Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government

Baroness Blake of Leeds CBE
Minister for Building Safety, Fire and Resilience
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

Your reference: BB108503
Our reference: PO2026/26728

Bob Blackman MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

5 October 2026

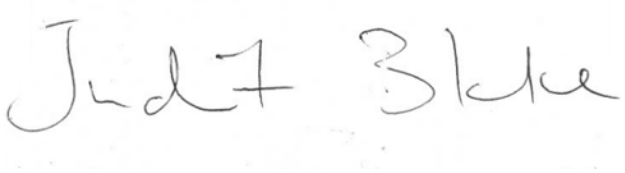
Dear Bob,

Thank you for your correspondence, and your kind words on my appointment, regarding the alignment of BS 9994 with the Government's reforms to fire safety strategies and the regulation of fire engineers.

I am grateful to you for getting in touch. To ensure that you receive a substantive and prompt response, I have asked officials in the department to provide an update on your specific concerns, which is appended.

Thank you again for writing on this important matter. I hope that this information clarifies the position. If not, please do not hesitate to let me know.

Yours sincerely,



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Dear Bob Blackman MP,

Thank you for your correspondence. I have been asked to reply.

The Government welcomes your support for our work in response to the Grenfell Tower Inquiry to develop the role of the fire safety strategy and establish a regulated fire engineering profession. The Government also recognises the importance of ensuring that the various strands of this work across government and industry are aligned. It is important to build a coherent system and avoid creating unnecessary ambiguity.

As you know, the Government is currently developing policy on the future regulation of fire engineers, including the role of the fire safety strategy within that framework. Alongside this, the British Standards Institution is developing BS 9994, which addresses many related issues. The Government recognises the overlap between these programmes of work and continues to engage with BSI as its work progresses. Officials will continue to contribute to the development of the standard where appropriate.

The Government's priority remains the development of the policy needed to establish an effective regulatory framework for fire engineers. The objective is to ensure that the future framework delivers the reforms identified by the Grenfell Tower Inquiry and reflected in the Fire Engineers Advisory Panel's Authoritative Statement. Decisions on the future statutory role, scope and responsibilities associated with fire safety strategies will therefore be made through the Government's policy-making process and informed by the full range of available evidence and expert advice.

Officials are working closely with the Fire Engineers Transitional Board to inform the Government's work and consider developments in related reforms, thereby ensuring coherence. A working group on fire safety strategies is also being established to support this work.

Work undertaken by BSI may provide valuable insight as policy development progresses. However, it is important to recognise that standards and regulation serve different purposes. While the Government will continue to engage constructively with BSI and other stakeholders, it must retain the flexibility to determine the requirements needed to support a robust regulatory regime.

The Building Regulations set the legal requirements for fire safety in new building work and are supported by statutory guidance in Approved Document B. British Standards may be used as one means of demonstrating compliance with those requirements, but they do not have the same status as statutory guidance, and the British Standards regime remains industry-led. Approved Document B is subject to continuous review, and relevant evidence and developments in standards will continue to be considered as part of that process.

More broadly, the Government agrees that coherence across the building and fire safety system is essential. The department continues to work closely with the relevant bodies involved in delivering these reforms to ensure that policy, regulation, guidance and standards are considered together as proposals are developed. As the policy matures, the Government will continue to consider the most effective arrangements for maintaining alignment across the system.

Thank you again for raising these important issues. The Government, and the Minister, welcomes your continued engagement as this work progresses.

Yours sincerely,

ALEX BADRICK
Deputy Principal Private Secretary