



Home Builders Health and Safety Forum

Guidance on the Competence of Contractors Supervision

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Purpose

As part of the continuous improvement strategy in the home building sector, the members of the Home Builders Health and Safety Forum ('Forum') have developed an outline standard on the minimum competency requirements for those persons employed by contractors who are designated as supervising workers.

Comment [c1]: Two members have asked for clarification that the standard will be approved by the Major Home builders Group. It is agreed this will be provided to them for approval.

The main objective of this initiative is to enhance the levels of health and safety knowledge within the workforce. There is an opportunity to invest in improving health and safety standards and assist Forum members site staff in the overall management and supervision of the workforce on site.

Forum Members are committed to developing consistent standards across the sector and provide our supply chain with guidance for standards expected on our developments. Forum members consider that a key element of our improvement strategy is to engage with our supply chains and to enhance the competency of those persons supervising work activities.

The industry has previously committed to having a fully qualified workforce which is demonstrated by workers being accredited to the Construction Skills Certification Scheme or affiliated/amalgamated schemes such as CPCS, CISRS etc. This constitutes the minimum acceptable level of competency for all workers but in terms of those supervising work activities, it is considered that a further level of training is required.

Scope

For this purpose supervisors are defined as those persons directly supervising work activities. They are the front line supervisors (i.e. Supervisor, Ganger, Foreman, Charge-hand etc.) with direct responsibility for putting people to work and who will typically brief their workers on how to carry out their work and ensure that they are carrying out their work safely.

Contractors should provide details of the nominated competent supervisor prior to work commencing and for some trades it is recognised that the supervisor may operate on a visiting basis. In this case, the supervisor will still need to meet the minimum training requirements detailed below.

Comment [c2]: A couple of comments have been received indicating that we should not put this in the scope and insist that all contractors regardless of size or trade have trained supervision on site.

Forum members have evaluated the work activities carried out on home building developments and have identified the following particular trades/work activities where due to the controls required, on site supervision who have completed the health and safety training detailed below, will always be required when more than 4 workers of the particular trade are present on site.

Groundwork/Demolition/Pre-Cast Concrete Floor Installation/ Reinforced Concrete Frame Construction/Scaffolding/Steel Erection/Lift Installation/Asbestos Removal/Erection or dismantling of Hoists/Piling/Erection or dismantling of Tower Cranes

Comment [c3]: Some comments received that we may have only two scaffolders on site for example and therefore do they need a supervisor. Suggested wording to reflect that trained supervision is always required where there is 4 or more workers on site. This wording will need further consideration.

The above does not mean that other trades/work activities will not require supervision and this will be considered as part of the overall risk evaluation process on each development. The

Comment [c4]: Some comments received that if we do not clearly specify that all contractors should have supervision then those classified as low risk just won't bother and this defeats the object.

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ratio of supervisors to workers on a site will be determined on the basis of risk assessment of the work in progress and in conjunction with local site management.

Forum members will develop their own management systems and will engage with their supply chain so that this minimum training standard can be met. It may be the case that some will have systems which may go beyond this minimum standard.

The Training Standard

Health and Safety Training

In addition to the requirement to hold a relevant Construction Skills Certification Card (CSCS), all supervisors should have sufficient knowledge of health and safety gained at a construction specific course of at least two days duration. Approved training courses are as follows;

- Construction Skills Site Safety Supervisors Training Scheme (SSSTS)
- Construction Skills Site Management Safety Training Scheme (SMSTS)
- Institution of Occupational Safety & Health (IOSH) 'Managing Safely in Construction'
- Construction Industry Scaffolders Record Scheme (CISRS) 'Scaffolding Supervisor'
- Certificate of Competence for Demolition Operatives (CCDO) 'Demolition Supervisor'
- Construction Health and Safety Group (CHSG) 'Health & Safety Site Management cert' (Modules 1-3)
- NEBOSH National Certificate in Construction Health & Safety

It is appreciated that some employers may have already provided in-house training that is not accredited to the above schemes but the content may be considered equal to them. Members have agreed that in-house training will be acceptable as long as it can be demonstrated that the course content/duration is at least equal to the SSSTS and this will only be accepted as proof of training until 31st December 2013.

All new training provided to supervisors from the 1st January 2013 should be approved/accredited by one of the above schemes and in all cases supervisors should have attended one of the approved courses from 1st January 2014.

Supervisory Skills

Supervisors should have sufficient skills to be an effective supervisor of their workers. Members consider that supervisors will also need to demonstrate having attended training which includes an understanding of behavioural issues, leadership and effective intervention skills. This training should include delivering effective presentations (e.g. tool box talks), role-play, have a form of testing, and successful candidates should be issued with a certificate to demonstrate a suitable standard has been achieved.

A method of clearly demonstrating this would be for supervisors to achieve the S/NVQ Level 3 in Site Supervision or Occupational Work Supervision and/or hold a CSCS Supervisor (Gold) Card. Whilst this is not currently a specific requirement, this would clearly identify that an individual has acquired an acceptable level of knowledge on appropriate supervision and is something that all forum members will be striving towards.

Comment [c5]: The previous text was felt too prescriptive and having words such as 'members are committed to' or 'ensure that the minimum standard is met' may be outside the remit of the forum. Revised wording has therefore been suggested.

Comment [c6]: One member has commented that this should not be detailed as approved training.

Comment [c7]: Some comments have been received that we should allow in-house training if it is equal to that of the SSSTS. Others have indicated that the training should be to one of the approved schemes only and if we set this out as our key principal, with appropriate time frames, then this will give time for in-house training to become approved where required. This is subject to further debate and to resolve we will need to go with the majority view.

Comment [c8]: One member has suggested that we detail a supervisory plan for each contractor which provides them with a time frame for compliance to the requirements.