



Figure 1 The works will cost in the region of \$33m. Picture: Richard Dobson

## CENTRAL SYDNEY

# ABC reveal \$33m plan to replace dangerous cladding from HQ

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The ABC is spending \$33 million on renovations of its Ultimo base including stripping it of potentially deadly cladding.

Plans submitted this week reveal the public broadcaster expects to spend \$33,610,606 on the works.

As well as replacing the dangerous cladding, work will be carried out on replacement roof parts and upgrading the building's mechanical plant.

ABC employees were warned in June that highly flammable cladding was discovered on the 12-storey Harris St block.

In an email to staff, corporation bosses told them to take home personal appliances such as fans, heaters, coffee machines and toasters.



Figure 2 ABC bosses investigated the cladding after Grenfell Tower blaze in London. / AFP PHOTO / Adrian DENNIS

“Please take the time to look around your workplace and identify any unnecessary papers, rubbish etc,” the email added. “Any potentially unsafe use of extensions or power boards will be removed from the site.”

The investigation was prompted by the Grenfell Tower blaze in London in which a fire fuelled by plastic-based cladding killed 71 people.

The Ultimo office was built in 1989 and was extended to include an office tower and entry area in 2002.

“During the year, the ABC undertook an assessment of the cladding used on its buildings,” ABC bosses said in the corporation’s annual report.



Figure 3 It is expected the cladding will be removed next year. Picture: Richard Dobson

“The assessment identified the need to carry out certain repairs and modifications to the ABC’s existing Ultimo, building...the cladding was commonly used when the buildings were originally constructed in 1992 and 2002.

“Independent experts assessed relevant safety issues, and advised that employees were safe to remain in the building.”

The plans have been submitted to the City of Sydney council and are on exhibition until January 23.

The ABC did not respond to a request for comment on how much the cladding work alone will cost and where the money would come from.

If approved the work is expected to be carried out next year.