

The background of the entire page is a solid teal color. Overlaid on this are dark blue silhouettes of construction equipment and structures. In the foreground, there are several cranes of different types, including tower cranes and jibs. In the background, there are silhouettes of buildings under construction, some with visible window frames and scaffolding. The overall scene is a stylized representation of a construction site.

# SETTING THE BAR

A NEW COMPETENCE  
REGIME FOR BUILDING  
A SAFER FUTURE

**The Executive Summary of the Competence  
Steering Group for Building a Safer Future**

**October 2020**



## FOREWORD

One legend of the performing arts is the reported saying of W C Fields that actors should “never work with children or animals”. Perhaps the equivalent warning in my line of work would be “never write a report by committee”! This is particularly pertinent when the committee has 13 Working Groups; with active personnel that has changed on a regular basis; and with more than 300 organisations and people engaged in the report-writing process.

That said, it is quite remarkable that this report has been produced: a testament to the unified determination of these organisations to do everything they can to improve building safety and to ensure that residents feel safe in the homes that they occupy. This applies to all homes – and, indeed, all buildings – but it particularly applies to fire and structural safety in the buildings with the highest risk, as initially defined by Dame Judith Hackitt in her seminal 2018 report, *Building A Safer Future*, which has been our guiding light; and subsequently modified by the draft Building Safety Bill, which was published for pre-legislative scrutiny on 20 July, 2020. This report of the Competence Steering Group (CSG) should be read in association with the draft legislation and our Interim Report, *Raising the Bar*, which was published in August 2019.

The process of getting to this Final Report, *Setting the Bar* has been a difficult one and – as with everything in the past six

months – it has been seriously impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. We have temporarily lost chairs and secretaries of our many working groups, both due to furlough and, for example, the lightning-fast construction of Nightingale Hospitals (which showed this industry in its best light). Nonetheless, we have kept going, clocking up almost 50 meetings of the CSG along the way.

Unfortunately, some of the early complete contributions have had to be revisited due to the length of time it has taken to finalise the report, which became rather like painting the Sydney Harbour Bridge in a job that never seemed to be finished. Like trying to leave the Hotel California, it seemed that we might never check out!

At various periods over the past two years, I have reported on the progress of our work to the Industry Safety Steering Group (ISSG) and to the Industry Response Group (which formally established the CSG back in 2018). It was pleasing to see the ISSG’s second report to the Secretary of State and Minister for Building Safety, published in August 2020, which states that the ISSG is “impressed and encouraged by the significant progress, at pace, the Competence Steering Group and its working groups have made in the last year”.

However, the ISSG report goes on to say that “not all in the industry have embedded good practices and embraced the changes required to ensure the

safety of buildings. There is still a huge challenge for all those involved in competence work to ensure that those who work on higher-risk residential buildings...are competent to do so and that this is realised and implemented at all levels across the industry.”

This is a sentiment with which I concur wholeheartedly. The work on enhancing competences to date, as described in this report, is an important first step towards a better industry but it is only a beginning. The vital work is that which is yet to come and implementing the competence frameworks set out in this report is essential and must not be fudged.

On the plus side, some important things are happening. The British Standards Institution (BSI) has got to grips with implementing the recommendations of WG0 in already taking forward the development of a suite of National Standards to raise competence in the built environment sector, which means that the CSG is in the enviable position of producing a report in which key recommendations are already being implemented. And the Government has published the draft Building Safety Bill. These happenings mean that the timing of the publication of *Setting the Bar* has turned out rather well!

However, on the debit side, the impact on the economy caused by Covid-19 already appears to be encouraging a return to bad habits, particularly with regard to the ‘race to the bottom’ and cut-price bids for work (already I am hearing of absurd uneconomic pricing which seems fit only for buying cashflow) and this will be a recipe for cutting corners and quality. And while the recently announced planning reforms will help to encourage

industry recovery that must not be at the expense of quality and safety issues.

Most of what is in this report requires action by industry across the sectors represented in these discussions (fire safety, construction, the built environment, building owners and managers) and it is essential that every organisation gets cracking to arrange the enhanced competences that are required. The building safety legislation will take time to be enacted and implemented, as will the suite of National Standards which will also need to be developed through due processes. The ‘industry’ (in its widest context) cannot stand still and wait for these things to happen. It must continue the momentum towards implementing change without delay.

It is also paramount that the proposed Building Safety Bill provides the impetus to ensure that the enhanced competences outlined in this report are required for working on all buildings that are in scope to the legislation. The worst outcome would be for the best to become better but to still be “undercut” by parts of the industry that are able to dodge around the requirements to be properly competent. This will be complex to achieve but the CSG and its many constituent organisations believe that it is essential.

There are many people to thank for the preparation of this report and the plethora of important appendices, both for their participation in the working groups and the CSG itself and also for the many considered suggestions for revision we received at the two consultative conferences, held in September/October 2019, and the hundred or so formal written responses that we received to that consultative process. It has been a massive team effort and I thank you all.

Special thanks are due to the many civil servants who have participated in our work from various departments but notably to Kara Kashemsanta and Bethany Dunning who have been regular attendees at both the CSG and the various Working Groups and have patiently and diligently ensured, insofar as has been possible, alignment between our work and the Government's response to *Building a Safer Future*.

I would like to pay particular thanks to Denise Chevin who has stood by the CSG tirelessly both as its Secretary, providing invaluable support to me over the past two years, and as the principal author/editor of this report. Denise has been a tower of strength during the whole of this process and the various sectors covered by this report owe her a debt of gratitude.

Finally, I would also like to recognise the contribution of Ashley Salandy, the Head of the Better Regulation and Policy Unit of the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). When the HSE was identified as the potential host for the proposed Building Safety Regulator, Ashley became its representative on the CSG and – for a brief time – acted as a link between our work

and the HSE. Tragically, Ashley died earlier this year and our condolences go to his family, friends and colleagues. We hope that an enduring legacy will be that *Setting the Bar*, alongside all the other improvements in building safety being carried forward by the industry and Government, will be the achievement of the 'Better Regulation' that Ashley was responsible for at the time of his death.



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**Graham Watts OBE**  
**Chair, Competence Steering Group**

29th September 2020

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## What our work sets out to do

Over the past two years the Competence Steering Group (CSG) has assembled an unprecedented coalition of organisations from across the built environment and fire industries and organisations representing building owners and managers. Our aim has been to come up with a blueprint to improve competence for those working on higher-risk buildings and drive a culture change right across the industry.

We believe that the CSG's recommendations achieve both of these objectives: they lay firm foundations for a more coherent and consistent approach to assessing and ensuring competence across the critical disciplines; and accompanied by legislation laid out in the draft Building Safety Bill, they can help pave the way for widespread culture change, so that everyone recognises their responsibility as part of a wider system for delivering safe buildings.

This new system is achieved by putting in place a comprehensive set of competence standards underpinned by rigorous third party assessment for individuals and companies and third party accreditation of those who carry out the assessment.

*Setting the Bar* is the second and final report of the CSG and is an update of our Interim Report *Raising the Bar*, published in August 2019. The work was initiated by the recommendations in Dame Judith Hackitt's review *Building a Safer Future*. But there has been no doubt of a long-felt and urgent need for change in the industry.

Since the publication of the *Setting the Bar*, the CSG and its 13 Working Groups have consulted widely and taken on board feedback as they have continued to develop sector frameworks. These frameworks will provide the skills, knowledge, experience and behaviours needed to carry out specific roles, and deliver a more rigorous approach to the essential training and assessment that is required.

Alongside, we have drawn up stringent recommendations for continual learning, reassessment and third party accreditation of those assessing competence. Many sector groups have drawn up their frameworks across all building types and not just those in the higher-risk categories.

The CSG's work on competence sits within a new systems-based approach to building safety being developed by Government in the draft Building Safety Bill, along the lines envisaged by Dame Judith Hackitt in her 2018 report, *Building a Safer Future*. In the period following publication of our Interim Report, further detail has become available as to how Government intends to respond to Dame Judith's report and the outcomes of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry through a new building safety regime underpinned by legislation and guidance. This culminated with publication of the far-reaching draft Building Safety Bill in July.

We have worked closely with the Ministry for Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and some of the recommendations we are making in this report have already been acted upon and are set out in the draft Building Safety Bill.

The draft Building Safety Bill made clear that assisting and encouraging competence in the built environment is one of the key functions of the new Building Safety Regulator. Our first recommendation, for example, for a system of competence to be overseen by a building safety competence committee reporting to the Building Safety Regulator, was one such proposal. Similarly, MHCLG has commissioned the National Standards Body, BSI, to develop the National Standards for the overarching competence framework and accompanying Publicly Available Specifications (PAS) standards for the three regulated roles of Principal Designer, Principal Contractor and Building Safety Manager.

The proposed overarching system of competence is made up of four key elements:

- a new competence committee sitting within the Building Safety Regulator
- a national suite of competence standards
- arrangements for independent assessment and reassessment against the competence standards
- and a mechanism to ensure that those assessing and certifying against the standards have appropriate levels of oversight.

The national suite of competence standards will encompass:

- a British Standard for an overarching competence framework, developed as part of our work, that will be common to all disciplines and provide a basis for raising the bar for all individuals and across all disciplines
  - PAS standards for three regulated roles
  - and a series of sectoral competence standards or frameworks that provide discipline specific requirements for individual disciplines, roles or activities. These frameworks, which have been developed by 12 Working Groups, will provide the skills, knowledge, experience and behaviours needed to carry out specific roles, and a more rigorous approach to the training and assessment needed to ensure that is the case.
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We are recommending that all individuals whose work on higher-risk buildings is likely to materially affect safety outcomes, or who work unsupervised on these buildings, should meet the skills, knowledge, experience and behaviours set out in the competence frameworks developed by the industry.

That said, we would see higher-risk buildings as a starting point for the new competence frameworks for the whole of the built environment, which would result in a step change across the sector and change of industry culture.

We have also adopted the nomenclature used in the draft Building Safety Bill, so where we refer to higher-risk buildings we mean those in scope of the legislation and under the control of the Building Safety Regulator (shortened in this report to 'higher-risk buildings').

To this end, some of the Working Groups have drawn up their own sector-specific competence frameworks with the intention that they will be rolled out across the relevant profession/s or trade/s without reference to particular building types. The detail of these frameworks can be found by following links in our report to the online annexes of these individual Working Groups.

## **Background to our work**

The CSG was set up to tackle competence shortcomings identified in the 2018 Hackitt Review *Building a Safer Future*, published in the wake of the Grenfell Tower fire in June 2017. More than 300 people have been directly involved with the CSG's work, drawn from some 150 institutions and associations across the full spectrum of built environment, fire safety and building owner / manager sectors.

*Building a Safer Future* identified a lack of consistency in the processes and standards for assuring the skills, knowledge and behaviours of those working on higher-risk buildings as constituting a major flaw in the current regulatory system.

The CSG was tasked with:

- Developing the role and remit for an overarching competence body
- Ensuring a coherent and consistent approach to raising and overseeing competence standards within each discipline in scope
- Supporting the delivery of competent people working on higher-risk buildings.

The CSG tackled the challenge of raising competence standards for specific sectors by focusing on the 10 disciplines set out in Dame Judith Hackitt's final report *Building a Safer Future*, plus two further sectors (Procurement Professionals, and Construction Products) which the CSG considered equally important to bring about the necessary improvement.

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Twelve Working Groups were therefore formed for individual sectors to develop competence frameworks, and they reported to the CSG. Subsequently, a separate group (known as WG0) was tasked to come up with recommendations for the role and remit of the overarching body (or system for overseeing competence) with an aim of driving up standards and providing oversight of competence in a way that gives assurance to residents, dutyholders and regulators that those involved in the design, construction, inspection, maintenance and management of higher-risk buildings are fully competent to perform these roles.

The Working Groups are:

Overarching Competence Body (WG0)  
Engineers (WG1)  
Installers (WG2)  
Fire Engineers (WG3)  
Fire Risk Assessors (WG4)  
Fire Safety Enforcing Officers (WG5)  
Building Standards Professionals (WG6)  
Building Designers, including Architects (WG7)  
Building Safety Managers (WG8)  
Site Supervisors (WG9)  
Project Managers (WG10)  
Procurement Professionals (WG11)  
Construction Products Competence (WG12)

The Working Groups' activity has involved:

- appraising the competence frameworks and qualifications that already exist
- developing additional competence frameworks for general construction and operation
- developing additional sector frameworks specific to those working on higher-risk buildings, where required.

Each of the Working Groups started at a different place in terms of competences in their sector for working on higher-risk buildings. Some sectors already have mature competence systems (engineers and architects, for example) from which an extension can be made to cover the specialism of higher-risk buildings. And some sectors have a plethora of competence systems, which need to be assessed and reviewed.

However, a number of sectors have no recognised competence and assessment systems at all. WG8, for example, which has focused on the competences of the Building Safety Manager, has essentially started from scratch, since there is currently no recognised competence and assessment system for this discipline.

## **An overarching system for overseeing competence**

One of the areas of significant progress over the past 12 months has been in the development of an overarching system for overseeing competence, which is reflected in our report with the new workstreams.

Three of the chapters in our report cover this aspect:

- the development of National Standards and an overarching competence body
- developing an overarching competence framework
- oversight of assessment.

In the Interim Report, Working Group 0 (WG0) set out a proposal for a robust, coherent and comprehensive system of overseeing competence that gives assurance to residents, dutyholders and regulators that those involved in the design, construction, inspection, maintenance and management of higher-risk buildings are competent and that they understand the risks and responsibilities of their work and act accordingly.

During January and February 2020, it was agreed that the recommendations from WG0 would be taken forward as a programme of formal standards development work under the governance of BSI in its role as the National Standards Body, with full stakeholder engagement and open public consultation.

To co-ordinate the standards development programme, BSI has now formed a Built Environment Competence Standards (BECS) Strategy Group from the wider stakeholder base.

The key time table for development is as follows:

*September 2020* – Publication of the overarching competence framework for first public consultation

*January 2021* – Publication of the overarching competence framework standard for second public consultation

*April 2021* – Publication of the overarching competence framework standard for third public consultation. Work begins on PAS standards for Principal Designer, Principal Contractor and Building Safety Manager

*March 2022* – Publication of the overarching competence framework British Standard and accompanying guidance; and PAS standards published for Principal Designer, Principal Contractor and Building Safety Manager.

## **Additional disciplines**

The overarching competence framework is designed to be flexible enough that those sectors not yet included can in time be brought into the system. And we have made recommendations that this should happen for a number of additional roles, including designers of specialist trades, legal experts and clients.

## **Assessment and oversight**

In the Interim Report, the CSG recognised that the different sectors concerned employ a wide variety of methods for assessing competence and it promoted the need for greater consistency. The CSG agreed that the introduction of a greater degree of independent scrutiny in the assessment process and a requirement for regular reassessment of competence in all sectors would provide significantly increased assurance of competence.

Following industry consultation on our Interim Report and further discussion in the CSG and the Working Groups, it is proposed that existing arrangements for third party assessment, in the main delivered through certification and professional registration, should be improved and built on by requiring all assessments and reassessments to include – as a minimum – the competences needed for working on higher-risk buildings. The development of National Standards, as proposed in the WG0 report, will provide a benchmark for assessing competence.

It is further proposed that all organisations carrying out the assessments and reassessments should themselves be subject to a rigorous system of oversight (in *Building a Safer Future* this is referred to as ‘accrediting the accreditors’).

Bodies that certify or register members against the higher-risk buildings’ competence frameworks are expected to:

- maintain a register of those individuals certified under their scheme
- be accredited / licensed by a suitable publicly recognised body such as UKAS or the Engineering Council, or be able to demonstrate equivalent standards of robust accreditation / licensing approved by the building safety competence committee.

The system of assessment and oversight proposed is still a work in progress. There are a number of actions required to make further progress, which we set out in the report.

The development and implementation of assessment and oversight systems will vary between disciplines, depending on the completion of competence criteria.

Where good progress is made on the completion of the competence criteria, it is possible that agreed assessment and oversight arrangements could be in place for some disciplines within a year. Where completion of the competence criteria is delayed, this could take significantly longer (up to Spring 2023).

### **Third party assessment of individuals**

There is absolute agreement that everyone working on in-scope buildings must work within a system of competence assessment and management to ensure they are competent to deliver safe outcomes.

In most instances, the expectation is that demonstrating competence will be through third party assessment, where individuals are assessed by an independent organisation, such as certification, professional or licensed bodies, which are independent of the work that that person undertakes (that is, they are not an employer or contractor and would therefore be in effect ‘marking their employees’ homework’).

Third party assessment should be required of all persons whose work is likely to materially affect safety outcomes and must be required for those who work unsupervised.

However, it is also recognised that it may not always be practical or necessary to require that every person is third party assessed.

In these circumstances, non-third party assessed persons working on higher-risk buildings will need to be properly supervised.

Sectoral competence frameworks must clearly set out at what level or in what roles third party assessment is and is not required, and the requirements for supervision where applicable. These arrangements should be subject to approval by the building safety competence committee established within the Building Safety Regulator to provide confidence that building safety is not in any way jeopardised.

The net result of this approach would be to ensure that all safety-critical decisions and work are undertaken by third party assessed persons who are competent to do so. All other persons involved in work on higher-risk buildings will, as a minimum, be subject to audited and evidenced competence assessment or management processes and supervision by a third party assessed person. Such an approach would also allow suitable flexibility for new entrants to gain experience and develop suitable competence over time.

### **Third party assessment of organisations**

In considering the need for a greater degree of independent scrutiny, the CSG’s main focus has been on the verification of the competence of individuals, as highlighted in *Building a Safer Future*. However, discussion in the Working Groups and the results of the consultation exercise have indicated that consideration also needs to be given to the competence of organisations.

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In some sectors, it is common for organisations (for example, installation companies) to be required to demonstrate that they employ competent staff, who are properly assessed, managed and supervised. This can be achieved by third party certification of the service provided by the organisation or of the competence management system operated by the organisation. The final recommendations therefore reflect this point and it will be for the Working Groups and the building safety competence committee to decide how this will operate in practice for each sector.

### **A new role of Building Safety Manager**

Additionally, we have completed the work of setting out competence requirements for the Building Safety Manager, which has formed a major element of our work. *Setting the Bar* includes a summary under the Working Group 8 section, but there is a full and separate report published by WG8 at the same time as this report, *Safer People, Safer Homes: Building Safety Management*, reflecting the fact that WG8 is establishing a completely new role and the competence needed.

### **Building control**

In the past few months, a Future of Building Control Working Group has been established under MHCLG auspices to look at building control / standards across the whole of the built environment.

In parallel with WG6's deliberations, the Future of Building Control Working Group has also been set up to consider how best to establish / re-establish building control as a profession and examine how the whole building control / standards sector could be regulated.

The Group has so far looked at strengthening professional pathways, how to support a unified (Approved Inspector and LABC) sector and a generic competence framework (building on the draft higher-risk buildings framework produced by WG6).

In May those responsible for the Future of Building Control Working Group and WG6 frameworks agreed to produce a unified comprehensive competence framework and publish it for use by the building control sector at the earliest opportunity. It is then recommended that this competence framework is subjected to a BSI process, similar to that of the three regulated roles, translating into a full British Standard.

The CSG is fully supportive of these developments and agrees to the proposed actions.

## **Continuing professional development**

Across all sectors, there has been clear commitment to a continuing professional development (CPD) framework. It is agreed that CPD is important for the sectors which this report covers to ensure they maintain their existing skill-set and are able to integrate new products, technologies and techniques into their work.

Although the CPD and assessment requirements for each sector will vary significantly, it is proposed that common principles are established to guide sectors, and to which the building safety competence committee would hold sectors accountable.

To ensure these principles are embedded, UKAS and the Engineering Council have begun working with each sector to ensure there is clear oversight of each sector's CPD and assessment processes in order to provide assurance that it is being carried out effectively and consistently.

## **Implementation and barriers to take up**

Inevitably, our report is a snapshot in time of a highly ambitious programme to overhaul competence and culture. Because of the differing 'starting points' across the trades and professions that make up the built environment sector, some aspects of our work are at different stages of progress to others. Many of the Working Groups require time and investment to achieve the outcomes detailed in their recommendations.

The scale of costs and time required are diverse, being related to matters like the current availability of people and maturity of training and development systems. Some Working Groups envisage completely new arrangements, others the modification or adaptation of existing systems.

There is still much to be done, not least by the Working Groups, many of which will remain in place and take forward their work, possibly reporting directly to the proposed building safety competence committee, or through a continuation of the Competence Steering Group. We have set out this programme of work in the section on implementation.

We also recognise the need for culture change: doing a job well is about attitude and values as well as having the right skills and qualifications on paper.

We very much welcome the setting up of the building safety competence committee and the recognition that there needs to be continued oversight to provide continued improvement and guidance. We would encourage that this happens as soon as practicable.

That said, the CSG is disappointed that the draft Building Safety Bill has stopped short of mandating the need for those working on higher-risk buildings to be assessed against the frameworks. Instead, MHCLG is relying on the top-down approach – greater accountability through the new dutyholder roles, coupled with more oversight through the gateway process to drive changes in behaviour from above.

Responsible firms will want to adopt the sectoral frameworks and ensure that those in their employ working on higher-risk buildings are assessed against them by third party accredited organisations. But at a time when the economy is fragile, and the industry is facing a period of financial turmoil, those that are pursuing the highest standards of competence and quality need to know that they are competing in a market which rewards the right behaviours.

Without regulatory pressure, it remains likely that those who can undercut on price by not complying with the new framework will continue to win work, and the culture of cutting corners and putting building users at risk will remain.

There certainly needs to be a great deal more signposting of the importance of appointing individuals or organisations that have the appropriate certification/registration.

It is vital Government takes the lead and sets the example of leading culture change by requiring that the competence framework set out within this report must be met by any company or individual working on any higher-risk building.

Using opportunities such as where the public sector is the client, or where a contract involves a public sector project in the built environment including the management of occupied premises, the Government should implement, and through advice to public authorities and agencies, seek to use and promote the competence framework.

The CSG believes that in the publication of its draft Building Safety Bill, Government has set out the biggest reform of building safety in 40 years. We trust that it will provide the mandate for the adoption of sector-specific competence frameworks in the secondary legislation, which we hope to expect in spring 2021.

There is no time to lose in casting aside the substandard practices that have shamed the industry. In this document we have set a new bar. We would urge all those in professions and trades in life critical disciplines to attain these higher levels of competence. Only then can we rebuild the trust of those who occupy and live in the buildings we design, construct and manage.

## Consolidated recommendations

These are a summary of recommendations made in the Working Group reports. The full versions can be found in individual Working Groups.

Recommendations that are common to all Working Groups have been consolidated.

To briefly summarise, before listing our recommendations, the proposed overarching system of competence is made up of four key elements:

- a new competence committee sitting within the Building Safety Regulator;
- a national suite of competence standards;
- arrangements for independent assessment and re-assessment against the competence standards; and
- a mechanism to ensure that those assessing and certifying against the standards have appropriate levels of oversight.

The national suite of competence standards will encompass:

- a British Standard for an overarching competence framework;
- PAS standards for three regulated roles; and
- a series of sectoral competence standards that provide specific requirements for individual disciplines, roles or activities.

We are recommending that all individuals whose work on higher-risk buildings is likely to materially affect safety outcomes, or who work unsupervised on these buildings, should meet the skills, knowledge, experience and behaviours set out in the competence frameworks developed by the industry.

We are recommending that a top-down and bottom-up approach should be taken to improve systems for assessing and assuring competence. The overarching competence framework, developed as part of our work, will provide a basis for raising the bar for all individuals and across all disciplines.

We were pleased that a new competence committee reporting into the Building Safety Regulator was announced in the draft Building Safety Bill as per our Recommendation 1. Similarly, MHCLG has commissioned the National Standards Body to develop the National Standards for the overarching competence framework and the three regulated roles as per our Recommendation 3, while organisations involved in the Working Groups have committed to continuing to develop the competence standards for their sectors.



Our consolidated list of recommendations follows.

**Recommendation 1: A new committee for competence** – A strategic, industry-led building safety competence committee should be created comprising representatives of relevant industry bodies, independent experts, building owners and Government. The committee should be appointed or designated by the Building Safety Regulator to:

- raise competence by working with and challenging professional and trade bodies to drive gap-filling
- promote the equivalence of accreditation or licensing systems
- issue guidance to dutyholders and the Regulator on selecting competent people,
- provide a space for industry to continue to work collaboratively to drive competence more widely
- provide or signpost guidance to industry and the public on relevant legislation, registers and standards relevant to higher-risk buildings.

**Recommendation 2: Develop an overarching competence framework** – Industry should complete the work to develop an overarching competence framework for higher-risk buildings as a National Standard under the governance of the National Standards body.

**Recommendation 3: Develop competences for regulated roles** – The three regulated roles that have primary responsibility for building and life safety at each stage of a building’s lifecycle (Principal Designer, Principal Contractor and Building Safety Manager) require competences in addition to any discipline-related competences. The competences of these regulated roles should be developed and maintained as National Standards. (New PAS standards specifying competence requirements for the three regulated roles are in preparation).

**Recommendation 4: Set up a centralised list** – The Building Safety Regulator should hold and maintain a register of those qualified to perform the three regulated roles, with the advice of the building safety competence committee and provide sign-posting to the registers held by the professional and trade bodies (see Recommendation 13).

**Recommendation 5: Mandate continuing professional development** – Levels of competence should be maintained and subject to continuing professional development. Common principles of CPD should be established for each sector, which the building safety competence committee should use to hold sectors to account.

**Recommendation 6: Develop fire safety materials** – Fire safety CPD materials explaining basic fire science would be beneficial across the industry and for those managing occupied higher-risk buildings.

**Recommendation 7: Apply stringent assessment of individuals** – For individuals whose work materially affects safety, or who work unsupervised, compliance needs to be demonstrated by independent, third party assessment. All others working on higher-risk buildings should be supervised by individuals who have been third party assessed as competent to carry out the work and to act as supervisors.

**Recommendation 8: Employ competent people** – We are recommending that all individuals whose work on higher-risk buildings is likely to materially affect safety outcomes, or who work unsupervised on these buildings, should meet the skills, knowledge, experience and behaviours set out in the competence frameworks developed by the industry.

**Recommendation 9: Reassess competence** – For those involved with higher-risk buildings, there should be a robust system of reassessment so as to ensure that they have maintained their competence in relation to the work they are registered / certified to undertake and have a plan to develop new competences where necessary. The frequency of reassessment may vary between disciplines, but it should be at least every five years.

**Recommendation 10: Improve existing arrangements** – Existing arrangements, for assessing and reassessing competence, in the main delivered through certification and professional registration, should be improved to include – as a minimum – the competences needed for working on higher-risk buildings.

**Recommendation 11: Adopt the sectoral competence frameworks** – The competence frameworks proposed by each working group (WG1-WG12) should be adopted as the basis for assessing the competence of those in the profession / trade covered by the framework who work on higher-risk buildings. Professional and trade bodies are expected to develop and maintain their individual sector-specific or discipline competence frameworks in light of the overarching competence framework as it develops.

**Recommendation 12: Extend the competence frameworks** – A similar approach to the current methodology should be employed for all trades and professions not yet addressed. Specifically, the community in question should work collectively to undertake a process of analysis and enhancement to make competences clear, robust and fit for purpose. The overarching competence framework is designed to enable other sectors to be brought within it.

**Recommendation 13: Professional bodies should maintain registers of competent individuals** – Professional and trade bodies that assess and reassess members against a sector specific competence framework for higher-risk buildings are expected to maintain a register of those individuals certified under their scheme.

**Recommendation 14: Apply stringent assessment for organisations** – In those sectors where third party assessment is carried out at the organisation level (ie, companies, rather than, or as well as individuals, are third party assessed), the requirements for organisations will need to set out clearly how the competence of the individuals carrying out the work is assessed and how they are managed and supervised.

**Recommendation 15: Oversight of assessors** – All organisations carrying out the assessment and reassessment of competence should themselves be subject to a rigorous system of oversight for their activities in relations to higher-risk buildings (in *Building a Safer Future* referred to as ‘accrediting the accreditors’). This should be undertaken by a body such as UKAS or the Engineering Council, or another body able to demonstrate equivalent standards of accreditation or licensing.

**Recommendation 16: Mandatory registration/certification** – Wherever appropriate, Government should mandate persons working on higher-risk buildings to be registered/certified by a recognised professional/ certification body.

#### **Working Group 1 – Engineers**

**Recommendation 17: Appoint a Lead Engineer** – Dutyholders should appoint a Lead Engineer with responsibility for overall safety systems integration and risk management.

**Recommendation 18: Adopt a safety management system** – For interfaces between systems a systematic safety management process should be used throughout the building lifecycle, comprising a safety management system, safety case and a hazard identification and risk assessment methodology with engineering leadership; ensuring effective process and functional integration. This should be a user-friendly process to enable collaboration across stakeholders incorporating the needs of the residents.

**Recommendation 19: Assessment and revalidation for engineers** – The Engineering register should incorporate the contextualised standards requiring assessment and re-validation based on the identified levels of higher-risk buildings competences cross-referenced to the overarching competence framework, and build competence profiles underpinned by the code of ethics.

## Working Group 2 - Installers

### **Recommendation 20: Use a recognised framework including card scheme –**

The industry should adopt a framework for all the installer sectors working on higher-risk buildings that can be applied to other project types. The framework will consist of:

- Accredited third party certification of companies
- Level 2 or 3 qualifications for individuals
- A card scheme such as, but not limited to, the CSCS
- CPD refresher training and the maintenance of individual skills
- All installers have a core knowledge of fire safety in buildings – training to be standardised and made mandatory.

**Recommendation 21: New sector assurance frameworks** – Where sectors do not currently operate within the above, these will need to be defined and developed.

**Recommendation 22: Standardised terminology** – The same educational terms should be adopted across all installer sectors.

**Recommendation 23: Refresher training** – An industry-wide CPD refresher training programme should be introduced within each installer sector specifying the training, process and accessible storage of records. Contractors and building safety managers should ensure industry-agreed fire safety resources are presented to all installers at induction.

**Recommendation 24: New competence systems** – WG2 continues to explore competence systems for designers and task supervisors.

## Working Group 3 – Fire Engineers

**Recommendation 25: Recognise professional engineers** – Professional engineers (individuals who are members of a Professional Engineering Institution licensed by the Engineering Council) should be recognised as a means of providing assurance of relevant competence.

**Recommendation 26: Central guidance on roles** – That MHCLG should produce statutory guidance for the Principal Designer, Principal Contractor and Building Safety Manager roles to ensure that those in these regulated roles appoint only professionally registered fire engineers to ensure that fire safety critical work on in-scope buildings is carried out appropriately.

**Recommendation 27: RIBA Plan of Work to become the norm** – The RIBA Plan of Work is accepted as an industry standard template for managing projects.

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**Recommendation 28: Fire safety strategy to be part of design** – A number of key fire engineering-related deliverables should be produced as part of the design process – notably a fire safety strategy for the works, which will describe the basis of the fire safety design and which will detail how the design meets the relevant legislation and standards. This should be updated as the project progresses and upon completion a final version should be handed to the building user. This will assist the dutyholder and their other fire safety advisors and risk assessors to undertake their duties once the premises are in occupation.

#### **Working Group 4 – Fire Risk Assessors**

**Recommendation 29: Assessor accreditation** – Accredited third party certification of fire risk assessors and organisations should be introduced with registers of persons accredited by UKAS and others validated by being part of a Professional Engineering Institution licensed by the Engineering Council.

**Recommendation 30: Statutory duty to use accredited assessors** – A statutory requirement to use only fire risk assessors meeting the standards defined in WG4 criteria to conduct assessments of in-scope buildings and those of complex fire risk will safeguard and reassure the public, regulators and firefighters that competent fire risk assessments have been made.

**Recommendation 31: Register for fire risk assessors** – To assist the public, responsible persons and dutyholders to gain reassurance and confidence, a fire risk assessors’ register compiled from the existing registers is proposed. It should be easy to use with open public access to records of individuals and organisations who both meet the defined criteria and are validated or registered by a certification or professional body.

#### **Working Group 5 – Fire Safety Officers**

**Recommendation 32: Resolve legislative overlap:** – The legislative fire safety overlap should be resolved and / or those who are responsible for regulating fire safety under the Housing Act should demonstrate their competence through a suitable competence framework.

**Recommendation 33: Initiate a recruitment drive** – Government should consider the broader issues associated with recruitment and retention of fire safety officers and support fire and rescue services in addressing these.

**Recommendation 34: Provide additional funding** – The increased financial burdens to fire and rescue services as a result of enhanced competence standards proposed in the revised competence framework should be addressed by Government to ensure effective fire safety regulation by professional, competent fire and rescue service fire safety officers.

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**Recommendation 35: Quality assurance in other areas** – Consideration needs to be given to how the competence of fire safety officers in the devolved administrations, Crown Premises Fire Safety Inspectorate and Defence Fire Safety Regulators are quality assured.

### **Working Group 6 – Building Standards Professionals**

**Recommendation 36: Accept the framework** – WG6 framework should be accepted for the assessment of competence of building standards professionals working on higher-risk buildings.

**Recommendation 37: Mandate regular peer reviews** – The period between peer review of competence for Building Standards Professionals should be at least once every five years, subject to there being suitable management systems within the workplace to monitor competence and record CPD annually.

**Recommendation 38: A central role for the Building Safety Regulator** – The regulator should be the body responsible for controlling and maintaining the system of competence for the building standards profession.

**Recommendation 39: Restrict the framework alteration process** – Any changes to this framework can only be with the consideration and approval of the organisations (not individuals) forming Working Group 6.

### **Working Group 7 – Building Designers (including architects)**

**Recommendation 40: Competence framework to cover designers** – The competence framework at Annex 7C is adopted as a way for assessing the competence of building designers working on higher-risk buildings, and is reviewed on a regular basis.

**Recommendation 41: Five-yearly reassessments** – That the competence of building designers working on higher-risk buildings is reassessed every five years.

### **Working Group 8 – Building Safety Managers**

(The summary of recommendations made by WG8 below, is expanded on within the full report *Safer People, Safer Homes: Building Safety Management*, issued by WG8 in conjunction with this report).

**Recommendation 42: A defined role for Building Safety Manager –**

The Building Safety Manager (BSM) should:

- be a role with statutory duties and functions, responsible for life safety in whole buildings and for engagement with residents / occupiers
- ideally sit within a wider organisational structure, the Organisation BSM. The body corporate will need to comply with legal requirements for organisational capability – which will be assessed during the Building Registration Certification (BRC) application process) – and will have to have a named (senior) individual that will ensure that the Named Individual BSM(s) will be appropriately competent and have the resources necessary
- be appointed by the Accountable Person (AP), who is the dutyholder. The AP cannot delegate their duties to the BSM.

**Recommendation 43: Defined role for Named Individual –** A competence framework for the Named Individual BSM covering the core knowledge, skills, experience and behaviours required for the role, should be adopted for higher-risk buildings and beyond. To be a competent Named Individual BSM, a person must:

- demonstrate adequate and appropriate minimum relevant experience in managing building risk, and demonstrate a relevant recognised professional qualification
- demonstrate the requirements of the competence framework are met through assessment of their skills, knowledge, experience and behaviour
- resubmission for certification of Named Individual BSM competence should occur every three years, evidencing participation in a refresher course, relevant CPD and adherence to the Code of Conduct.

**Recommendation 44: Statutory registration and certification –** There should be a statutory certification and registration structure for higher-risk buildings covering:

- a building registration: to operate and occupy buildings in scope with any residential accommodation, with classification based on risk profile which would include building types, occupancy and complexity, amongst others
  - registration (checking of suitability criteria during the building registration process) for the legal entity BSM organisation to operate residential accommodation
  - registration for the Accountable Person / dutyholder who would be held responsible and accountable for building safety and resident engagement.
  - certification (third party accredited) for the Named Individual BSM against the WG8 competence framework
  - a national register for these statutory roles, (AP, BSM, Named Individual BSM) maintained by the regulator to facilitate the traceability and transparency of role holders.
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**Recommendation 45: A mandatory Fire and Emergency File** – To maintain the golden thread of information throughout a building’s lifecycle, the Fire and Emergency File should become mandatory for all residential new and existing residential buildings (except detached and semi-detached owner occupied).

**Recommendation 46: Common formatting of information** –The content and structure of the Safety Case File and the Fire and Emergency File should be mandated, and this information should only be uploaded and managed by competent persons. The information should be held on a single national database.

**Recommendation 47: BSM’s residential role** – The BSM will be responsible for the resident engagement strategy and its implementation, for and on behalf the dutyholder.

**Recommendation 48: ‘Fire kills’ campaign extended** – Occupier education and engagement should be supported by an extended ‘Fire Kills’ campaign.

**Recommendation 49: Residential access rights** – There should be a strengthened right of ‘reasonable and proportionate’ access to individual residential units which should be enshrined in new and standard clauses in leases and provided for in existing tenure contracts.

### **Working Group 9 – Site Supervisors**

**Recommendation 50: Three on-site roles** – There is a need for three distinct roles to ensure the on-site delivery of a safe building (Annex 9A details the competence framework required of each role):

- Construction Project Manager (CPM), whose primary role is to liaise with the client and design team, procure the appropriate subcontractors, materials, plant and equipment required of the project and oversee all construction work
- Site Supervisor (SS), who oversees the on-site construction works to ensure the works are completed safely, to specification and to the required standard
- Independent Construction Assessor (ICA), a new role working on behalf of the client, is involved in the design phase defining the test and inspection regime required and then assures the on and off-site works comply with the design and all necessary building standards and regulations.

### **Working Group 10 – Project Managers**

**Recommendation 51: Competence framework for project managers** – The adoption of a project management competence framework with additional requirements particular to in-scope buildings should be standardised.

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**Recommendation 52: Comprehensive competence required** – That ‘comprehensive’ be the level of competence that is required of PMs (‘comprehensive’ being the highest level of competence as defined within the APM framework).

**Recommendation 53: Professional bodies accredited** – That the professional bodies involved in the training and accreditation of project managers seek to have their own in-house systems, which focus on the particular area of in-scope competences, accredited by a third party organisation.

**Recommendation 54: Professional body membership mandatory** – That all project managers in this field must be members of a recognised professional body (or equivalent).

### **Working Group 11 – Procurement Professionals**

**Recommendation 55: Accrediting the Procurement Lead** – The Procurement Lead will be assessed and accredited against a new procurement competence framework which identifies the capabilities and knowledge that are needed to carry out all procurement activities identified for in-scope buildings.

**Recommendation 56: Procurement Lead essential** – There must be a designated individual who is assigned as the procurement lead. This lead must have a comprehensive competence level at every stage of the RIBA Plan of Work.

### **Working Group 12 – Construction Products Competence**

**Recommendation 57: Competence matrix as benchmark** – The ‘SKEB’ competence matrix and methodology should be further developed through the National Standards programme and rolled out across the built environment industry as a benchmark for ensuring correct product interactions.

**Recommendation 58: Competence matrix recognition** – The new regulatory framework and sanctions recognise the WG12 competence framework as the way industry is to behave when addressing products and their interactions.

**Recommendation 59: Framework to be industry integrated** – As the WG12 framework is developed and applied, due consideration is made to ensure it co-ordinates and fits with other competence work and with product information standards (being developed by the CPA Marketing Integrity Group).





