

**Implementation of
the Grenfell Tower
Inquiry Phase 1
recommendations**

12th progress report

COPYRIGHT

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Introduction

The Grenfell Tower fire was an appalling tragedy and Londoners will always remember the 72 people who lost their lives in a fire that should never have spread on such a scale. We owe it to the people who died, their loved ones and those who survived to ensure that nothing like it ever happens again.

On 30 October 2019, the Grenfell Tower Inquiry, chaired by Sir Martin Moore-Bick, published its Phase 1 report.¹ This phase looked at the events of the night of 14 June 2017. Phase 2, now underway, is looking at events leading up to that night and the immediate response.

The Phase 1 report highlighted some serious issues for the London Fire Brigade (LFB) and for fire and rescue services more generally, as well as failings in the building itself. While it is clear that every single firefighter, member of Control staff and other LFB staff member who responded that night did so to save lives, it is also clear that the LFB was overwhelmed by the unprecedented nature of the fire. Institutional failures meant that the overall response to the disaster was not good enough.

The Mayor oversees the London Fire Brigade, which is part of the Greater London Authority (GLA) Group of organisations, and he has undertaken to ensure that the recommendations directed at the Brigade are implemented. Recommendations aimed at other bodies such as the national Government or building owners are outside the Mayor's direct control, although the Mayor has committed to using the full extent of his influence to ensure other organisations implement the recommendations in full.

The Government is responsible for building regulations, including those that relate to fire safety. Issues relating to the construction, refurbishment and management of Grenfell Tower are being examined in more detail in Phase 2 of the Inquiry, but it is vital that the Government, housing and building industries do not wait for the Inquiry's next report to take action on such an important issue.

Since the fire, the Mayor has been calling for urgent changes to building safety regulations, including for the Government's ban on combustible cladding to be extended to all buildings, and for sprinklers to be made compulsory in all purpose-built blocks of flats, regardless of height, as well as in schools, care homes and other places that are home to vulnerable people. The Government has not yet implemented the wholesale reforms that

¹ The report can be found here: <https://www.grenfelltowerinquiry.org.uk/phase-1-report>

are needed to fix a broken system, although we are pleased to see some progress has been made in recent months.

The Mayor has been publishing a monthly update report on the implementation of the recommendations. This ensures that all Londoners, especially those who lost loved ones in the fire, are able to see the progress being made and can hold the Mayor to account for this.²

² Previous monthly updates can be found at: <https://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/mayor-london/grenfell-tower-inquiry-mayoral-updates>

London Fire Brigade's transformation process

The London Fire Brigade accepted all of the Inquiry report's recommendations, many of which have direct implications for the Brigade's operations. Changes made as a direct response to individual recommendations are detailed in the following section, but the institutional failures detailed in the report have wider implications for the way the Brigade will take its work forward.

Andy Roe took up the role of London Fire Commissioner on 1 January 2020, following confirmation by the London Assembly of the Mayor's proposal to appoint him. Andy has brought to the role a wealth of experience of dealing with major incidents and having operational command of Britain's busiest fire and rescue service. This includes having operational command for the Croydon tram crash in 2016 and taking the decision to revoke the 'stay put' advice minutes after becoming incident commander at the Grenfell Tower fire.

Andy is working both to rebuild LFB leadership's relationship with the Grenfell community, and to ensure that the Brigade makes the changes that are required to respond both to the recommendations and the conclusions of the Inquiry report.

The Brigade is also responding to the findings of its 2018/19 inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS), which was published in December 2019. This was the first inspection of the Brigade since an inspection regime was re-introduced by the Government. The report highlighted a number of areas where the Brigade needs to improve, for instance in training, which correlated closely with the findings of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 1 report.

The Brigade is implementing a Transformation Delivery Plan, published in February 2020.³ This plan addresses issues raised by both the HMICFRS and the Grenfell Tower Inquiry, and will feed into the next London Safety Plan.

The delivery of actions in response to the Grenfell Tower Inquiry, and consequently actions in the Transformation Delivery Plan, has been affected by COVID-19. As an emergency service, the Brigade is vital to London's response to this ongoing situation. For

³ Available at: <https://www.london-fire.gov.uk/media/4339/lfc-0294x-lfb-transformation-delivery-plan.pdf>

instance, a partnership between the Brigade and the London Ambulance Service saw firefighters assisting the ambulance service in order to boost the COVID-19 response.⁴

The demands on the Brigade and restrictions in other types of activity mean that some of the actions set out in previous versions of this report will not be delivered according to expected timescales. The Mayor is clear that improvements required by the Grenfell Tower Inquiry must continue to be delivered with any delay minimised as far as possible.

It is clear the need for transformational change is urgent and the Mayor has been working with the LFB to consider what external assistance should be secured to support the effective and timely delivery of the change required. This work will include how LFB and the Mayor obtain assurance about the changes being implemented by the Brigade. A key element of this will be the establishment of a new audit committee for the LFB, which will begin its work in December, alongside the oversight provided by the Deputy Mayor's Fire and Resilience Board. A new Director for Transformation has now joined the Brigade and will also be leading this work.

The resources available to deliver much-needed transformational change may be reduced by the forecast loss of council tax and business rates income as a result of the economic impact of COVID-19. These sources provide over 80 per cent of the Brigade's income. The Mayor and Commissioner have both called on the Government to ensure that funding for essential public services such as fire and rescue are preserved.

⁴ For more details of this partnership see: <https://www.london-fire.gov.uk/news/2020-news/april/london-ambulance-service-and-london-fire-brigade-announce-blue-light-partnership-to-tackle-covid-19/>

Implementation of the recommendations

The Phase 1 report made 46 recommendations, directed at bodies including the London Fire Brigade, fire and rescue services more widely, other emergency services, national Government and owners and managers of residential buildings.

In total there were 29 recommendations aimed at the London Fire Brigade, 14 solely for the Brigade to address and 15 to address in conjunction with other organisations.

For the 14 recommendations aimed solely at the Brigade, action to deliver these recommendations is underway for all of these recommendations. Implementation has been completed for three of these:

- Updating the LFB's policy on gathering and managing operational risk information, including procedures to support the completion of Premises Risk Assessments (Recommendation 3);
- Training firefighters in the new policy on operational risk information (Recommendation 4); and
- Upgrading the servers on Command Units to enhance the connectivity and usability of the Command Support System software - further improvements are also planned in this area to enhance capability (Recommendation 27).

There are 15 recommendations directed either at fire and rescue services or emergency services generally, which includes the London Fire Brigade. Action by the Brigade to deliver the recommendations directed at the organisation is underway for all of these recommendations. One recommendation, on introducing smoke hoods to aid in the rescue of people in smoke-filled environments, has been implemented by the Brigade but not yet by all other fire and rescue services (Recommendation 34).

There are 12 recommendations aimed primarily at the Government. This includes 11 recommendations where the report recommends a change in the law to place new requirements on building owners and managers; this process is underway, notably with the introduction of the Fire Safety Bill and Building Safety Bill. A further three recommendations are aimed at building owners and managers, but without requiring legal changes. Nine of the recommendations aimed at the Government or building owners and managers will have significant implications for the London Fire Brigade, which is working to ensure that it is in a position to implement these recommendations in the most effective way. A recommendation aimed at the National Police Air Service to enable emergency services to view images recorded by helicopters at incidents has been implemented.

In December 2020, the Home Office published an update on progress against the recommendations aimed at the Government. Information has been reflected in this progress report where relevant; the Government's report should be consulted for further detail.⁵

It should be noted that as a result of the demands placed on the Brigade and other services by the COVID-19 pandemic, some of the actions to implement the Inquiry's recommendations have been delayed. The Brigade continues to examine ways to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on its delivery of the recommendations, to ensure implementation can continue with minimal delay.

Notably, the Brigade's new procedures on firefighting in high-rise buildings, providing fire survival guidance to people affected by incidents and undertaking evacuations require an extensive training programme before they can be implemented. It should be noted that the Brigade is leading the country in developing these procedures and has to ensure that they are tested and the safety implications for firefighters and building occupants are fully considered. This training programme was originally due to be delivered by September 2020, but with in-person training limited by the pandemic, the schedule was amended to ensure delivery by March 2021. The ongoing risks posed by COVID-19 and changes to Government guidance mean the delivery of in-person training was paused over the Christmas period and is subject to review; a further update will be provided in the next report.

A full summary of progress against each recommendation aimed at the Brigade, either directly or as part of the national fire and rescue and wider emergency services is provided in the tables overleaf. Overall, 21 of the 29 recommendations (72 per cent) will be completed by March 2021. Table 1 shows recommendations aimed directly at the Brigade, including two in conjunction with the Metropolitan Police Service and London Ambulance Service. Table 2 shows national recommendations, which the Brigade are required to implement as part of action being taken at the national level.

Actions aimed at the Government are not included in the tables, as the Government has not provided a timed delivery plan for these recommendations. Most of these recommendations require legislative change; further detail for each of these recommendations has been provided in the body of this report.

⁵ The Home Office report is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/quarterly-thematic-update-on-progress-against-the-grenfell-tower-inquiry-phase-1-recommendations>

Table 1: Progress with recommendations aimed specifically at London Fire Brigade

No.	Aimed at	Recommendation summary	LFB progress
3	LFB	Revise operational policy on gathering risk information for high-rise buildings.	Implemented by LFB in July 2020
4	LFB	Train senior officers in the inspection of high-rise buildings.	Implemented by LFB in September 2020
10	LFB	Review policy on communication between incident commander and control room.	To be implemented by LFB in March 2021
11	LFB	Train incident commanders in communication with the control room.	To be implemented by LFB in March 2021
12	LFB	Train senior control room officers in communication with incident commanders.	To be implemented by LFB in March 2021
13	LFB	Dedicated communication link between the incident commander and senior control room officer.	To be implemented by LFB in March 2021
14	LFB	Revise operational policy to distinguish between callers seeking advice and callers needing to be rescued.	To be implemented by LFB in March 2021
15	LFB	Provide regular refresher training to all control room officers.	To be implemented by LFB in March 2021
22	LFB	Develop policies and training to ensure better control of breathing apparatus deployments.	To be implemented by LFB in March 2021
23	LFB	Develop policies and training to ensure better information from crews returning from deployments.	To be implemented by LFB in March 2021
24	LFB	Develop a system for direct communication between the incident commander and control room.	To be implemented by LFB in March 2021
25	LFB	Investigate the use of a direct communication link between the control room and the bridgehead.	To be implemented by LFB in March 2021
26	LFB	Obtain equipment to allow firefighters wearing helmets and breathing apparatus to communicate with the bridgehead.	To be implemented by LFB in May 2021
27	LFB	Ensure the 'command support system' is operative on command units, and crews are trained to use it.	Implemented by LFB in March 2020 (further upgrades planned)
44	LFB, MPS, LAS	Investigate steps to enable LFB, MPS and LAS to read each other's messages.	Implementation date to be confirmed ⁶
46	LFB, MPS, LAS	Investigate ways of improving the collection and sharing of information about survivors (also aimed at local authorities).	To be implemented after LESLP review in September 2021

LAS: London Ambulance Service, LFB: London Fire Brigade, MPS: Metropolitan Police Service, LESLP: London Emergency Services Liaison Panel

⁶ This action is dependant on the development of the national Multi-Agency Information Transfer (MAIT) system, for which government funding has recently been announced.

Table 2: Progress with national recommendations for all fire and rescue or emergency services

No.	Aimed at	Recommendation summary	LFB progress
2	Fire & rescue services	Train staff in risks of external wall fires in high-rise buildings.	To be implemented by LFB in March 2021
7	Fire & rescue services	Store electronic buildings plans and make them available for responding to incidents.	To be implemented by LFB in March 2023
16	Fire & rescue services	Develop policies for handling a large number of 'Fire Survival Guidance' calls simultaneously.	To be implemented by LFB in March 2021
17	Fire & rescue services	Develop systems to display 'Fire Survival Guidance' information at the bridgehead and in command units.	To be implemented by LFB in March 2021
18	Fire & rescue services	Develop policies for managing a transition from 'stay put' to 'get out' advice.	To be implemented by LFB in March 2021
19	Fire & rescue services	Train control room officers in handling a change of advice from 'stay put' to 'get out'.	To be implemented by LFB in March 2021
20	Fire & rescue services	Investigate how assisting control rooms can gain access to information from the host control room.	To be implemented by LFB in March 2021
29	Fire & rescue services	Develop policies for the evacuation of high-rise buildings and training to support them.	To be implemented by LFB in March 2021
34	Fire & rescue services	Services to be equipped with smoke hoods to assist in evacuations.	Implemented by LFB in February 2020
40	Emergency services	Communicate the declaration of a Major Incident to other emergency services.	To be implemented after JESIP review in September 2021
41	Emergency services	Establish clear lines of communication between emergency service control rooms in a Major Incident.	To be implemented after JESIP review in September 2021
42	Emergency services	Designate a single point of contact in Major Incidents to enable communication between control rooms.	To be implemented after JESIP review in September 2021
43	Emergency services	Send a 'METHANE' message as soon as possible when a Major Incident is declared.	To be implemented after JESIP review in September 2021

JESIP: Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles (a national partnership of emergency service chief officers)

METHANE: Major incident, Exact location, Type of incident, Hazards, Access, Number of casualties, Emergency services

Knowledge and understanding of materials used in high-rise buildings

- 1. That the owner and manager of every high-rise residential building be required by law to provide their local fire and rescue service with information about the design of its external walls together with details of the materials of which they are constructed and to inform the fire and rescue service of any material changes made to them.**
- 2. That all fire and rescue services ensure that their personnel at all levels understand the risk of fire taking hold in the external walls of high-rise buildings and know how to recognise it when it occurs.**

Recommendation 1 is for new legal requirements on building owners and managers to provide information on their external walls. The Government announced a Fire Safety Bill and a Building Safety Bill in the Queen's Speech in December. If agreed, this legislation would amend existing fire safety regulation by clarifying that duty-holders for residential buildings (often the building owner) are responsible for managing the fire risk for external structures such as cladding, and doors to individual flats. The legislation would also allow the Government to introduce further regulation to deliver the recommendations of the GTI Phase 1 report.

The Building Safety Bill was published on 20 July 2020. The Mayor will be engaging with the Government and parliamentarians to ensure this legislation will address the safety issues that were highlighted by the Grenfell Tower fire and the GTI phase 1 report.

The Mayor made a submission to the draft Building Safety Bill call for evidence in September, proposing a number of improvements to the Bill. Namely, the Mayor asked the Government for a more comprehensive coverage of buildings within the new regime, including supported accommodation and any building that presents a fire risk. The Mayor also asked for reassurances that leaseholders would be protected and that the building safety charge would not be used to cover remediation works associated with safety defects that are the result of the failings of the current regulatory system. Finally, the Mayor asked the Government for clarity on the enforcement measures proposed, particularly with respect to how remediation would be monitored and how residents and leaseholders would be involved in these processes.

The Fire Safety Bill was introduced to Parliament in March 2020. It has now completed all stages in the House of Commons and House of Lords, with amendments now being considered before the Bill is finalised. The Mayor supported an amendment to the Fire Safety Bill that would have enshrined certain recommendations from the Phase 1 report in legislation, but this was not supported by the Government. The Home Office has also consulted on related changes to the Fire Safety Order, which regulates fire safety in non-domestic premises and common parts of residential premises, with a response from the Government expected in early 2021.

The Brigade has already established an Operational Risk Information project to improve how it gathers, records and disseminates this type of information for the purposes of responding to incidents. This will be further enhanced by the introduction of the One Risk solution in 2023, which is being designed to hold all of the Brigade's information on risk associated with buildings in London. To implement Recommendation 1 in full, a consistent national approach is needed to enable fire and rescue services to prepare for the volume, frequency and format of information that building owners and managers will be instructed to share with fire and rescue services. The National Fire Chiefs Council has reported to the Mayor that it is addressing this through its Community Risk Programme, which has developed a national definition of risk and is now seeking to produce metrics and guidance for fire and rescue services.

Addressing Recommendation 2, the Brigade has already provided new written guidance to firefighters on responding to the rapid spread of fire on the outside of buildings; this was issued in August 2019. This included advice on buildings with combustibile cladding, Fire Survival Guidance calls (advice given by Brigade Control operators to callers directly affected by fire, heat or smoke), operational discretion for firefighters responding to incidents, and incidents with rapid or abnormal fire spread. The guidance also identified a number of methods of communicating with residents to initiate an emergency evacuation. Training for operational staff on the new guidance was delivered after it was issued.

The Brigade has also revised its Policy Note (PN) 633 on High-Rise Firefighting.⁷ This document sets out the procedures firefighters should follow when responding to a fire in a high-rise building. The new PN 633 covers operational tactics for use in exceptional circumstances when a building is not behaving as designed in order to provide the greatest possibility of reaching all parts of the building for the purpose of emergency evacuation of residents.

The Brigade plans to implement the revised PN 633 following the rollout of a robust training programme being delivered to all station-based officers. Changes to the training schedule for new procedures were introduced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has limited face to face training. Computer based training packages have been developed and went live in early September 2020, and in-person training for incident commanders began in October. The policy will not be implemented until in-person training has been completed; as a result of both COVID-19 and an extended consultation process, the completion date for the training and 'go live' date for the policy is now planned for March 2021. The provision of in-person training remains subject to review in light of the ongoing risks of COVID-19 and changes to Government guidance; a further update will be provided in the next progress report. PN 633 will remain under review until such time as

⁷ Available at: <https://www.london-fire.gov.uk/media/4305/lfc-304x-d-high-rise-firefighting-policy-663.pdf>

national guidance, changes in legislation and subsequent remediation work have been undertaken.⁸

Finally, the Brigade has also reviewed its Incident Command training to incorporate learning from the Grenfell Tower fire. This training will make sure that Brigade personnel of all ranks, who take charge of incidents, understand the risk of fire taking hold in the external walls of high rise buildings, and how to recognise when it occurs. The Brigade is now on schedule for all its Level 1 Incident Commanders to be trained by December 2021, Level 2 Incident Commanders by August 2021, and Level 3 and 4 Incident Commanders by December 2021.

Visits under Section 7(2)(d) of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004

- 3. That the LFB review, and revise as appropriate, Appendix 1 to Policy Note 633 to ensure that it fully reflects the principles in Generic Risk Assessment 3.2: Fighting Fires in High Rise Buildings (GRA 3.2).**
- 4. That the LFB ensure that all officers of the rank of Crew Manager and above are trained in carrying out the requirements of PN 633 relating to the inspection of high-rise buildings.**

The Brigade has completed the implementation of these recommendations.

Section 7(2)(d) visits, also known as familiarisation visits, enable firefighters to learn about buildings in their local areas, to help prepare for possible incidents in that building. National guidance on conducting effective visits in high-rise buildings was set out in a document called Generic Risk Assessment (GRA) 3.2.⁹ This recommendation requires the London Fire Brigade's own procedures to reflect national guidance.

The Brigade has now completed the implementation of Recommendation 3 by producing relevant guidance based on the content of GRA 3.2 in a revised Policy Note (PN) 800 on the Management of Operational Risk Information, which was published in July. This document sets out how London firefighters should inspect buildings, record information, and so on.

⁸ PN 633 will be subject to monthly review. As stated in the policy: *"We recognise that as building legislation changes and the outcomes of Phase 2 of the Inquiry (once published) will require the policy to be reviewed and changed. We have already formally agreed with the London region [of the Fire Brigades Union] to undertake a monthly review of the policy within the Brigade Joint Committee for Health, Safety and Welfare to ensure it remains current and reflect the changing circumstances."*

⁹ The Government has now withdrawn Generic Risk Assessment 3.2 as its content has been incorporated in National Operational Guidance. GRA 3.2 is available as legacy guidance here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/generic-risk-assessment-32-fighting-fires-in-high-rise-buildings>

Recommendation 4 requires that all officers will be trained in the requirements of the revised policy. This training was mandatory for operational staff at fire stations and has now been completed.

Building plans

- 5. That the owner and manager of every high-rise residential building be required by law to provide their local fire and rescue services with up-to-date plans in both paper and electronic form of every floor of the building identifying the location of key fire safety systems.**
- 6. That the owner and manager of every high-rise residential building be required by law to ensure that the building contains a premises information box, the contents of which must include a copy of the up-to-date floor plans and information about the nature of any lift intended for use by the fire and rescue services.**
- 7. That all fire and rescue services be equipped to receive and store electronic plans and to make them available to incident commanders and control room managers.**

Recommendations 5-6 are for new legal requirements on building owners and managers to provide information on their buildings. The Fire Safety Bill is currently being considered in Parliament. If agreed, this legislation would amend existing fire safety regulation by clarifying that duty-holders for residential buildings (often the building owner) are responsible for managing the fire risk for external structures such as cladding, and doors to individual flats. The legislation would also allow the Government to introduce further regulation to deliver the recommendations of the GTI Phase 1 report. The Mayor supported an amendment to the Fire Safety Bill that would have enshrined certain recommendations from the Phase 1 report in legislation, but this was not supported by the Government. The Home Office has also consulted on related changes to the Fire Safety Order, which regulates fire safety in non-domestic premises and common parts of residential premises, with a response from the Government expected in early 2021.

The Building Safety Bill was published on 20 July 2020. The Mayor will be engaging with the Government and parliamentarians to ensure this legislation will address the safety issues that were highlighted by the Grenfell Tower fire and the GTI Phase 1 report.

The Mayor made a submission to the draft Building Safety Bill call for evidence in September, proposing a number of improvements to the Bill. Namely, the Mayor asked the Government for a more comprehensive coverage of buildings within the new regime, including supported accommodation and any building that presents a fire risk. The Mayor also asked for reassurances that leaseholders would be protected and that the building safety charge would not be used to cover remediation works associated with safety defects that are the result of the failings of the current regulatory system. Finally, the

Mayor asked the Government for clarity on the enforcement measures proposed, particularly with respect to how remediation would be monitored and how residents and leaseholders would be involved in these processes.

Regarding Recommendation 6, the Brigade will review its relevant operational procedure in Policy Note 513 on Premises Information Box Systems (PIBs), and further work will be taken forward when the Government has clarified its proposed legislation in this area. The Brigade has been working with the provider of PIBs in London and has developed best practice guidance on PIB content, which has been shared with the Home Office and National Fire Chiefs Council. The Home Office has now commissioned a new Industry Standard for PIBs; this will be produced through the Fire Industry Association, with a senior London Fire Brigade officer chairing the group producing the new standard; it is anticipated that consultation on the proposed new standard will take place in early 2021.

To implement Recommendations 5 and 7 a consistent national approach is needed to enable fire and rescue services to prepare for the volume, frequency and format of information that building owners and managers will be instructed to share with fire and rescue services. The Building Safety Bill and associated regulations are expected to address this. The National Fire Chiefs Council has reported to the Mayor that it is addressing this through its Community Risk Programme, which has developed a national definition of risk and is now seeking to produce metrics and guidance for fire and rescue services.

The Brigade has already established an Operational Risk Information project to improve how it gathers, records and disseminates this type of information for the purposes of responding to incidents. The Brigade is planning to implement a 'One Risk' solution to consolidate building risk information it receives into one database. A series of workshops to develop the specification for a new system have taken place. The specification has been completed and market engagement will begin in early 2021. The Brigade's existing Operational Risk Database can provide an interim solution for the management of information building owners may have to provide, depending on the requirements of legislation and any national solution developed by the Government.

Lifts

- 8. That the owner and manager of every high-rise residential building be required by law to carry out regular inspections of any lifts that are designed to be used by firefighters in an emergency and to report the results of such inspections to their local fire and rescue service at monthly intervals.**
- 9. That the owner and manager of every high-rise residential building be required by law to carry out regular tests of the mechanism which allows firefighters to take control of the lifts and to inform their local fire and rescue service at monthly intervals that they have done so.**

It is essential for public safety that firefighters are able to take control of lifts in emergency situations in high-rise buildings, so ensuring that lifts and control mechanisms are in working order is vital.

These recommendations are for new legal requirements on building owners and managers to inspect and test the lifts in their buildings, and to provide information to fire and rescue services. The Fire Safety Bill is currently being considered in Parliament. If agreed, this legislation would amend existing fire safety regulation by clarifying that duty-holders for residential buildings (often the building owner) are responsible for managing the fire risk for external structures such as cladding, and doors to individual flats. The legislation would also allow the Government to introduce further regulation to deliver the recommendations of the GTI Phase 1 report. The Mayor supported an amendment to the Fire Safety Bill that would have enshrined certain recommendations from the Phase 1 report in legislation, but this was not supported by the Government.

The Building Safety Bill was published on 20 July 2020. The Mayor will be engaging with the Government and parliamentarians to ensure this legislation will address the safety issues that were highlighted by the Grenfell Tower fire and the GTI phase 1 report. The Mayor made a submission to the draft Building Safety Bill call for evidence in September, proposing a number of improvements to the Bill. Namely, the Mayor asked the Government for a more comprehensive coverage of buildings within the new regime, including supported accommodation and any building that presents a fire risk. The Mayor also asked for reassurances that leaseholders would be protected and that the building safety charge would not be used to cover remediation works associated with safety defects that are the result of the failings of the current regulatory system. Finally, the Mayor asked the Government for clarity on the enforcement measures proposed, particularly with respect to how remediation would be monitored and how residents and leaseholders would be involved in these processes.

To implement Recommendations 8 and 9 a consistent national approach is needed to enable fire and rescue services to prepare for the volume, frequency and format of information that building owners and managers will be instructed to share with fire and

rescue services. The Building Safety Bill and associated regulations are expected to address this.

The Brigade has already established an Operational Risk Information project to improve how it gathers, records and disseminates this type of information for the purposes of responding to incidents. The Brigade is planning to implement a 'One Risk' solution to consolidate building risk information it receives into one database. A series of workshops to develop the specification for a new system have taken place, and market engagement is beginning in early 2021. The Brigade's existing Operational Risk Database can provide an interim solution for the management of information buildings owners may have to provide, depending on the requirements of legislation and any national solution developed by the Government.

Communication between the Control room and the Incident Commander

- 10. That the LFB review its policies on communications between the control room and the incident commander.**
- 11. That all officers who may be expected to act as incident commanders (i.e. all those above the rank of Crew Manager) receive training directed to the specific requirements of communication with the control room.**
- 12. That all CROs of Assistant Operations Manager rank and above receive training directed to the specific requirements of communication with the incident commander.**
- 13. That a dedicated communication link be provided between the senior officer in the control room and the incident commander.**

These recommendations are about improving communication between the Control room and the Incident Commander. The London Fire Brigade's Control room is a facility based at Merton, where officers receive emergency calls from the public and mobilise firefighters to incidents. The Incident Commander is the officer in charge of the Brigade's response at the scene, responsible for the tactical plan to resolve the incident and the safety of firefighters.

Communication between the Control room and the Incident Commander is a key area for the London Fire Brigade to address following the Grenfell Tower fire. In particular, Control staff need to be able to provide information from Fire Survival Guidance (FSG) calls – where Control operators give advice to callers directly affected by fire, heat or smoke – to the Incident Commander at the scene.

To implement Recommendations 10, 11 and 12, the Brigade has reviewed and revised the operational procedures set out in its Policy Note 790 on Fire Survival Guidance calls, to

ensure it serves to improve communications. This specifically addresses the requirement on communication between Control and the Incident Commander. New procedures have been tested and consultation on the revised policy has now taken place, and the policy has been finalised.

Recommendation 12 is also being addressed with changes to the Vision mobilising system used in the Brigade's Control room. A new layout has been introduced for Fire Survival Guidance and High-Rise calls, with Control officers trained on this in November. The new layout has been implemented and provides an easily accessible telephone number for each caller trapped in a building that Control staff can access quickly in order to pass on any change in guidance or additional information.

As discussed under Recommendation 2 above, changes to the training schedule for new procedures were introduced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has limited face to face training. Computer based training packages have been developed and went live in early September 2020, and in-person training for incident commanders began in October. The policy will not be implemented until in-person training has been completed; as a result of both COVID-19 and an extended consultation process, the completion date for the training and 'go live' date for the policy is now planned for March 2021. The provision of in-person training remains subject to review in light of the ongoing risks of COVID-19 and changes to Government guidance; a further update will be provided in the next progress report.

The Brigade is implementing Recommendation 13 for a dedicated communication link between the Control room and Incident Commander, which is also included in the revised PN 790. This issue is also addressed under Recommendations 17 and 24-25 below. Communication between Control and the Incident Commander is currently delivered via the Initial Command Pump or Command Unit. An IT solution to increase situational awareness and communication between the incident and Control is being developed, which will enable information from FSG calls to be displayed simultaneously at the incident and in Control; a new IT application is expected to be completed by March 2021.

The Brigade has also implemented the 999 Eye system, which is being used by Control as an additional tool to gain situational awareness of incidents. Control can send a link to a caller's mobile phone, which enables the live streaming of images to Control and other devices.

Emergency calls

- 14. That the LFB's policies be amended to draw a clearer distinction between callers seeking advice and callers who believe they are trapped and need rescuing.**
- 15. That the LFB provide regular and more effective refresher training to CROs at all levels, including supervisors.**
- 16. That all fire and rescue services develop policies for handling a large number of FSG calls simultaneously.**
- 17. That electronic systems be developed to record FSG information in the control room and display it simultaneously at the bridgehead and in any command units.**

The London Fire Brigade received an unprecedented number of Fire Survival Guidance (FSG) calls – where Control operators provide advice to callers directly affected by fire, heat or smoke – on the night of the Grenfell Tower fire. The Brigade has identified the need to improve the way it handles these calls, and arrangements for when a large number are received simultaneously.

The new operational policy on Fire Survival Guidance calls (Policy Note 790) will address Recommendation 14. Consultation on the revised policy has now taken place and it has been finalised. A training package on new procedures is now being rolled out. Computer based training packages have been developed and went live in early September 2020, and in-person training for incident commanders began in October. The policy will not be implemented until in-person training has been completed; as a result of both COVID-19 and an extended consultation process, the completion date for the training and 'go live' date for the policy is now planned for March 2021. The provision of in-person training remains subject to review in light of the ongoing risks of COVID-19 and changes to Government guidance; a further update will be provided in the next progress report.

Refresher training on FSG calls was delivered in December 2018 and December 2019, and will continue to be provided on an annual basis, based on the new procedures contained within PN 790, as required by Recommendation 15. The refresher training is now part of the Brigade's Development and Maintenance of Operational Professionalism (DaMOP) system, a cyclical framework for risk-critical competencies. The recommendation will be considered completed when PN 790 goes live in March 2021. A new competency framework for Brigade Control staff has been developed and was rolled out in July 2020. This is part of a wider Control Improvement Plan, which the Assistant Commissioner for Control and Mobilising has produced and is currently implementing. The enhanced policy and training will enable the Brigade to more effectively manage multiple Fire Survival Guidance calls, addressing Recommendation 16.

Also addressing this recommendation, the Brigade has now developed a protocol to assist control rooms across the country with the challenge of large call volumes, and share risk

critical information quickly. This will occur via a new talk group on Airwave, the communication network used by emergency services. This talk group is now in place following agreement with the NFCC and Home Office. At the Brigade, all Control officers have now received training in the use of the talk group. There was a national training event in October, and NFCC has reported to the Mayor that work with the Home Office on further testing with other fire and rescue services is ongoing. The recommendation will not be considered complete for the Brigade until the new Fire Survival Guidance policy goes live in March 2021, as discussed above under Recommendations 10-13.

Recommendations 15 and 16 are also being addressed with changes to the Vision mobilising system used in the Brigade's Control room. A new layout has been introduced for Fire Survival Guidance and High-Rise calls, with Control officers trained on this in November. The new layout has been implemented and provides an easily accessible telephone number for each caller trapped in a building that Control staff can access quickly in order to pass on any change in guidance or additional information.

To implement Recommendation 17, an IT solution to increase situational awareness and communication between the incident and Control is being developed, which will enable information from FSG calls to be displayed simultaneously at the incident and in Control; a new IT application is expected to be completed by March 2021. The core application has now been delivered to the Brigade, although technical issues have led to a delay in testing the application. This has put at risk the final completion date for the recommendation; a further update will be provided in the next progress report. This recommendation is similar to Recommendations 24 and 25 – these actions are relevant to the implementation of each of these, as well as to Recommendation 23, which will depend on the use of the application.

Emergency calls – transition from 'stay put' to 'get out'

18. That policies be developed for managing a transition from 'stay put' to 'get out'.

19. That control room staff receive training directed specifically to handling such a change of advice and conveying it effectively to callers.

The Grenfell Tower Inquiry has identified that the London Fire Brigade did not recognise the extent of the building failure at Grenfell Tower soon enough or alter its advice to residents to 'get out' as quickly or effectively as it should. The Mayor has ensured the Brigade is prioritising action in this area, with improvements in the handling of Fire Survival Guidance already implemented in the Brigade's Control room.

The Mayor and the Brigade have called for the Government to initiate a national review of the 'stay put' principle of building design, specifically to respond to circumstances of building failure, recognising that mass evacuation is not without challenges and risk. The Mayor has urged the Government to act quickly to put in place new national guidelines for

the total or partial evacuation of residential high-rise buildings. A national steering group has been established by the Home Office to consider new national protocols, with new academic research commissioned to support this; further detail is provided in the Home Office's December 2020 update on the Inquiry recommendations.

The Brigade has now produced a new Evacuation and Rescue policy, setting out new operational procedures for how firefighters should plan for and execute the safe and effective evacuation of a building, and/or rescue of large numbers of people. Specific work is being undertaken by the Brigade into how firefighters can support the evacuation of people who have learning difficulties, neurodiverse people, people with dyslexia and potentially people whose first language is not English.

The Brigade has also revised its Policy Note (PN) 633 on High-Rise Firefighting. This document sets out the procedures firefighters should follow when responding to a fire in a high-rise building. The new PN 633 covers operational tactics for use in exceptional circumstances when a building is not behaving as designed in order to provide the greatest possibility of reaching all parts of the building for the purpose of emergency evacuation of residents.

The LFB plans to implement both the Evacuation and Rescue policy and the revised High-Rise Firefighting policy following the rollout of a robust training programme. Computer-based training packages are being delivered to all operational staff, with additional face-to-face training to 1,200 supervisory officers. As discussed under Recommendation 2 above, changes to the training schedule for new procedures were introduced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has limited face to face training. Computer based training packages have been developed and went live in early September 2020, with in-person training for incident commanders beginning in October. The policies will not be implemented until in-person training has been completed; as a result of both COVID-19 and an extended consultation process, the completion date for the training and 'go live' date for the policies is now planned for March 2021. The provision of in-person training remains subject to review in light of the ongoing risks of COVID-19 and changes to Government guidance; a further update will be provided in the next progress report.

PN 633 will remain under review until such time as national guidance, changes in legislation and subsequent remediation work have been undertaken.¹⁰

To address Recommendation 19, the Brigade has also revised the operational procedures set out in its Policy Note 790 on Fire Survival Guidance calls. This includes procedures for Control officers to manage a change in advice from 'stay put' to 'get out'. The timeline for implementation is the same as for the policies discussed above, with the full training programme due to be completed by March 2021. Control officers have implemented

¹⁰ PN 633 will be subject to monthly review. As stated in the policy: "We recognise that as building legislation changes and the outcomes of Phase 2 of the Inquiry (once published) will require the policy to be reviewed and changed. We have already formally agreed with the London region [of the Fire Brigades Union] to undertake a monthly review of the policy within the Brigade Joint Committee for Health, Safety and Welfare to ensure it remains current and reflect the changing circumstances."

improvements in the handling of Fire Survival Guidance calls and information-sharing ahead of the policy going live.

Control officers have created a new screen layout for Fire Survival Guidance callers on the Vision mobilising system. The new layout has been implemented and provides an easily accessible telephone number for each caller trapped in a building that Control staff can access quickly in order to pass on any change in guidance or additional information. Control officers received training on the new layout in November. In the longer term, the project to procure the next iteration of the mobilising system has now begun and Grenfell-related recommendations, including call back, will form a part of the technical specification.

Emergency calls – other controls rooms

- 20. That steps be taken to investigate methods by which assisting control rooms can obtain access to the information available to the host control room.**
- 21. That the LAS and MPS review their protocols and policies to ensure that their operators can identify FSG calls (as defined by the LFB) and pass them to the LFB as soon as possible.**

These recommendations are aimed at addressing problems the Grenfell Tower Inquiry identified in communication between London Fire Brigade Control and other services during the incident. A number of other Control rooms handled calls from people at Grenfell Tower during the fire, but there was a lack of effective information sharing between them and the Brigade. This included information from Fire Survival Guidance (FSG) calls, where operators provide advice to callers trapped by fire.

Addressing Recommendation 20, the National Fire Chiefs Council is undertaking work on the dissemination of risk critical information between Control rooms, including protocols for sharing information beyond current mutual aid agreements, which will help to address Recommendation 20. The Brigade has now developed a protocol to assist control rooms across the country with the challenge of large call volumes, and share risk critical information quickly. This will occur via a new talk group on Airwave, the communication network used by emergency services. This talk group is now in place following agreement with the NFCC and Home Office. At the Brigade, all Control officers have now received training in the use of the talk group. There was a national training event in October, and NFCC has reported to the Mayor that work with the Home Office on further testing with other fire and rescue services is ongoing. The recommendation will not be considered complete for the Brigade until the new Fire Survival Guidance policy goes live in March 2021, as discussed above under Recommendations 10-13. Addressing Recommendation 21, the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and London Ambulance Service (LAS) have both reported to the Mayor that they have reviewed protocols on Fire Survival Guidance

calls to ensure these are passed to the London Fire Brigade. The Brigade will be issuing guidance to MPS and LAS once the revision of PN 790 is complete (see above).

The Brigade is also working with the MPS and LAS on a trial of a 'control hub', known as the London Emergency Services Control Centre (LESCC). A trial ran for seven days in February 2020 at the MPS special operations room to test ways of improving joint communications. The trial considered practice on FSG calls. Work has taken place to test the concept in a major incident type scenario, trialling an alternative staffing model which would keep the respective Control Officers within their service Control rooms, but continuing to operate as a team. Work is now recommencing on the London Emergency Services Control Centre (LESCC) following a delay as a result of COVID-19.

Command and control – breathing apparatus crews

- 22. That the LFB develop policies and training to ensure better control of deployments and the use of resources.**
- 23. That the LFB develop policies and training to ensure that better information is obtained from crews returning from deployments and that the information is recorded in a form that enables it to be made available immediately to the incident commander (and thereafter to the command units and the control room).**

The Grenfell Tower Inquiry team has clarified that Recommendation 22 refers to the management and use of breathing apparatus (BA), and to deficiencies in how officers in command at the incident exercised control over deployed firefighters. Related to this, Recommendation 23 requires improvements to the debrief process for crews returning from deployments to ensure crucial information is obtained and used.

The revised High-Rise Firefighting (PN 633) Fire Survival Guidance (PN 790) policies will address these recommendations by including information on crew deployments, including on tasks relating to Fire Survival Guidance calls. As discussed above, recommendations 22 and 23 will be implemented when the training programme for the new policies is completed, with March 2021 the forecast completion date. Recommendation 23 further depends on the delivery of a new IT application for communicating Fire Survival Guidance information between the incident and Control, as discussed under Recommendation 17.

A related project relevant to Recommendation 23 is a new operational briefing model being developed by the Brigade for crews and officers on the incident ground, for both briefing and debriefing purposes and ensuring that information is both passed and received (and captured) in a consistent manner. This model will be used by BA teams and committing officers during search and rescue operations. The model is currently being trialled and refined, and will be rolled out in April 2021.

A review of the Brigade's radio channels has been completed. As a result of this, a radio channel has been identified for allocation only to specific tasks as required during an incident, to be determined at the discretion of incident command officers. This was communicated to officers in the Operational News publication in July 2020.

Command and control – communication

- 24. That the LFB develop a communication system to enable direct communication between the control room and the incident commander and improve the means of communication between the incident commander and the bridgehead.**
- 25. That the LFB investigate the use of modern communication techniques to provide a direct line of communication between the control room and the bridgehead, allowing information to be transmitted directly between the control room and the bridgehead and providing an integrated system of recording FSG information and the results of deployments.**

Recommendations 24 and 25 overlap with Recommendation 13, which recommends a dedicated communication link between the Control room and Incident Commander, and Recommendation 17, which requires the Brigade to display information simultaneously at Control and in Command Units. Actions under these earlier recommendations will also contribute to the Brigade's response to Recommendations 24 and 25.

An IT application to increase situational awareness and communication between the incident and Control is being developed, which will help address Recommendations 24 and 25. The system will enable information from FSG calls to be displayed simultaneously at the incident and in Control; this new application is expected to be completed by March 2021. The core application has now been delivered to the Brigade, although technical issues have led to a delay in testing the application. This has put at risk the final completion date for the recommendation; a further update will be provided in the next progress report. Additional visual display technology has already been delivered in the primary Control room.

In addition, the Brigade has introduced the use of aerial drones at incidents, with three drones now in operation. Information provided by drone technology can improve situational awareness for commanding officers and will be live streamed at Brigade Control. The Brigade's drone pilots are being trained on new draft procedures for drones to deliver smoke hoods and flotation devices at incidents.

Equipment

- 26. That the LFB urgently take steps to obtain equipment that enables firefighters wearing helmets and breathing apparatus to communicate with the bridgehead effectively, including when operating in high-rise buildings.**
- 27. That urgent steps be taken to ensure that the command support system is fully operative on all command units and that crews are trained in its use.**

At the Grenfell Tower fire, there were serious problems with radio communication between the bridgehead (the safe position within a building from where firefighting operations are co-ordinated) and deployed firefighters. The London Fire Brigade is now addressing these issues, as set out below.

Responding to Recommendation 26, the Brigade is in the process of replacing and upgrading the radios that it uses at incidents. This project is being taken forward in two phases. The first phase, complete by May 2021, will deliver a new single type of radio used for both fireground and breathing apparatus communications and radio repeaters. This will be a more powerful radio for breathing apparatus communications than the current model. Station-based trials of new radios is taking place in January and February 2021. Training and policy revision are projected to be complete in February 2021, with a go live date of May 2021 for both the radios and repeaters.

The second phase of this project, due to be completed by May 2022, will be the delivery of new breathing apparatus including an integrated communication capability.

Problems were also experienced with the command support systems on the Brigade's Command Units. Recommendation 27 is aimed at addressing these. The Brigade has identified that connectivity issues were the primary cause of the problems. An interim measure was implemented in January 2019, to ensure all Command Units have 4G-enabled laptops. In addition, servers on Command Units have been upgraded to support 4G connectivity, a project that was completed in March 2020.

The Brigade has therefore completed the implementation of Recommendation 27. However, further long-term upgrades are being planned, with procurement of new Command Units and a command support system. This project is due to be completed in October 2021.

Evacuation

- 28. That the government develop national guidelines for carrying out partial or total evacuations of high-rise residential buildings, such guidelines to include the means of protecting fire exit routes and procedures for evacuating persons who are unable to use the stairs in an emergency, or who may require assistance (such as disabled people, older people and young children).**
- 29. That fire and rescue services develop policies for partial and total evacuation of high-rise residential buildings and training to support them.**

The Grenfell Tower Inquiry has identified that the London Fire Brigade did not recognise the extent of the building failure at Grenfell Tower soon enough, or alter its advice to residents to 'get out' as quickly or effectively as it should. The Mayor accepts this finding and has ensured the Brigade is prioritising action in this area.

The Mayor and the Brigade have called for the Government to initiate a national review of the 'stay put' principle of building design, specifically to respond to circumstances of building failure, recognising that mass evacuation is not without challenges and risk. The Mayor has urged the Government to act quickly to put in place new national guidelines for the total or partial evacuation of residential high-rise buildings. A national steering group has been established by the Home Office to consider new national protocols. New academic research on evacuation has recently been commissioned, and is underway; further detail is provided in the Home Office's December 2020 update on the Inquiry recommendations. Arising from this work, the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) provided interim guidance on evacuation and rescue in November, which reflected the new London Fire Brigade policy.

The Brigade has also revised its Policy Note (PN) 633 on High-Rise Firefighting. This document sets out the procedures firefighters should follow when responding to a fire in a high-rise building. The new PN 633 covers operational tactics for use in exceptional circumstances when a building is not behaving as designed in order to provide the greatest possibility of reaching all parts of the building for the purpose of emergency evacuation of residents.

The LFB plans to implement the revised PN 633 following the rollout of a robust training programme being delivered to all station-based officers. Changes to the training schedule for new procedures were introduced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has limited face to face training. Computer based training packages have been developed and went live in early September 2020, with in-person training commencing for incident commanders in October. The policy will not be implemented until in-person training has been completed; as a result of both COVID-19 and an extended consultation process, the completion date for the training and 'go live' date for the policy is now planned for March 2021. The provision of in-person training remains subject to review in light of the ongoing risks of COVID-19 and changes to Government guidance; a further update will be provided

in the next progress report. PN 633 will remain under review until such time as national guidance, changes in legislation and subsequent remediation work have been undertaken.¹¹

The Brigade has now produced a new Evacuation and Rescue policy, setting out new operational procedures for how firefighters should plan for and execute the safe and effective evacuation of a building, and/or rescue of large numbers of people. This policy has been finalised and will be implemented alongside the new High Rise Firefighting and Fire Survival Guidance policies, once the training programme for the policy has completed in March 2021.

Evacuation – duties for building owners and managers

- 30. That the owner and manager of every high-rise residential building be required by law to draw up and keep under regular review evacuation plans, copies of which are to be provided in electronic and paper form to their local fire and rescue service and placed in an information box on the premises.**
- 31. That all high-rise residential buildings (both those already in existence and those built in the future) be equipped with facilities for use by the fire and rescue services enabling them to send an evacuation signal to the whole or a selected part of the building by means of sounders or similar devices.**
- 32. That the owner and manager of every high-rise residential building be required by law to prepare personal emergency evacuation plans (PEEPs) for all residents whose ability to self-evacuate may be compromised (such as persons with reduced mobility or cognition).**
- 33. That the owner and manager of every high-rise residential building be required by law to include up-to-date information about persons with reduced mobility and their associated PEEPs in the premises information box.**

These recommendations are aimed at placing new duties on building owners and managers of residential high-rise buildings to help enable residents to be safely evacuated. The Government announced a Fire Safety Bill and a Building Safety Bill in the Queen's Speech in December. The Fire Safety Bill is currently being considered in the Parliament. If agreed, this legislation would amend existing fire safety regulation by clarifying that duty-holders for residential buildings (often the building owner) are responsible for managing the fire risk for external structures such as cladding, and doors

¹¹ PN 633 will be subject to monthly review. As stated in the policy: "We recognise that as building legislation changes and the outcomes of Phase 2 of the Inquiry (once published) will require the policy to be reviewed and changed. We have already formally agreed with the London region [of the Fire Brigades Union] to undertake a monthly review of the policy within the Brigade Joint Committee for Health, Safety and Welfare to ensure it remains current and reflect the changing circumstances."

to individual flats. The legislation would also allow the Government to introduce further regulations to deliver the recommendations of the GTI Phase 1 report. The Mayor supported an amendment to the Fire Safety Bill that would have enshrined certain recommendations from the Phase 1 report in legislation, but this was not supported by the Government. The Home Office has also consulted on related changes to the Fire Safety Order, which regulates fire safety in non-domestic premises and common parts of residential premises, with a response from the Government expected in early 2021.

The Building Safety Bill was published on 20 July 2020. The Mayor will be engaging with the Government and parliamentarians to ensure this legislation will address the safety issues that were highlighted by the Grenfell Tower fire and the GTI Phase 1 report.

The Mayor made a submission to the draft Building Safety Bill call for evidence in September, proposing a number of improvements to the Bill. Namely, the Mayor asked the Government for a more comprehensive coverage of buildings within the new regime, including supported accommodation and any building that presents a fire risk. The Mayor also asked for reassurances that leaseholders would be protected and that the building safety charge would not be used to cover remediation works associated with safety defects that are the result of the failings of the current regulatory system. Finally, the Mayor asked the Government for clarity on the enforcement measures proposed, particularly with respect to how remediation would be monitored and how residents and leaseholders would be involved in these processes.

Recommendation 30 would require building owners and managers to provide evacuation plans to fire and rescue services. The Brigade has already established an Operational Risk Information project to improve how it gathers, records and disseminates this type of information for the purposes of responding to incidents. In preparation for new legislation, the London Fire Brigade is considering how it would receive, record and use any new information provided by building owners and managers. A national steering group has been established by the Home Office to consider new national protocols. New academic research on evacuation has recently been commissioned and has now commenced; further detail is provided in the Home Office's December 2020 update on the Inquiry recommendations.¹²

Recommendation 31 requires building owners and managers to install facilities for firefighters to send an evacuation signal to residents. At a national level, a new British Standard (BS8629) has been designed for the design, installation, commissioning and maintenance of evacuation systems, and was published in November 2019.¹³ Building owners and managers are primarily responsible for implementing this recommendation, although the Brigade is considering the policy and training implications that may arise,

¹² Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/quarterly-thematic-update-on-progress-against-the-grenfell-tower-inquiry-phase-1-recommendations>

¹³ The British Standard is available at: <https://standardsdevelopment.bsigroup.com/projects/2019-01237>. A standard is not necessarily mandatory and enforceable in its own right. For further explanation please see: <https://www.bsigroup.com/en-GB/standards/Information-about-standards/standards-and-regulation/>

taking into account possible changes in national guidance on evacuation. The National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) has now produced training materials associated with BS8629 and shared these across the fire and rescue sector; the Brigade is now assessing implications for its own training.

Recommendations 32 and 33 do not require the London Fire Brigade to take specific steps to implement them. However, Recommendation 33 would mean new information on evacuation plans for residents with reduced mobility to be placed in Premises Information Boxes (PIBs), which are used by firefighters at incidents. The Brigade will review its relevant operational procedure in Policy Note 513 on Premises Information Box Systems, and further work will be taken forward when new legislation and regulation in this area has been finalised. The Brigade has been working with the provider of PIBs in London and has developed best practice guidance on PIB content, which has been shared with the Home Office and National Fire Chiefs Council. The Home Office has now commissioned a new Industry Standard for PIBs; this will be produced through the Fire Industry Association, with a senior London Fire Brigade officer chairing the group producing the new standard; it is anticipated that consultation on the proposed new standard will take place in early 2021.

Evacuation – smoke hoods

34. That all fire and rescue services be equipped with smoke hoods to assist in the evacuation of occupants through smoke-filled exit routes.

Smoke hoods, also known as fire escape hoods, are provided by firefighters to people caught in smoke-filled environments, to help enable them to safely escape. The hood is worn over the head, and a tight seal around the hood prevents any smoke from getting in. Air comes into the hood through a filter, which removes the toxic gasses found in smoke. This provides clean, safe air for 15 minutes. Smoke hoods can be provided by firefighters when trying to get someone through a smoke-filled area, or when someone needs to stay in a smoky environment until they can be rescued.

The London Fire Brigade did not have smoke hoods available at the time of the Grenfell Tower fire. However, they were introduced in 2018, and the LFB is the first fire and rescue service in the country to implement this capability. They have been issued to all fire stations and are carried on all breathing apparatus sets on all fire engines. As discussed under Recommendation 24, the Brigade is also trialling a procedure to deliver smoke hoods to high floors of a building using aerial drones.

The Brigade's research into smoke hoods and their use has been shared with the National Fire Chiefs Council, to support national implementation of the recommendation.

Internal signage

- 35. That in all high-rise buildings floor numbers be clearly marked on each landing within the stairways and in a prominent place in all lobbies in such a way as to be visible both in normal conditions and in low lighting or smoky conditions.**
- 36. That the owner and manager of every residential building containing separate dwellings (whether or not it is a high-rise building) be required by law to provide fire safety instructions (including instructions for evacuation) in a form that the occupants of the building can reasonably be expected to understand, taking into account the nature of the building and their knowledge of the occupants.**

These recommendations are aimed at placing new duties on building owners and managers of residential buildings to display floor numbers and fire safety instructions. This may require new legislation, so the Government must act on this point. Relating to Recommendation 35, the Government has reported that new Building Regulation guidance on internal signage has come into effect; further detail is available in the Home Office's update on the recommendations.¹⁴

The Fire Safety Bill is currently being considered in Parliament. If agreed, this legislation would amend existing fire safety regulation by clarifying that duty-holders for residential buildings (often the building owner) are responsible for managing the fire risk for external structures such as cladding, and doors to individual flats. The legislation would also allow the Government to introduce further regulations to deliver the recommendations of the GTI Phase 1 report. The Mayor supported an amendment to the Fire Safety Bill that would have enshrined certain recommendations from the Phase 1 report in legislation, but this was not supported by the Government. The Home Office has also consulted on related changes to the Fire Safety Order, which regulates fire safety in non-domestic premises and common parts of residential premises, with a response from the Government expected in early 2021.

The Building Safety Bill was published on 20 July 2020. The Mayor will be engaging with the Government and parliamentarians to ensure this legislation will address the safety issues that were highlighted by the Grenfell Tower fire and the GTI Phase 1 report.

The Mayor made a submission to the draft Building Safety Bill call for evidence in September, proposing a number of improvements to the Bill. Namely, the Mayor asked the Government for a more comprehensive coverage of buildings within the new regime, including supported accommodation and any building that presents a fire risk. The Mayor also asked for reassurances that leaseholders would be protected and that the building safety charge would not be used to cover remediation works associated with safety defects that are the result of the failings of the current regulatory system. Finally, the

¹⁴ Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/quarterly-thematic-update-on-progress-against-the-grenfell-tower-inquiry-phase-1-recommendations>

Mayor asked the Government for clarity on the enforcement measures proposed, particularly with respect to how remediation would be monitored and how residents and leaseholders would be involved in these processes.

The GLA is considering the best ways to encourage building owners/managers in London to implement these recommendations as quickly as possible and ahead of legislation. The Mayor has written to building owners and managers in London to draw attention to a range of recommendations to improve the safety of residential blocks, including recommendations made in the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 1 report.¹⁵ This letter encouraged building owners to implement a number of urgent actions for existing buildings and start preparing for a number of other recommendations, ahead of legislation. The London Fire Brigade will also provide support and advice to the Government and building owners and managers to assist with implementation as required.

Fire doors

- 37. That the owner and manager of every residential building containing separate dwellings (whether or not they are high-rise buildings) carry out an urgent inspection of all fire doors to ensure that they comply with applicable legislative standards.**
- 38. That the owner and manager of every residential building containing separate dwellings (whether or not they are high-rise buildings) be required by law to carry out checks at not less than three-monthly intervals to ensure that all fire doors are fitted with effective self-closing devices in working order.**
- 39. That all those who have responsibility in whatever capacity for the condition of the entrance doors to individual flats in high-rise residential buildings, whose external walls incorporate unsafe cladding, be required by law to ensure that such doors comply with current standards.**

These recommendations are aimed at placing new duties on building owners and managers of residential buildings to ensure fire doors are working properly and regularly checked. This may require new legislation, so the Government must act on this point. In its formal response to the GTI Phase 1 report, the Government indicated that all fire doors, including their closers, should be routinely checked or inspected by qualified professionals. In January, the Government also published updated advice on fire doors as part of the consolidated Expert Panel advice note. The Mayor has written to building owners and managers in London highlighting the need to implement this recommendation.

The Fire Safety Bill is currently being considered in Parliament. If agreed, this legislation would amend existing fire safety regulation by clarifying that duty-holders for residential

¹⁵ The letter is available at:

https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/letter_and_recommendations_from_the_mayor_of_london.pdf.

buildings (often the building owner) are responsible for managing the fire risk for external structures such as cladding, and doors to individual flats. The legislation would also allow the Government to introduce further regulations to deliver the recommendations of the GTI Phase 1 report. The Mayor supported an amendment to the Fire Safety Bill that would have enshrined certain recommendations from the Phase 1 report in legislation, but this was not supported by the Government. The Home Office has also consulted on related changes to the Fire Safety Order, which regulates fire safety in non-domestic premises and common parts of residential premises, with a response from the Government expected in early 2021.

The Building Safety Bill was published on 20 July 2020. The Mayor will be engaging with the Government and parliamentarians to ensure this legislation will address the safety issues that were highlighted by the Grenfell Tower fire and the GTI Phase 1 report.

The Mayor made a submission to the draft Building Safety Bill call for evidence in September, proposing a number of improvements to the Bill. Namely, the Mayor asked the Government for a more comprehensive coverage of buildings within the new regime, including supported accommodation and any building that presents a fire risk. The Mayor also asked for reassurances that leaseholders would be protected and that the building safety charge would not be used to cover remediation works associated with safety defects that are the result of the failings of the current regulatory system. Finally, the Mayor asked the Government for clarity on the enforcement measures proposed, particularly with respect to how remediation would be monitored and how residents and leaseholders would be involved in these processes.

Co-operation between emergency services – Joint Doctrine

40. That the Joint Doctrine be amended to make it clear that each emergency service must communicate the declaration of a Major Incident to all other Category 1 Responders as soon as possible.
41. That the Joint Doctrine be amended to make it clear that on the declaration of a Major Incident clear lines of communication must be established as soon as possible between the control rooms of the individual emergency services.
42. That the Joint Doctrine be amended to make it clear that a single point of contact should be designated within each control room to facilitate such communication.
43. That the Joint Doctrine be amended to make it clear that a "METHANE" message should be sent as soon as possible by the emergency service declaring a Major Incident.

The Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 1 report identified problems with the way London's emergency services worked together on the night of the fire. In particular, the report was critical of emergency services for each declaring the fire a Major Incident, but without immediately informing each other they had done so. A Major Incident is "an event or situation with a range of serious consequences which requires special arrangements to be implemented by one or more emergency responder agency," as defined in the National Operational Guidance on Major Incidents.

These recommendations are aimed at all emergency services and are about the content of the Joint Doctrine. This is an interoperability framework setting out a standard approach to multi-agency working and training material. It is developed by the national Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme (JESIP), a partnership of emergency service chief officers.

"METHANE" refers to a model promoted by JESIP for managing the initial stages of an incident. It stands for:

- Major Incident
- Exact Location
- Type of Incident
- Hazards
- Access
- Number of Casualties
- Emergency Services

The METHANE model tells emergency responders what information they need to gather and share about an incident. The Inquiry's recommendation is that a message containing this information is shared by the service declaring a Major Incident.

Each of these recommendations will primarily be addressed by JESIP. Lead chief officers for each of the emergency services have committed to a review of the Joint Doctrine, including consideration of these recommendations. The revision of the Joint Doctrine has been delayed due to COVID-19 demands. It is now expected that the review will take place after the conclusion of the Manchester Arena Inquiry, which is considering related issues. This has a potential completion date in September 2021, dependent on the progress of the Inquiry.

The London Fire Brigade has committed to incorporating any changes to the Joint Doctrine into its own policies and training. The Brigade is already making changes to its own operational procedures to address these recommendations. Specifically, the Brigade is in the process of revising its Major Incident Policy (PN 263), which will include a specific section regarding informing other category 1 responders, the initiation of a Major Incident for Incident Commanders, reinforced METHANE messaging, and the activation of a tri-service call at the declaration of a Major Incident. The revised policy is expected to be finalised in January 2021.

London's emergency services are also working together to address these issues at the city level. These recommendations are also being considered by the 'Blue Lights' panel of London Emergency Services Liaison Panel (LES�P). The Blue Lights panel is responsible for London's Major Incidents Procedures Manual, and has agreed to review these procedures. Addressing Recommendation 41 specifically, there is now a procedure in place for the activation of a conference call between London's emergency service control rooms following the declaration of a major incident. Addressing Recommendation 42 and 43, the Brigade also has a dedicated contact within its Control room to facilitate this communication and has embedded the sharing of a METHANE message in tri-service calls with the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and London Ambulance Service (LAS). The three services have now reviewed and updated a Memorandum of Understanding via the London Control Room Operations Group in order to confirm these procedures.

As discussed under Recommendation 21, the Brigade is working with the MPS and LAS on a trial of a 'control hub', known as the London Emergency Services Control Centre (LESCC). A trial ran for seven days in February 2020 at the MPS special operations room to test ways of improving joint communications. The trial considered practice on FSG calls; the Brigade will be issuing guidance to MPS and LAS once the revision of PN 790 is complete (see above). Work was taking place to test the concept in a major incident type scenario, trialling an alternative staffing model which would keep the respective Control Officers within their service Control rooms, but continuing to operate as a team. Work is now recommencing on the London Emergency Services Control Centre (LESCC) following a delay as a result of COVID-19.

Co-operation between emergency services – information-sharing

- 44. That steps be taken to investigate the compatibility of the LFB systems with those of the MPS and the LAS with a view to enabling all three emergency services systems to read each other's messages.**
- 45. That steps be taken to ensure that the airborne datalink system on every NPAS helicopter observing an incident which involves one of the other emergency services defaults to the National Emergency Service user encryption.**
- 46. That the LFB, the MPS, the LAS and the London local authorities all investigate ways of improving the collection of information about survivors and making it available more rapidly to those wishing to make contact with them.**

The Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 1 report identified problems with the way London's emergency services worked together on the night of the fire, including the way key pieces of information were collected and shared.

As discussed in relation to the Recommendations 40-43, these issues are being considered by the national Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme (JESIP), a partnership of emergency service chief officers. The revision of the Joint Doctrine has been delayed due to COVID-19 demands. It is now expected that the review will take place after the conclusion of the Manchester Arena Inquiry, which is considering related issues. This has a potential completion date in September 2021, dependent on the progress of the Inquiry.

In London, the 'Blue Lights' panel of London Emergency Services Liaison Panel (LESLP) is considering Recommendation 44 on the London Ambulance Service (LAS), London Fire Brigade and Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) reading each other's messages. The Multi-Agency Information Transfer (MAIT) is a protocol enabling information to be shared between emergency services and, ultimately, the implementation of MAIT will ensure this recommendation can be met. The Brigade's mobilising system is already MAIT-compliant, and MPS and LAS have both reported to the Mayor that they are adding this capability to their own systems. The Home Office has recently announced funding for the development of MAIT, and the National Fire Chiefs Council is leading a project to introduce MAIT to all fire and rescue services in England; a forecast completion date for this recommendation is still being determined and a further update will be provided.

As discussed under Recommendation 21, the Brigade is working with the MPS and LAS on a trial of a 'control hub', known as the London Emergency Services Control Centre (LESCC). A trial ran for seven days in February 2020 at the MPS special operations room to test ways of improving joint communications. The trial considered practice on FSG calls; the Brigade will be issuing guidance to MPS and LAS once the revision of PN 790 is complete (see above). Work was taking place to test the concept in a major incident type scenario, trialling an alternative staffing model which would keep the respective Control

Officers within their service Control rooms, but continuing to operate as a team. Work is now recommencing on the London Emergency Services Control Centre (LESCC) following a delay as a result of COVID-19.

Recommendation 45 refers to the images recorded by the police helicopter present at Grenfell Tower. These images may have assisted firefighters in responding to the fire, but the encryption of the information was incompatible between the London Fire Brigade and the National Police Air Service (NPAS). The recommendation from the Inquiry is that common encryption is used in the future.

The Brigade already has the capacity to receive images from the NPAS, and is engaging with the NPAS to ensure that arrangements for sharing these types of images are implemented, and improved if necessary. NPAS have now issued information to all Police and Crime Commissioners that the encryption will now default to enabling all emergency services to view images via the downlink. There will still be an option for the information to be encrypted if deemed necessary by the police, but this is not the default. Therefore it is considered that this action is now complete.

As discussed in relation to Recommendation 24, the Brigade is now also using aerial drones at incidents. Images from drones are therefore already being used by commanding officers and live streamed at Brigade control.

Recommendation 46 is about improving the way information about the survivors of an incident is collected and shared by London's emergency services and local authorities. Procedures for this are already set out in London's Major Incidents Procedures Manual, which is produced by the 'Blue Lights' panel of London Emergency Services Liaison Panel (LESLP). The Blue Lights panel has considered this recommendation and will now work with the Humanitarian Assistance Working Group to take forward a review of the current guidance. The review has been subject to delays due to the impact of COVID-19, but is expected to be completed by September 2021.

Other action taken by the Mayor and GLA to promote building safety

Since the Grenfell Tower tragedy, the Mayor has done everything he can to improve the safety of buildings by using his powers directly or lobbying the Government for change. For the first time, the London Plan (currently with the Secretary of State for formal approval) requires all development proposals to achieve the highest standards of fire safety. The London Plan ensures that safety is considered at the very earliest stage of building design.

In addition, the Mayor wants to be at the forefront of best practice in fire safety when commissioning new homes on GLA land. New housing developments delivered on GLA land via the London Development Panel will require the provision of sprinklers, control over combustible items in the walls in buildings of any height and the registration of white good products. The Mayor has produced guidance for other landowners encouraging them to do the same.

The Government is in the process of reforming the Building Regulations and the processes around how homes are built and managed safely. The Mayor is actively engaged in shaping these proposals. For instance, the Mayor has been a long-time supporter of the London Fire Brigade's campaign for increasing the installation of sprinklers. In his response to the consultation on sprinklers and other fire safety measures in high-rise blocks of flats, he has called again for the inclusion of sprinklers in all purpose-built flats. In March, the Government has confirmed its intention to require sprinklers in all new buildings of a height of 11 metres or above.

With respect to the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 1 report, many of the recommendations addressed to building owners and managers will require new legislation. The proposed Building Safety Bill and Fire Safety Bill are expected to address a number of the recommendations; the Mayor is lobbying to ensure this legislation delivers fully and quickly on the requirements of the Inquiry's Phase 1 report.

The Mayor made a submission to the draft Building Safety Bill call for evidence in September, proposing a number of improvements to the Bill. Namely, the Mayor asked the Government for a more comprehensive coverage of buildings within the new regime, including supported accommodation and any building that presents a fire risk. The Mayor also asked for reassurances that leaseholders would be protected and that the building safety charge would not be used to cover remediation works associated with safety defects that are the result of the failings of the current regulatory system. Finally, the Mayor asked the Government for clarity on the enforcement measures proposed,

particularly with respect to how remediation would be monitored and how residents and leaseholders would be involved in these processes.

The Mayor is exploring, with the housing sector, the best ways to encourage building owners/managers in London to appropriately implement Phase 1 recommendations prior to legislation. The Mayor has written an open letter to building owners and managers to draw attention to a range of recommendations to improve the safety of residential blocks, including some of the recommendations made in the Phase 1 report.¹⁶

The Mayor is responsible for administering the Social Sector ACM Cladding Remediation Fund and the Private Sector ACM Cladding Remediation Fund on behalf of the Government for buildings in London. All decisions regarding the scope and design of the fund, and approvals of applications, are carried out by the Government. The Mayor has called on the Government to extend the Funds to cover all types of unsafe cladding and interim safety measures. The Government announced an additional £1 billion for the remediation of other types of cladding on high-rise buildings; the GLA is administering this funding for London buildings.

In September, the Mayor wrote to more than 40 London landlords to demand faster action on the removal of ACM cladding.¹⁷ These were building owners who had funding applications approved but were yet to start remediation work. With thousands of Londoners still living in unsafe buildings, the Mayor has made it clear that owners must take all necessary steps to remove and replace dangerous cladding.

¹⁶ The letter is available at: <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/housing-and-land/housing-and-land-publications/responses-and-correspondence-building-regulations-and-fire-safety>

¹⁷ The letter is available at: <https://www.london.gov.uk/press-releases/mayoral/mayor-demands-action-from-unsafe-building-owners>

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