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1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), herein referred to as the “Authority”, is undertaking a procurement exercise to award a Contract to a Supplier to assess the current provisions in Approved Document B and review alternative approaches in providing means of escape for disabled people. This aim of the project is to ensure ADB provides adequate guidance to meet the minimum requirements under Schedule 1 of Part B1 of the Building Regulations 2010.
- 1.2 The project will review and provide evidence and knowledge on the current provisions in ADB and alternative policy options. The project will establish the current research knowledge and review it in view of modern building design approaches, technology, building use, and operation.
- 1.3 The project will develop robust data and evidence that will enable MHCLG to support future policy decisions for possible improvements, simplification, and changes of guidance so that people can have confidence in the regulatory standards.
- 1.4 The project should establish an expert Technical Steering Group to support MHCLG officials at a strategic decision-making level of the project and assist where necessary, steering the research programme and providing feedback on the research methodology, as well as key deliverables and milestones throughout the duration of the project.

2. BACKGROUND TO THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY

- 2.1 The Authority's aim is to help create great places to live and work right across the country and to back communities to come together and thrive. The Authority's responsibilities include:
 - Ensuring people throughout the country have access to affordable and high-quality housing
 - Providing opportunities for all parts of the country to thrive economically
 - Building integrated communities
 - Supporting effective local government
- 2.2 Amongst its other interests, the Authority has also established the Building Safety Programme which is responsible for delivering the changes where needed to make the building safety system fit for purpose.
- 2.3 The Building Regulations control certain building work – principally to protect the health, safety and welfare of people in and around buildings. Part B of Schedule 1 of the regulations relates to fire safety aspects of building design and construction and Approved Document B (ADB), the statutory guidance to the regulations which demonstrates how the provisions can be complied with.
- 2.4 In response to Dame Judith Hackitt's review following the Grenfell tragedy in 2017 the Government has committed to a full-scale [review](#) of Approved Document B.



- 2.5 The technical review started with a [call for evidence](#) which invited views on technical issues and further improvements that could be made to ADB. A [summary](#) of the findings from the call for evidence was published on the 05 September 2019.
- 2.6 The findings were used to set a proposed agenda, terms of reference and programme for the review and to identify what research is needed to inform the review.
- 2.7 Through these findings, stakeholder workshops, and advice from the Building Regulation Advisory Committee (BRAC), the department has identified means of escape for disabled people as an area requiring review.
- 2.8 ADB makes provisions to support assisted escape for disabled persons, including the provision of refuges and communication facilities. The basis is that disabled persons should not need to rely upon rescue by the fire and rescue services to make a safe escape.
- 2.9 MHCLG has previously commissioned research in this area in 2015 which concluded that ADB provisions were generally adequate in meeting the minimum requirements of the Building Regulations. However, the report also highlighted areas where ADB could go further.
- 2.10 MHCLG received a total of 92 responses regarding means of escape for disabled people during the [Call for Evidence](#). The findings questioned the existing approach of using refuges and considered that strengthened provisions were needed;
- Sprinklers should be provided for housing vulnerable people,
 - Wider use of evacuation lifts
 - Guidance is required on the in-use management to support the physical evacuation aids in the building.
- 2.11 Response to the Call for Evidence also called for ADB to set out comprehensive guidance related to the inter-relationship of building standards and management of buildings in use. Research is required to better understand any disconnect between the provisions in ADB (and the principles which underpin them), and the practical realities and operation of buildings which are in-use.
- 2.12 Finally, the Call for Evidence also raised the need for more research into ensuring safe and dignified evacuation of disabled people and how modern technologies and evacuation lifts are able to provide this.
- 2.13 Overall, there is a need to review the provisions in ADB for means of escape for disabled people to determine whether it is adequate and explore potential alternatives which may better provide an adequate level of safety.

3. BACKGROUND TO REQUIREMENT

- 3.1 With the requirements of Part M (Access and use) and the Equalities Act 2010, the design of buildings to cater for people of all abilities has become increasingly significant. There is continued concern that the provisions of unrestricted access are not reflected in the provisions for escape.



- 3.2 There is also increased recognition that the ability of people to escape is not only affected by just physical factors, cognitive impairments can affect wayfinding and decision making.
- 3.3 Increasing life expectancy has meant that age related impairments are expected to become more prevalent. The availability of mobility scooters has provided greater access to locations and buildings. Concerns have been raised about the potential fire hazard that some aids, such as charging electrical scooters, present in buildings.
- 3.4 Changing standards of living have meant body dimensions of people have been increasing in many countries (including the UK) over the last few decades. Other factors such as pregnancy affect mobility and there is concern whether the ergonomics are representative of up-to-date anthropometric data (human body measurements across populations), particularly with regards to sizes of wheelchairs.
- 3.5 Supported evacuation is based on both physical provisions designed into a building (e.g. refuges and communication facilities) and expected levels of management once the building is in use. Design solutions must be workable and realistic therefore an understanding of how recommended provisions work in practice ‘on the ground’ is required as part of the work.
- 3.6 ADB recommends the provision of refuges, and previously commissioned research into the guidance in ADB. The research, published in 2015, found the recommended number and sizing of refuges were suitable however the subject should be revisited; a number of concerns were raised around the information provided in guidance and how the provision is being incorporated into designs and implemented when in use.
- 3.7 The current ADB also recognises the option of using lifts for evacuation and cites Annex G of BS 9999 for further advice. Evacuation lifts, firefighting lifts and lifts for beneficial use are used to support the evacuation of disabled persons. Each has varying levels of provisions and supporting management behind them. Provisions for evacuation lifts are being updated and have been consulted upon (e.g. BS EN 81-76).

4. DEFINITIONS

Expression or Acronym	Definition
ADB	Approved Document B (Fire Safety) volumes 1 and 2
MHCLG	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

5. SCOPE OF REQUIREMENT

- 5.1 The overall scope of the project is to:
- A) provide a review of performance and effectiveness of the current provisions in ADB regarding means of escape for disabled people.



- B) provide evidence and knowledge on further/alternative provisions to enable MHCLG to make informed future policy proposals,
 - C) establish costs, benefits and impact of alternative approaches not currently detailed in the supplementary guidance.
- 5.2 The scope of buildings are those covered by the Building Regulations and more specifically ADB. Uncommon buildings (e.g. fire engineered) and building types outside the scope of ADB (e.g. airports, shopping centres) are outside of the scope for this project
- 5.3 It is not envisaged that any specific exclusions will be made from the scope of this project, unless otherwise stated in the research specification.
- 5.4 At the completion of each milestone a suitable review will be carried out to ensure the suitability of research and allow for variations (improvements, expansion, and/or reduction). Such variations will be subject to formal change control where they include cost implications.
- 5.5 The supplier will establish facilities for face to face or video conference call meetings with MHCLG and other stakeholder groups to discuss any further research goals of the project required to deliver updates and agree elements with the Authority, and as required to deliver the project objectives.
- 5.6 The supplier will work with the contract manager and other MHCLG suppliers where required to deliver project objectives, update meetings, and reports.
- 5.7 The Technical review programme comprises a number of workstreams covering different policy areas. It is recognised that each area is not mutually exclusive and there may be evidence and considerations relevant across workstreams. As such the supplier is expected to work collaboratively across workstreams to share and consider knowledge.
- 5.8 The supplier is also expected to work collaboratively with industry, academia and government bodies and interest groups to collect and research knowledge related to the workstream.
- 5.9 Approved Document M (Access) is also under review and therefore relevant information gathered as part of this review will need to be accounted for.
- 5.10 The research will also be used to inform impact assessments for future consultation proposals where evidence suggests changes may be necessary to current statutory guidance.
- 5.11 The main output from the research will be an objective presentation of the results in the form of technical reports.
- 5.12 Each objective, as laid out in section 6, is mandatory. However, the elements described that could contribute to achieving each objective is optional. It is for the supplier to define their approach in their bid and to justify the exclusion of any point in the requirement.

6. THE REQUIREMENT

- 6.1 The overall objective (objective 1) of this project is to review whether the provisions in ADB relating to means of escape for disabled people are sufficient



to meet the functional requirements of Part B1 of the Building Regulations. There are two components to this:

1a) an initial scoping exercise, identifying current evidence, and providing an overarching appraisal across building types (excluding blocks of flats, care homes and specialised housing). This is expected to include;

- Identification of people's impairments to means of escape;
- Identifying trends and predictions in demographics;
- Review of latest anthropometric data;
- Review of current evacuations aids and technology
- Review risks associated with building usage (e.g. mobile scooters);
- Review of supporting factors – maintenance, resourcing, management and training, etc.;
- Engagement of building owners/managers as well as disability groups to identify current policy, trends, and issues;
- Review evidence and engage with stakeholders to establish relevant social factors, perceptions, human behaviour, dignity;
- Review of previous fires involving the evacuation of disabled persons, e.g. post evacuation interviews, incident reports, fire statistics;
- Review of current research or evidence in disabled means of escape.

1b) Review the current approach, including;

- Establishing basis for current provisions in guidance;
- How provisions are used in practice and their effectiveness on the ground, including engagement with building owners/management as well as disability groups;
- Scoping of wider regulatory environment and requirements in England identifying conflicts and considerations;
- Review the current guidance in view of the current knowledge established in 1a;
- Review approach considering wider changes to modern building design and construction.

The supplier is expected to indicate the possible shortfalls in the existing fire safety guidance in relation to the results of the review.

2) the second objective (objective 2) of the project is to identify and analyse potential alternative approaches and develop evidence, understanding and knowledge for consideration in future policy development.

- International review of regulatory and design approached with recognition of wider regulatory difference and context;
- Undertake research into alternative approaches including use of evacuation technology and increased provision of evacuation lifts, providing evidence



through means such as practical evacuation drills, evacuation computer modelling, cost benefit analysis, desktop reviews,

- Consider risks, costs and benefits of alternative approaches.

6.2 The supplier will be expected to establish and provide secretariat services for a technical steering group who will periodically review progress of the project and monitor the research activities and outcomes for updating the methodology or reports. The contract manager of this project will represent MHCLG at these meetings.

6.3 The supplier will be expected to produce:

- A proposed methodology report;
- Interim reports for each objective;
- Final report summarising findings across each interim report.

6.4 A contract break will be included between tasks identified for objective 1 and objective 2. Early termination of the contract using this contract break will be taken if the research at this stage points towards an early conclusion as determined by the Authority.

6.5 The supplier will be required to provide ad-hoc advice as requested by the Authority.

7. KEY MILESTONES AND DELIVERABLES

7.1 The supplier will provide and present to MHCLG the following specific deliverables:

- A proposed research methodology consisting of a report (electronic and hard copy where appropriate) detailing the scope of the project, methodology, key deliverables and all risks.
- Draft interim reports (electronic and hard copy where appropriate) for each phase of the research including methodology, results/findings to date, detailed assumptions intended to underpin analysis along with any other issues identified and how these will be dealt with. Draft reports should also include indications of next steps the supplier will be taking, and any proposed further research not previously agreed with the contract manager. Draft reports should be preceded either via a face to face or a video call meeting to update MHCLG and any relevant groups of stakeholders (e.g. steering group established as part of the research project).
- Final report (electronic and hard copy where appropriate) including all results/findings throughout the project, detailed assumptions intended to underpin analysis along with any other issues identified. The final report should be preceded either via a face to face or a video call meeting to update MHCLG and any relevant groups of stakeholders (e.g. steering group established as part of the research project).

7.2 All reports (draft and final) should include a front cover and QA sheet including: the report title, the MHCLG and supplier reference numbers, the milestone



identifier, the version number, the date, and checking/approving signatures. The front should be marked as a draft until an approved final version is requested by MHCLG. The front cover may be removed and replaced when reports are prepared for publication by MHCLG.

- 7.3 Final reports will be published on the GOV.UK website after review and quality assurance.
- 7.4 Research results/findings should be made available to any established Technical Steering Groups during the project.
- 7.5 The supplier will also be expected to provide a secretariat service for project meetings and meetings of any Technical Steering Groups established, with a record of the minutes being provided to the Authority within three (3) working days of each meeting. Minutes should be provided to the Authority’s Contract Manager in an electronic format.
- 7.6 The supplier will be expected to update the Authority on progress at least monthly verbally and in writing, through a brief report, to the Contract Manager.
- 7.7 All outputs must be clearly written and thoroughly proof-read prior to submission.
- 7.8 Performance measures;
 - Methodology agreed
 - Technical Steering Group established
 - Draft interim reports provided to agreed timeframe
 - Final report provided to agreed timeframe
 - Satisfactory research output
- 7.9 The following Contract milestones/deliverables shall apply:

Milestone / Deliverable	Description	Timeframe
1	Commencement date: Start Date	Within 1 week of Contract Award
2	Objective 1 methodology agreed	Within 1-2 weeks of Commencement Date
3	Technical Steering Group established.	Within 1-2 weeks of Commencement Date
4	Objective 1a Draft Report provided	Within 4 months of Commencement Date
5	Objective 1b Draft Report provided	Within 6 months of Commencement Date
Contract Break		
6	Objective 2 methodology agreed	Within 6 months of commencement Date



7	Objective 2 Draft Report provided	Within 12 months of Commencement Date
8	Final Report provided	Within 14 months of Commencement Date
9	Contract completion	Within 14 months of Contract Award

8. APPROACH (OPTIONAL)

8.1 Some of the considerations related to the objectives are discussed below;

Objective 1

Existing Buildings;

- 8.2 The supplier will be expected to review the current provisions in ADB. This review should cover a range of building types designed to current ADB guidance and determine the effectiveness of provisions for means of escape of disabled people.
- 8.3 The supplier should provide a review based on a comprehensive understanding of the subject, considering evacuation drill data, information from past fire evacuation incidents, and the previous research studies. The supplier is expected to provide a practical understanding of the topic by talking with designers and existing building owners/managers.
- 8.4 The supplier will be expected to consider the wider operating environment of different building types including, other regulatory requirements (e.g. access), operating challenges (e.g. staffing) and other factors which impact upon the provisions for means of escape for disabled people.

Type and Prevalence of Disabilities

- 8.5 It is essential to consider the different types of disability to understand the impact on people's means of escape. The supplier is expected to engage with relevant stakeholders, including user groups, to understand how different disabilities affect evacuation. Social factors such as perception and dignity are expected to be considered.
- 8.6 The supplier will consider statistical information and demographic trends to help understand the prevalence and the differences in occupancy across different building types.

Modern Design

- 8.7 The supplier will be required to analyse how modern building design trends, operating practices, construction techniques and usage affect disabled means of escape and the basis for the current provisions in ADB.
- 8.8 New technologies such as electric scooters, and mobile medical support equipment have made buildings more accessible but may have introduced other risks associated with equipment. Such changes to building usage should be considered.



Objective 2

- 8.9 The supplier should review other approaches/alternative provisions and provide the necessary knowledge and information for the department to make informed decisions about potential policy options.
- 8.10 Suppliers will be expected to analyse the approaches/alternative provisions in the context of different building types and heights. Evidence and knowledge may be generated by modelling, surveys, costing, analysis, practical evacuation drills/exercises or other approaches.
- 8.11 Provisions reviewed by the supplier should consider and be consistent with the idea of safe and dignified evacuation either unassisted or assisted.
- 8.12 It is expected that the supplier will consider how any proposed provisions may also affect means of escape for able-bodied persons as part of a wider evacuation of a building.

Modern Technology

- 8.13 The supplier will be expected to review a range of modern evacuation aids and technologies. The supplier should provide a thorough analysis of effectiveness along with an analysis of lifetime costs.
- 8.14 There is a particular need for the supplier to review the use of evacuation lifts for the evacuation of disabled people in buildings. The supplier will be expected to assess the standard of lift required, number, and placement required along with any technology and management plans (including any staffing or training requirements) required for their effective use in a range of relevant building types.
- 8.15 The supplier will be expected to consider the use of evacuation lifts in the context of other provisions such as refuges and the operational FRS response. The risks associated with alternative provisions must be outlined. A variety of building types should be included.

9. MANAGEMENT INFORMATION/REPORTING

- 9.1 The Authority requires a dedicated account management structure including a single point of contact for day to day enquiries, with a nominated deputy to act in their absence.
- 9.2 A detailed escalation procedure must be outlined, with named individuals outlined on an organogram provided by the supplier.

10. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

- 10.1 The supplier should present any proposed changes to the project methodology to the Authority during monthly update meetings with the Contract Manager.
- 10.2 Changes to the way in which the Services are to be delivered must be brought to the Authority's attention and agreed prior to any changes being implemented.

11. QUALITY

- 11.1 The supplier should operate under an appropriate quality management system, such as ISO (9000 series) or equivalent.



12. PRICE

- 12.1 Attachment 4 – Price Schedule must be completed. The supplier is expected to provide sufficient detail for evaluation.
- 12.2 The total price for this Contract is expected to be a maximum of £130,000 (excl. VAT) and be completed within 14 months of commencement.
- 12.3 Prices are to be submitted via the e-Sourcing Suite (Attachment 4 – Price Schedule) excluding VAT and including all other expenses relating to Contract delivery.

13. STAFF AND CUSTOMER SERVICE

- 13.1 The Supplier should provide a sufficient level of resource throughout the duration of the Contract in order to consistently deliver a quality service.
- 13.2 The Supplier’s staff assigned to the Contract should have the relevant qualifications and experience (i.e. detailed knowledge of the construction industry, construction techniques, technology and design, relating to means of escape and in particular to means of escape for disabled people) to deliver the Contract to the required standard.
- 13.3 The Supplier shall ensure that staff understand the Authority’s objectives and will provide excellent customer service to the Authority throughout the duration of the Contract.

14. SERVICE LEVELS AND PERFORMANCE

- 14.1 The Authority will measure the quality of the Supplier’s delivery by assessing each task, including meeting target dates, appropriateness of methodology, completeness of information and readability of reports. The Authority will take account of the views of any Technical Steering Groups and will provide feedback to the supplier.

KPI/SLA	Service Area	KPI/SLA description	Target
1	Delivery timescales	Completion of milestones to agreed timeframe	100%
2	Research output	Completion of research to agreed standard set out in contract	To be agreed with the Authority
3	Methodology	Proposal and agreement of appropriate methodology	To be agreed with the Authority

- 14.2 The supplier will be required to report regularly on progress toward achievement of objectives. Applicants will need to explain how they will collect and record this information to maintain a fully evidenced audit trail. It should be noted that if a supplier fails to deliver contracted outputs, a performance review may apply which could lead to and early termination of the contract



15. SECURITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY REQUIREMENTS

15.1 There are no requirements for employees of the supplier to have any level of security clearance.

15.2 **REDACTED.**

16. PAYMENT AND INVOICING

16.1 Payment can only be made following satisfactory delivery of pre-agreed certified deliverables and Milestones.

16.2 Before payment can be considered, each invoice must include a detailed elemental breakdown of work completed and the associated costs.

16.3 The Purchase Order (PO) number must be included when the Invoice is submitted.

16.4 Payment of Invoices follow a process of checking and approval; timeframe is subject to agreement with Contract Manager.

17. CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

17.1 Feedback of performance will be provided to the contractor at progress meetings and at the end of the project, to ensure the quality of research is maintained.

17.2 The contract manager for this project will act as the formal point of contact between MHCLG and the supplier.

17.3 The following will be agreed with the Contract Manager;

- The outputs from the research (presentation, reports etc) and the proposed approach being taken by the suppliers to complete the research.
- How progress will be fed back to MHCLG (including the frequency of face to face, or video conference, progress meetings with the suppliers).

17.4 Where outputs will be required and cleared by MHCLG, it will be important that the supplier is able to take into consideration the time for MHCLG to clear these outputs.

17.5 All data and supporting information used in draft or any interim reports and the final report will be provided to MHCLG in an electronic format at the end of the contract.

18. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

18.1 This requirement can be undertaken by a single firm or a consortium.

18.2 In the case of a consortium, the Authority will only enter into a contract with the lead contractor and all formal contacts between the Authority and members of the consortium should be made through the lead contractor. The lead contractor will be expected to enter into Service Level Agreements (SLA) with consortium members and these members will form part of the Steering Group when it is established.

18.3 The Supplier's liability is limited to 125% of the total charges payable under this Contract.



19. LOCATION

- 19.1 The location of the Services will be carried out generally at the supplier's offices, although there may be a need for some tasks to be undertaken at the Authority's office (currently 2 Marsham Street, London SW1P 4DF).