question I put, he stated that the average time from works beginning on site to completion is eight months,<sup>5</sup> so to meet the December deadline, every social sector building would need to have begun works by April – three months before the target was set.

No equivalent figure was available for private sector remediation at the time, but we can assume it would be a lengthier time frame, keeping in mind the glacial pace of works by building owners so far. This impression is reinforced by the Mayor’s comments on the private sector remediation deadline, about which he stated: “The June 2020 commitment to remediate all buildings was irresponsible and unrealistic – the Government will fail to meet its own deadline. Supply chain pressures, delays in the Government creating this fund, Brexit, the complexity of the fund process as designed by MHCLG, and the fundamental fact that buildings owners control the pace of remediation, means this deadline is entirely unachievable”.<sup>6</sup>

I am sure you will understand the concern this will cause to my constituents, and many thousands of Londoners stuck in buildings that the Government has confirmed are dangerous to live in. Therefore I would be grateful if you could answer the following questions:

1. Are the deadlines for cladding remediation set by Mr Brokenshire still the policy of MHCLG?
2. If not, when do you now expect ACM remediation works to be completed?
3. How many applications to the private sector cladding remediation fund have been a) received and b) approved since it was opened?
4. Will you publish the risk assessment that would have been provided to the Secretary of State before he made the written statement to the House of Commons on 18 July?
5. What steps had MHCLG planned to take to ensure compliance with the deadlines? Are these actions still ongoing?

I appreciate that as a new Secretary of State in a new Government, there will be commitments from the previous administration that you choose not to keep, and perhaps even think not well judged. Nevertheless, I believe Londoners, and residents of tall buildings across the country, have a right to know whether the long-awaited

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<sup>3</sup> High rise flats: insulation: written question – 250034, House of Commons, 1 May 2019  
<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-05-01/250034/>

<sup>4</sup> Government target for remediating buildings with ACM cladding (1), GLA, 13 September 2019  
<https://www.london.gov.uk/questions/2019/17630>

<sup>5</sup> Speed of remediation buildings with ACM cladding (1), GLA, 13 September 2019  
<https://www.london.gov.uk/questions/2019/17639>

<sup>6</sup> Government target for remediating buildings with ACM cladding (3), GLA, 13 September 2019  
<https://www.london.gov.uk/questions/2019/17632>

commitments made in the past still stand, when these have such an impact on their financial and psychological wellbeing, not to mention the very safety of their homes.

I look forward to your response on the questions I have raised above.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Andrew Dismore". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'A'.

**Andrew Dismore AM**

Labour London Assembly Member for Barnet and Camden