



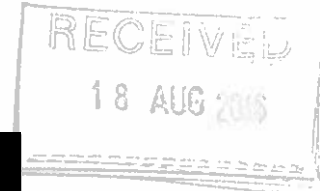
Department for
Communities and
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Our Ref:2560044
Your ref: MJL/HK/S-Billington

Dear Professor Leeming,

Thank you for your letter of 12 July to the Rt Hon Greg Clark MP which includes your report under regulation 28 of the Coroners (Investigations) Regulations 2013, in relation to the death on 25 March 2015 of Steven Thomas Billington in a fire at his home, in [REDACTED]. Your report was addressed to the Home Secretary as well as to [REDACTED].

Although your letter has been passed to me given my responsibility for Housing and Building Regulations, I am also replying on behalf of the Home Secretary.

I was very sorry to read about Mr Billington's death. I understand that the power supply to the fire alarm in the building had been switched off and that this may have contributed to his death. My officials have looked at the relevant standards for the installation of fire detection and alarm systems. It appears that the current guidance in British Standard 5839 already requires that isolators for fire alarm systems are appropriately secured against unauthorised tampering. Perhaps the system in question was an older system that did not meet the current standard.

However, if the investigations of the fire and rescue service have identified a weakness in the standard, then this should be brought to the attention of the relevant committee at the British Standards Institution. The committee may need more information than is contained in your report. If you or the fire and rescue service need assistance in this respect, please contact my official, [REDACTED] at my address, or email [REDACTED].

*Yours sincerely,
Gavin*

GAVIN BARWELL MP