



CONSTRUCTION DEFECTS
ALLIANCE

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**CONSTRUCTION DEFECTS ALLIANCE WELCOMES ‘VERY SIGNIFICANT’
INCLUSION OF ‘SAFE’ ESCAPE ROUTES IN FIRE SAFETY CODE OF PRACTICE**

Alliance will work to ensure State fully funds interim fire safety measures – such as fire alarm upgrades and making escape routes safe – envisaged under Code of Practice

New web portal will play key role in keeping owners and OMCs informed of latest developments and help gather much-needed data for planning defects remediation scheme

The Construction Defects Alliance has said that the inclusion of ‘safe’ escape routes in the Fire Safety Code of Practice for defective apartment developments and, thus, the anticipated Interim Fire Safety Measures Scheme is very significant.

Today, the Minister for Housing, Darragh O’Brien TD, published the Fire Safety Code of Practice and announced that funding mechanisms for interim fire safety measures will be published in the autumn.

Construction Defects Alliance spokesperson, Pat Montague, explained that over the past year – when it became apparent that the full roll-out of a remediation scheme for defective apartments could take up to 10 years – the Alliance, together with the ‘Not Our Fault’ group, has been advocating for an Interim Fire Safety Measures Scheme so that people can continue to live safely and free from worry and anxiety in their apartments while they await remediation.

“Today Minister O’Brien has published the Fire Safety Code of Practice and he referenced the creation of an Interim Fire Safety Measures Scheme under the Housing Agency, details of which will be published this autumn. We know that up to 90,000 apartments across the country could be affected by fire safety defects and, as the Code of Practice acknowledges, a range of interim measures – such as fire alarm upgrades and presence of fire wardens – may be required so that people can continue to live safely in their homes while awaiting remediation.

“Significantly, the Code of Practice – and the Interim Measures Scheme which will be based upon the Code – will include making escape routes safe as well as ensuring that they are well-lit and free of obstacles. We know of a number of apartment developments where escape routes are compromised from a safety perspective so it’s crucial for the residents of these complexes that their escape routes are made fire-safe.”

Pat Montague said that after the summer break, the Alliance will be engaging intensively with the Minister and his officials to tease out the details of the interim measures scheme – especially the financing arrangements for the rest of 2023 and 2024.

“The Code of Practice makes clear that where a professional decides that fire alarm upgrades or safety works on an escape route are necessary, then they require immediate action so that people can continue to live safely in the apartment complexes concerned. The only way this can happen in reality is through a centralised scheme run by the Housing Agency and fully-funded by the State.

“In this context, it’s worth bearing in mind that works to make escape routes safe would normally form part of a programme for full remediation of a defective building – which Government have already said they will fully fund. All we are asking is that these works and funding be brought forward so people can live safely and with reduced levels of safety-related stress in their homes.”

Returning to Minister O’Brien’s announcement, Pat Montague said that another key element of it is the creation of a web portal for apartment owners, OMCs and managing agents which has now gone live.

“Given that there is no central database for the country’s apartment developments, the information that the portal will gather on the location of defective developments, the nature of their defects and the extent to which they have been remediated or not will be crucial in the planning of the overall remediation scheme. In addition, the web portal will provide much-needed information and advice to all involved with defective apartments,” Mr Montague concluded.