



‘TURNING THE TANKER’

Draft Building Safety Bill Survey

SEPTEMBER 2020





ABOUT THE SURVEY

In the days, months and now years since the Grenfell Tower tragedy, policy makers have repeatedly committed to fundamental reform of Building Safety across the United Kingdom.

The farthest reaching reforms are contained within the Draft Building Safety Bill (BSB), which was published by the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government on 20th July 2020. The BSB currently focuses on Higher Risk Buildings (multi occupancy residential buildings over 6 storeys or 18m in height).

In addition to the BSB, property managers will also have to comply with the revised Fire Safety Order whose changes are proceeding through parliament in the Fire Safety Bill. There is also the potential for secondary legislation to adopt the Grenfell Inquiry recommendations.

The Government has described this regulatory overhaul as the greatest reform of Building Safety regulation in 40 years and this survey seeks to understand the impacts and practical realities of this change on the large property owners (Accountable Persons) that will be required to deliver upon it.

We named this survey report ‘Turning the Tanker’ to reflect the scale of the proposed changes in the context of a slow moving, complex and large scale housing sector.

METHODOLOGY

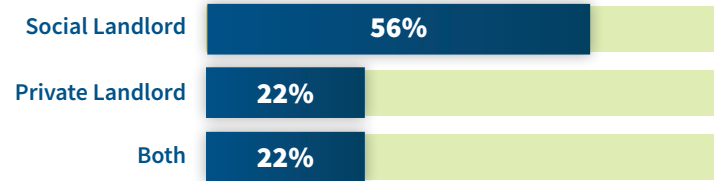
Senior housing executives representing over 5,000 HRBs were invited to participate in the survey of which respondents representing 1,048 HRBs agreed to take part in a telephone interview.

Telephone interviews were conducted on a 1:1 basis between 18th Aug - 2 Sept 2020. A mixture of qualitative and quantitative questions were asked and verbatim comments captured. All responses have been anonymised.

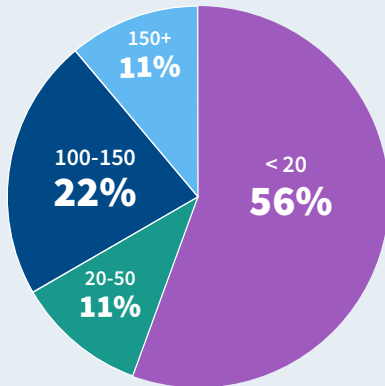
PARTICIPANT JOB ROLE



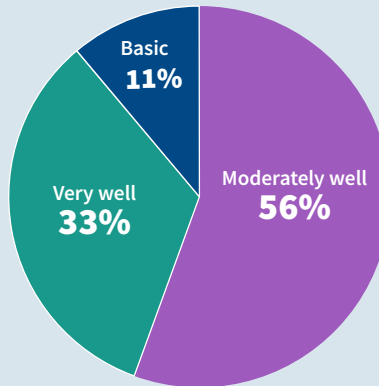
ORGANISATION TYPE



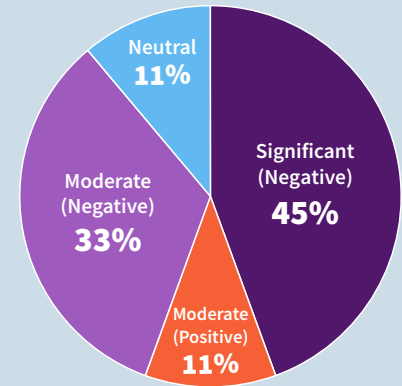
1. Number of HRBs in your portfolio?



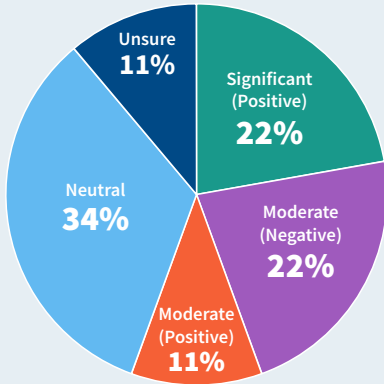
2. How well do you understand the implications of the BSB for your organisation?



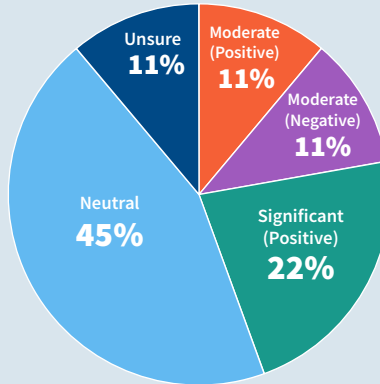
3. How profoundly do you think the BSB will impact the finances of your organisation?



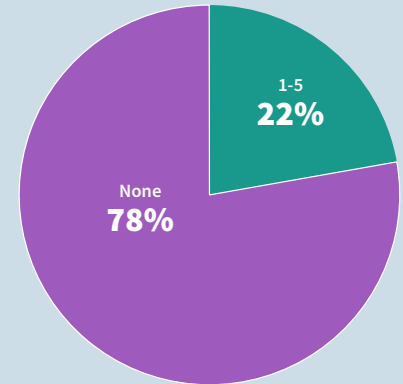
4. How profoundly do you think the BSB will impact the people in your organisation?



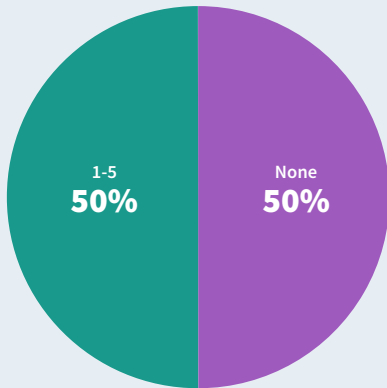
5. How profoundly do you think the BSB will impact the IT systems in your organisation?



6. How many Building Safety Cases has your organisation written so far?



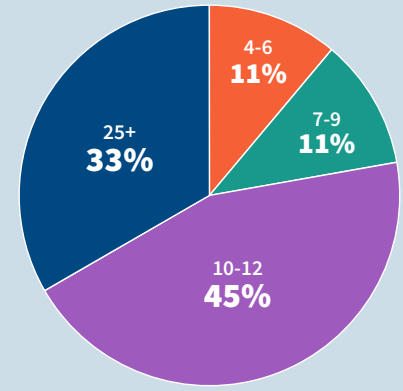
7. How many Building Safety Cases have been peer-reviewed outside of your organisation?



8. Do you have an estimate of the average cost to produce each Building Safety Case?



9. How many months will you need to demonstrate compliance with all aspects of the bill?

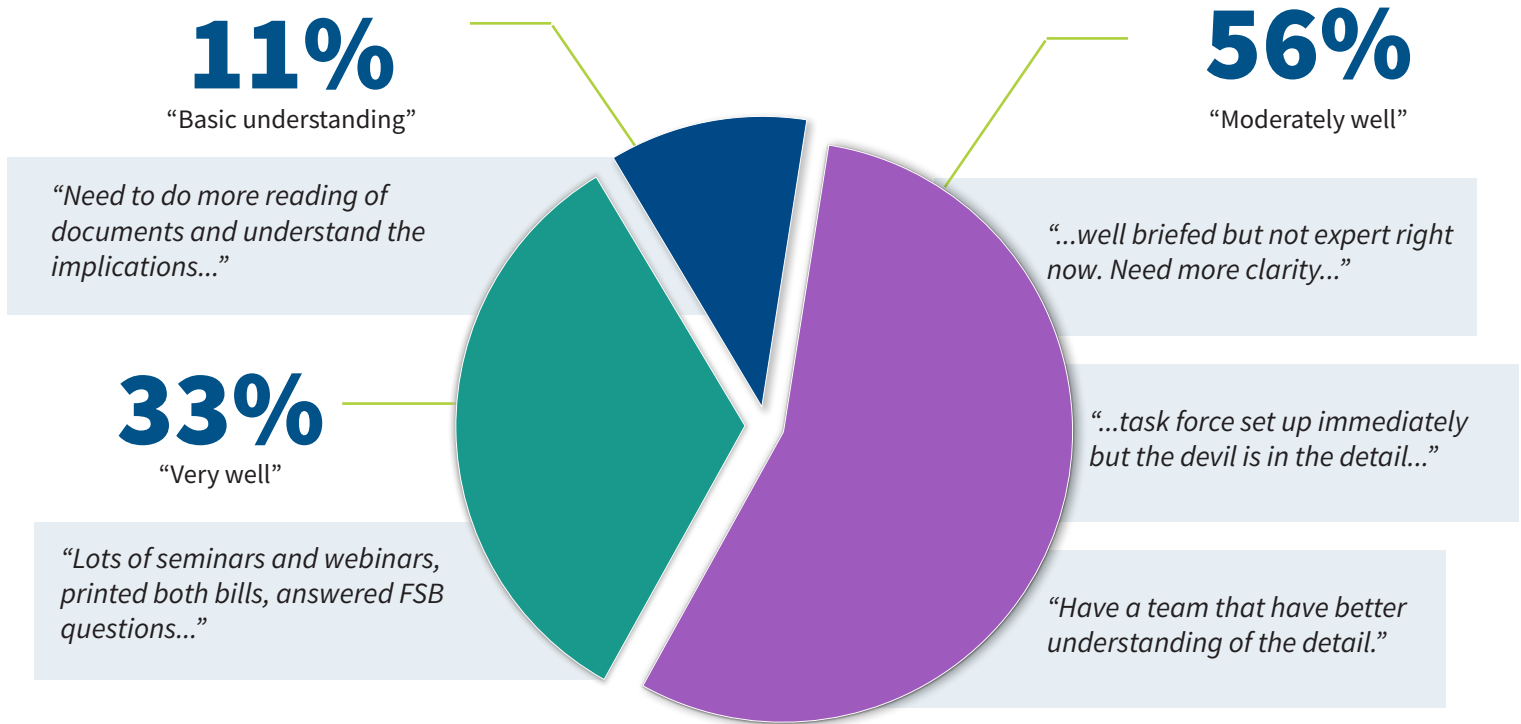




DETAILED ANALYSIS

A key objective for this survey is to gauge the level of positive and negative impact on large organisations that the proposed overhaul of Building Safety regulations could cause. This section of the survey report delves deeper into each question, shares verbatim comments from the respondents and summarises our thoughts as the Building Safety Register.

How well do you understand the implications of the Building Safety Bill for your organisation?

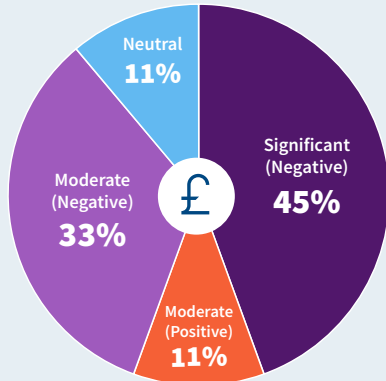


OUR THOUGHTS

Organisations are still in the process of learning what this new bill will mean for them. Some are working with MHCLG as early adopters to start implementing solutions now. Others have set up dedicated teams who are studying the bill and the implications for their organisation. However, many are still awaiting further guidance from the government as many aspects are still unclear.

In your organisation, how profoundly do you think the Building Safety Bill will impact ...

FINANCES



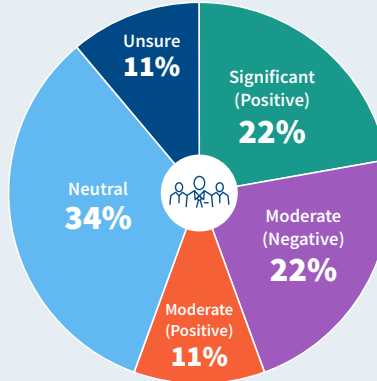
"...new department to fulfil duties, costs can be recharged from service charges."

"...Cost of BSC data gathering and remediation. Latent defect cover expired. £130m estimate."

"Lots of extra spend on getting ready, employment, inspections, software etc..."

Many of the required functions are already being performed in some capacity and in the private sector additional costs can be recharged to leaseholders. Some organisations are putting projects on hold in order to redirect finance to Building Safety work.

PEOPLE



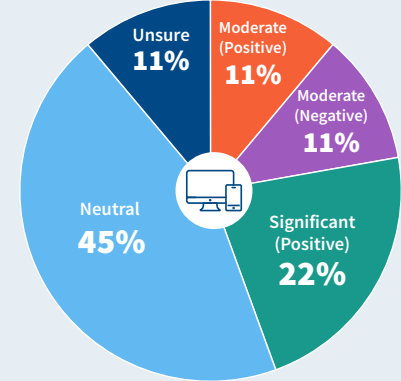
"Whistleblowing role could cause friction across the organisation. Some may resist."

"Positive for compliance as it will drive awareness and understanding of safety..."

"Pressure caused and restructuring/recruitment from limited pool of people..."

Significant concerns exist around the impact of the Bill on staff through increased liability and potential for whistleblowing. This is a primary concern for those in the 'Accountable Person' role.

IT SYSTEMS



"Applies to everyone, data quality has to improve and keep updated.."

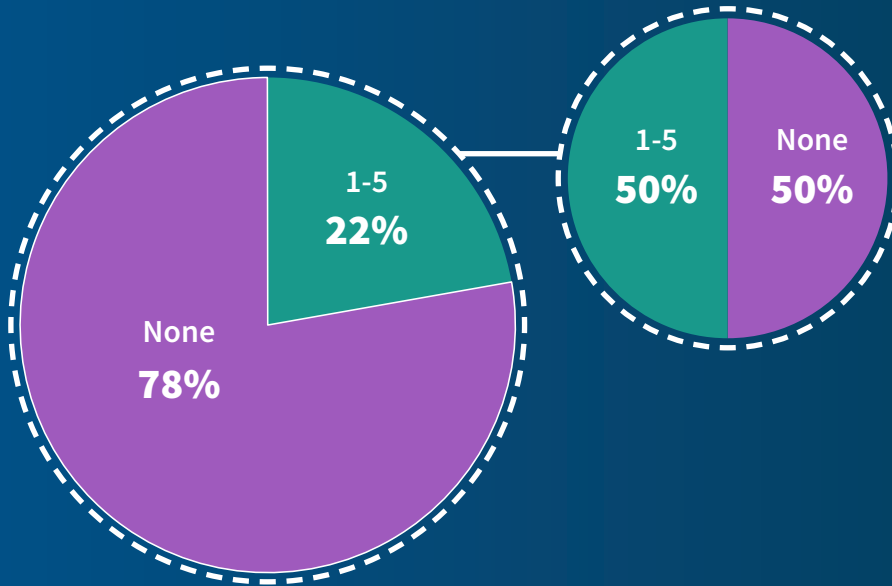
"Resident engagement might be a challenge to achieve, access control etc"

"Use a bespoke compliance system, looking to expand to include fire safety. Bought off shelf.."

Increased need for a system what supports resident engagement and secure sharing of information. Current IT systems inadequate to manage high volume interaction with external stakeholders and support data portability.

How many Building Safety Cases has your organisation written so far?

How many Building Safety Cases have been peer-reviewed outside of your organisation?



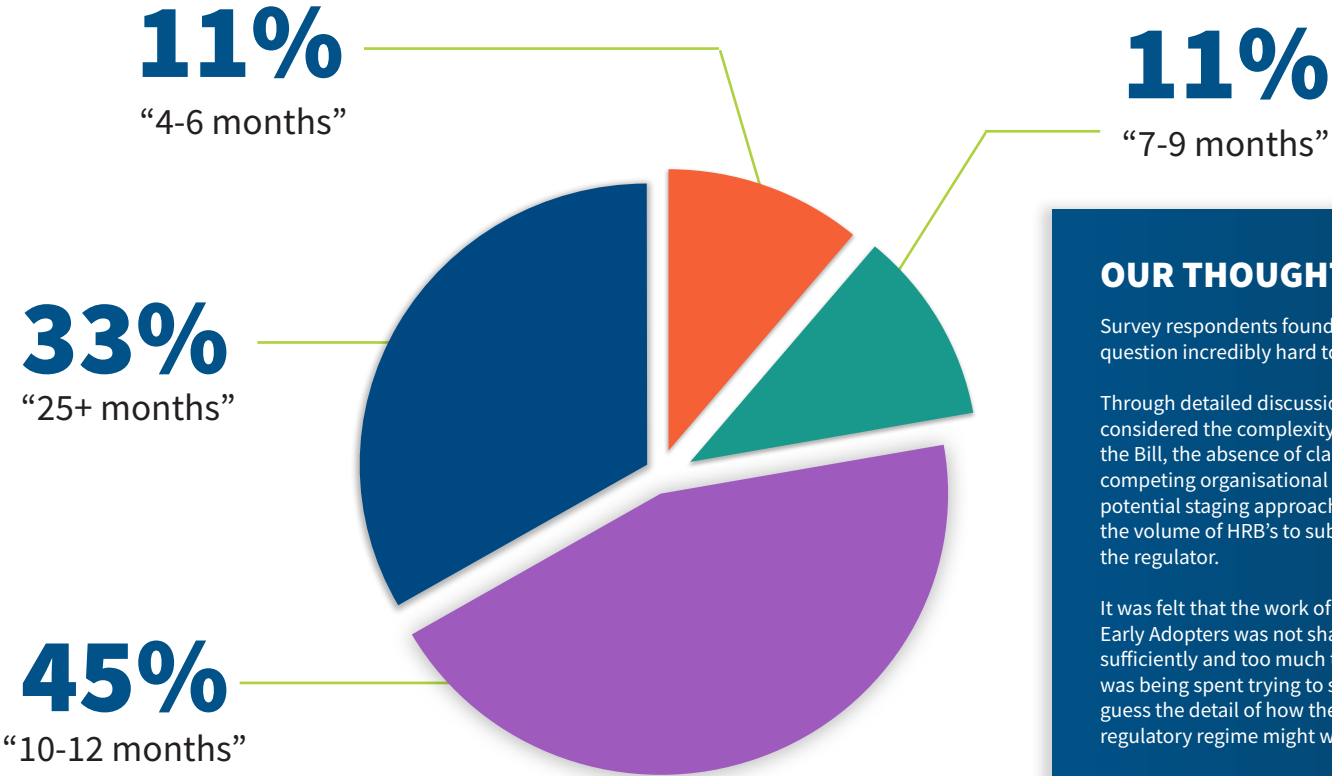
Only 22% of the organisations surveyed had completed a building safety case. Most respondents were concerned about unclear guidance of what needs to be included in a building safety case and were awaiting more information before committing time and resources to produce them.

AVERAGE COST TO PRODUCE A BUILDING SAFETY CASE?



No participants were aware of the cost to produce a building safety case. One expected to know more once they understood the costs of an EWS1 survey. Of those who had completed a building safety case, they had completed very few and were unaware of the costs of carrying it out for every building in their portfolio.

Based on your current understanding of the Building Safety Bill, how long will you need to demonstrate compliance with all aspects of the Bill?



OUR THOUGHTS

Survey respondents found this question incredibly hard to answer.

Through detailed discussion we considered the complexity of the Bill, the absence of clarity, competing organisational priorities, potential staging approaches and the volume of HRB's to submit to the regulator.

It was felt that the work of the Early Adopters was not shared sufficiently and too much time was being spent trying to second guess the detail of how the new regulatory regime might work.

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

Firstly a big thank you to the survey respondents for your time and extraordinary frankness during the interviews. Your willingness to engage will help Regulators, Policy Makers, Landlords, Residents and Media understand the complexity and implications of the proposed regulatory change.

Our major insight from the survey process and the reason we chose 'Turning the Tanker' as the report title is the sheer scale of the change required organisationally, culturally and technically. All set against a backdrop of missing detail.

In essence the destination is becoming clearer but the route map and detail is still to be clarified. Dame Judith Hackitt rightly said '*don't wait for regulatory change to change behaviour*' and we have observed genuine efforts from all survey respondents to embrace this advice.

The practical reality on the ground however is the need to recruit more staff, commission new surveys, implement new IT systems, ask residents for access to their homes and without greater clarity much of this effort could be rendered obsolete as the detail of the new regulatory system emerges.

We all need to be mindful of the fact that the first wave of Building Safety Regulation will include 13,000 HRBs which is no small undertaking. Add to this the pressures of fundamental changes to Fire Risk Assessments (external wall inclusion) for all multi occupancy properties subject to the Fire Safety Order and growing demand for EWS1 certification from residents.

Serious thought needs to be given to the capacity of the housing sector to cope with this workload.

We hope you have found this survey useful.

If you have further questions or would like to take part in future surveys please contact us via help@buildingsafetyregister.org or via Twitter [@BldgSafetyReg](https://twitter.com/BldgSafetyReg) [#BuildingSafety](https://twitter.com/BuildingSafety)