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The Rt. Hon. Michael Gove MP
Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities
Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
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18th May 2023

Dear Michael,

The APPG's advisers and I recently met three of your department officials, along with the Independent Review of Construction Product Testing – Review Chair and Panel (Paul Morrell OBE and Anneliese Day KC) on Wednesday 26th April. This was to discuss the long-awaited Independent Review of Construction Product Testing, published on the 20th April 2023.

Whilst there had been little time afforded for a fully considered response to the review, we were assured that the meeting was essentially to establish links and a dialogue and it would be the start of a long conversation ahead, involving detailed interactions with the construction and design industry. The Review team said it had received very positive engagement from the Fire APPG and Paul Morrell thanked the Group's Product Technical Adviser, Mike Wood BA (Hons) Oxon for his engagement and support. We found the meeting most constructive and encouraging.

As Chairman of the APPG (Fire Safety & Rescue) I am keen for the Group to continue to engage with the Policy Team and to make clear what we could do to help reforms. As a starting point however, it would be most helpful if we could see an open-ended statement by Government, stating its plans to reform (in response to the review, or otherwise) and to clarify when that response might be due.

Without this clarity, there is a risk, following the debacle re CE/UKCA marking, that businesses will be slow to invest money and effort in reform that may become irrelevant in the future.

A second Issue of concern to the Group is that Government currently has a report saying that certain standards are 'not fit for purpose'. Despite this, the Government appear to be holding back in sharing this. The APPG's interest in said report is such that if we are to work with you involving those detailed interactions with the construction and design industry referred to earlier, then we need to be aware of all reports relevant to this joint working. We would therefore like to make a formal request to see this report, which surely would also be in the public interest?

Subject to those matters being satisfactorily clarified and resolved, the APPG looks forward to continuing the very positive engagement already established with your team and involving detailed interactions with the construction and design industry.

Kind Regards,

Bob Blackman MP

Chairman of the APPG for Fire Safety & Rescue

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