

RICS Practice Alert - Transfer slabs: statement from RICS

Issued January 2026

RICS is issuing this Practice Alert to all RICS members, RICS-regulated firms and candidates globally. The purpose is to raise awareness of an important emerging building safety issue in the UK.

The UK government wrote to principal accountable persons and building owners about [potential risks from transfer slabs in buildings](#) on 19 December 2025.

Reinforced concrete transfer slabs are a floor arrangement where a load bearing column sits on top of a thickened reinforced concrete slab without a supporting column directly underneath. The Institution of Structural Engineers (IStructE) [published guidance](#) in November 2024 to address the lack of industry-wide guidance covering this design feature. On 19 December 2025, IStructE [issued further guidance on this](#).

The UK government Building Safety Regulator (BSR) has now [issued a statement](#) highlighting specific concern about 'punching shear in transfer slabs'. While the government is not aware of any building collapse caused by this in the UK, there is concern about the risk of a failure mechanism causing partial building collapse.

The government is currently recommending that where there are visible signs of distress or specific concerns regarding a building's condition or design, building owners should seek immediate professional advice. RICS members who are chartered building surveyors may be instructed to carry out condition surveys of such tall buildings to identify buildings with transfer slabs. If a building is identified, then a suitable expert structural engineer will be required to carry out more in-depth analysis. RICS recommends that IStructE are contacted for suitable competent engineers.

The BSR commissioned research in late 2024 to establish structural risk, which is ongoing with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). Further advice is

anticipated in due course, and building owners and RICS members should ensure that they keep themselves up to date with the latest information.

RICS has developed an information hub with FAQs: [Transfer slabs in buildings: Advice and FAQs](#). This will be updated as more information becomes available. Please check regularly for the most recent updates.

In addition, a technical webinar for UK RICS members will be hosted in January, and further details will be issued shortly.

Reminder of Rule 2 of the RICS Rules of Conduct

'Members and firms must maintain their professional competence and ensure that services are provided by competent individuals who have the necessary expertise.'

Members must ensure that they are appropriately qualified and only undertake surveying services for which they are competent, have the knowledge, skills, resources and the necessary expertise in this area. The requirement under Rule 2 of the [Rules of Conduct](#) is for all RICS members when undertaking surveying services to the public and/or their employer.

If you have concerns about the practice of an RICS member or RICS-regulated firm, please let us know by reporting your concerns to complaints@rics.org.

RICS members have a professional duty to promptly disclose the details of any regulated member that you reasonably believe may have breached RICS Rules or professional standards. The duty to speak up is an important part of the profession's 'moral compass'. Think of it as protecting the reputation of the profession by helping RICS to uphold the public interest.