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## Fire performance of external wall cladding systems - BC Update 244

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### Abbreviation

BC Update 244

### Valid from

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### Information provider

Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

### Information type

Guidelines

### Format

Website

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### Description

This guide discusses how external wall cladding systems can be tested to determine their fire performance. This information will help industry to demonstrate compliance with the requirements of the New Zealand Building Code, consider the overall risks associated with the building's use, the risk profile of its occupants, the building height and other fire safety systems in the building.

Significant high-rise fire events globally have increased our understanding of how fire spreads externally and within modern facade construction.

This has prompted MBIE to review the current methods used to demonstrate compliance of external wall cladding systems with building regulations' fire safety objectives. In particular, how New Zealand requirements should be interpreted and whether international alternative fire test and evaluation methods are suitable for use here.

### Scope

This guidance is intended to:

- make it clear what constitutes an external wall cladding system for testing external vertical fire spread and assessing performance against the New Zealand Building Code requirements
- describe the suite of fire testing protocols that could be applied to demonstrate compliance with the Building Code
- scope the parameters that need to be considered when addressing external vertical fire spread.

The guidance includes the following chapters:

- Introduction
- New Zealand Building Code compliance pathways
- Fire test methods for external wall cladding systems
- External wall cladding system vertical fire spread - risk assessment approach
- Documentation and evidence for building consent

- Resources for fire testing protocols of external wall cladding

The guidance **does not** intend to provide a fire-engineered design solution for individual construction details but covers broad principles requiring consideration in their development. Some of the principles are based on a simplistic risk assessment approach.

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