

## QLD BUSINESS

# Building certifiers face losing licence over cladding insurance

**INSURERS concerned about the risk of potentially deadly cladding are declining to underwrite the state's army of building certifiers who now face losing their licences.**

Glen Norris, The Courier-Mail

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A CRISIS is looming for the state's army of private construction certifiers with insurers declining to cover work involving [potentially deadly cladding on buildings](#).

Master Builders Queensland deputy chief executive Paul Bidwell said about 500 certifiers in the state faced losing their building licence if the issue was not resolved soon.

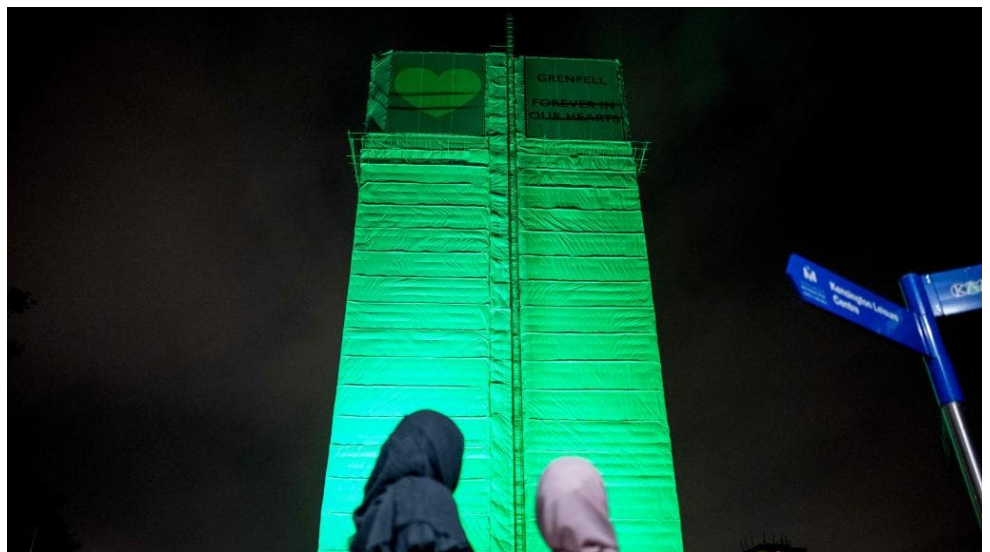
It is understood insurers are either declining to provide public indemnity insurance for certifiers approving cladding work or asking for substantially higher premiums.

“Insurers are getting nervous because of the growing number of incidents and accidents involving cladding,” said Mr Bidwell.

Flammable cladding was blamed for the 2017 Grenfell tower disaster in West London that caused the deaths of at least 80 people and has been linked to high-rise fires in Australia.

Certifiers, whose job is to ensure building work complies with regulations and codes, must have professional indemnity insurance before the Queensland Building and Construction Commission (QBCC) issues them with a licence.

Housing and Public Works Minister Mick De Brenni has already met with certifiers to discuss ways to resolve the impasse.



Members of the public hold a vigil and commemoration near Grenfell Tower in west London to honour the people who died during the fire.

Mr Bidwell said a quick fix would be to allow the QBCC to issue licences to certifiers even if their professional indemnity insurance excluded cladding.

“Late last year we realised a crisis was looming in the insurance area and have asked the government to take action,” said Mr Bidwell.

Insurers who were still providing professional indemnity insurance for certifiers were substantially hiking premiums to cover the increased risk.

“We had one certifier whose premiums increased from about \$12,000 to \$55,000,” he said. “He is only a small guy so he is gone.”

Mr Bidwell said the problem was already causing delays to building approvals. Fraser Construction owner Greg Fraser said final payment of about \$70,000 on three of his jobs was being held up because his certifier was having trouble obtaining the required public indemnity insurance. Mr Fraser said the bank won't release the funds until the final approvals are submitted. He said none of the projects involved cladding.

“Ninety per cent of the building work that this certifier certifies does not involve cladding so this doesn't make sense,” he said.

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