

# The Sydney Morning Herald

EXCLUSIVE NATIONAL QUEENSLAND CLADDING CRISIS

## Almost 3000 private buildings yet to be cleared of cladding concerns

By [Matt Dennien](#)

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More than 2700 privately owned buildings across Queensland are yet to be cleared of flammable cladding concerns, three years after the Grenfell Tower tragedy that rocked the United Kingdom and sparked a global response to address similar building materials.

In the wake of the fire disaster, which saw 72 die in North Kensington when their council housing complex went up in flames, governments around Australia enacted plans to find and replace similar flammable building materials in their own jurisdictions.



A total of 24 government buildings have been found to feature combustible external cladding. The Princess Alexandra Hospital was among the first in 2017. BRADLEY KANARIS

"We have regulated product identification through the Safer Buildings website, and the world leading Cladding Materials Library provides fire engineers with a tool to assess the fire hazard of cladding materials in existing buildings."

The department's Safer Buildings Taskforce website states that all government sites are deemed safe to occupy while work is carried out. Staff and building users have been notified of risk management measures in place and each facility is subject to "heightened" response from fire services.



**Matt Dennien**



Matt Dennien is a reporter with Brisbane Times.

In Queensland, the government launched a taskforce to audit all buildings constructed in the state since 1994 and passed laws in 2018 requiring certain privately owned buildings to be cleared or remedied.

By Friday, a total of 19,708 building owners had registered for that cladding checklist program, a Queensland Building and Construction Commission spokesperson said.

Of these, 16,951 had also been cleared of cladding concerns. This included 294 buildings having completed the third stage of the program, which calls for further investigation by a fire engineer who can identify risk management strategies or repair works.

All buildings required to progress through part three need to have done so by May next year.

This is in addition to 24 government-owned buildings now identified to feature the so-called Aluminium Composite Panel cladding on their exterior since.

The Princess Alexandra Hospital was [the first site flagged by the audit in 2017](#), with work to remove 24,000 square metres of the cladding expected to cost tens of millions of dollars and [completed last year](#).

Cladding had [also been found](#) on the Logan Hospital, a Queensland Rail building in Brisbane and the former Children's Court on Quay Street.

Eight other Queensland Health facilities feature on the list including the Royal Brisbane and Women's, Redcliffe and Gold Coast University hospitals.

The Ascot State School, Queensland Academy for Creative Industries and Mount Gravatt TAFE also feature, along with the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre and Gallery of Modern Art at South Bank.

## **Queensland government buildings with combustible external cladding**

List of sites as at May 29, 2020.

***Source: Housing and Public Works Department***

Responding to a Question on Notice last week, Housing and Public Works Minister Mick de Brenni said the timeframe for work on government buildings depended on factors including the extent required and availability of suitable replacement cladding.

In a further statement, he told *Brisbane Times* the Non-Conforming Building Products Audit Taskforce was ensuring the safety of Queenslanders.

"Our taskforce has worked hard to rectify the use of non-conforming building products on government buildings and continue to certify the safety of privately owned buildings right across Queensland," he said.