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INDUSTRY GROUPS CALL FOR URGENT REVIEW OF CONSTRUCTION CODE TO STOP FURTHER HIGH-RISE FIRES

The peak bodies representing the Concrete and Masonry industries, *Cement Concrete & Aggregates Australia* (CCAA), *Think Brick Australia*, and *Concrete Masonry Association of Australia* (CMAA) today called on the Government to urgently review the National Construction Code (NCC) and restrict the use of combustible materials in high-rise construction, following the recent fire on Spencer Street in Melbourne's CBD.

The Chief Executive Officer of CCAA, Ken Slattery said: "It's deeply concerning that yet again residents and first responders are put at significant risk by a fire at a high-rise building with Grenfell-style cladding, as we saw in Melbourne this week.

"Following the Grenfell Tower tragedy in London, a Senate inquiry raised serious concerns about the widespread use of non-compliant combustible cladding, and yet very little appears to have been done to make high-rise buildings safer in the event of a fire.

"The most effective way to provide absolute protection to residents and the brave men and women in the fire service is to ban combustible materials from being used in high-rise construction."

The Group Chief Executive of *Think Brick Australia & CMAA*, Elizabeth McIntyre said: "We are calling on the Federal Government to urgently review the proposed NCC changes that further weaken fire safety standards for buildings with an effective height of up to 25 metres.

"The standards expressed in the NCC should be tightened, not placing the community at greater risk by opening up the code to the increased use of combustible products.

"As well as being non-combustible, concrete and masonry products don't release toxic fumes during a fire, and because of their relatively slow rate of heat transfer, they act as a heat shield to protect building occupants.

"The simple fact is that concrete and masonry don't burn. No other materials are as safe or reliable as concrete and masonry in the event of a fire."

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