

## **MCG leads industry commitment to health and safety training**

The Major Contractors Group (MCG) has announced that, following a review identifying Supervisor Health & Safety training as an operational priority, all supervisors on their sites must attend ConstructionSkills' Supervisors Safety Training Scheme as part of their commitment to Health and Safety training. The MCG said the decision demonstrated that supervisory Health and Safety training is an area to which industry must turn its attention.

With the MCG representing the UK's largest construction companies, this is a significant move for the sector. It is estimated that, as a result of this commitment to a safer workforce, thousands of supervisors will receive health and safety training from ConstructionSkills by 2010.

The two-day Site Supervisors' Safety Training Scheme (SSSTS), which is part of the ConstructionSkills' Site Safety Plus (SSP) suite of courses, provides an introduction to health and safety, welfare and environmental issues. It is designed for those requiring an understanding of the current legislation that applies to them and their work activities.

It is intended that MCG companies will lead the drive to ensure that all supervisors achieve the SSP qualification by 2010. Those who have already achieved this qualification will be exempt until the renewal date, which is five years after certification, following which they will be required to renew the qualification. After the initial two-year period, MCG will implement a "zero tolerance" policy for those without this qualification on MCG sites, effective from 1 January 2010.

This latest announcement builds on the MCG's implementation of a zero tolerance policy towards employees who are not CSCS accredited, which was brought into force at the beginning for 2007. The decision to introduce the SSSTS course comes following a MCG review of supervisor courses being offered in the market, and the selection of the ConstructionSkills course as the one best suited to meeting their on-site health and safety needs.

Vaughan Burnand, Chief Executive of Shepherd Construction and Chairman of the MCG Health & Safety Group said of the new initiative:

“By working together MCG members have made a tremendous contribution to improving conditions on site and in reducing the incidence of accidents and work related ill health. Our front line supervisors assume huge responsibility and we are very pleased to have been working with ConstructionSkills in the development of a course designed specifically to help these supervisors fulfil these responsibilities. The course has been designed not only to refresh their Health & Safety knowledge but also to enhance their skills in intervention techniques, managing behavioural change and communication.”

Kevin Fear, Head of Health Safety & Environment for ConstructionSkills, added:

“I am delighted to hear that the two day site supervisors’ course has been recognised by MCG companies as the benchmark standard course to provide an underpinning in Health & Safety competence. The MCG is clearly demonstrating leadership in this area and should be applauded for their contribution to making the industry a safer place.”

Gordon Crick, inspector of Health & Safety for the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), welcomed measures such as those taken by the MCG, which prioritise health and safety. He said:

“The HSE recognises the vital importance of training for site supervisors and encourages all contractors to consider their approach in ensuring that the training needs of supervisors are given priority.”

The range of courses within the Site Safety Plus programme build on the well-respected ConstructionSkills Site Management Safety Training Scheme (SMSTS), which has been running for over twenty-five years and has come to be considered the standard for health and safety training in the industry. The courses are designed to provide an integrated programme of safety training from operative to management level. Both the SMSTS and the Supervisors Safety Training Scheme are shown as examples of competence within the CDM 2007 ACoP.

The SSP programme is delivered across the country through 130 training providers. The largest of these is the National Construction College, which is already planning to run more than 70 site supervisor courses across the country in 2008. All CITB-ConstructionSkills Levy registered companies can claim CITB-ConstructionSkills Grant of £35 per day to help with the costs, and a further £100 achievement grant.

For further information, visit [www.cskills.org/sitesafetyplus](http://www.cskills.org/sitesafetyplus) or call 0844 844 1315 or email [call\\_centre@cskills.org](mailto:call_centre@cskills.org)

For other NCC courses call 0844 8440466 or visit [www.nationalconstructioncollege.co.uk](http://www.nationalconstructioncollege.co.uk)

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Additional information on Site Safety Plus

***The courses offered as part of this scheme include:***

- Health and Safety Awareness (one day): Before an operative goes on site, they need to be health and safety aware. This introductory course is for those who have just entered the industry and is the first step on an ongoing pathway to understanding and avoiding all the hazards on-site.
- The Site Supervisors' Safety Training Scheme (SSSTS, two days): At the next level, where an individual assumes responsibility for a team, they need to understand their moral and legal obligations. The course is designed for first line managers or those preparing to undertake a site supervision role.
- Supervisor Specialist Skills Course (three day) Site Safety for Shopfitters and Interior Contractors: This course is for supervisors who, as part of their role, oversee the work of operatives in the shopfitting and interiors sector.
- The Site Supervisors' Safety Training Scheme Refresher Course: The SSSTS certificate is valid for five years, after which a mandatory refresher course is taken. However, with legislation changing more frequently, ConstructionSkills recommends taking the refresher course every three years.
- Site Management Safety Training Scheme (SMSTS, five days): Site managers are legally and morally responsible for the safety of many people. This course is designed for people responsible for planning, organising, monitoring and controlling and administering a workforce. The content includes legislation relating to safe practices in the building, construction and civil engineering industries. The course focuses on the need for risk assessment and good on-site communication to sustain site practices.
- SMSTS Refresher Course (two days): Again, the SMSTS certificate is valid for five years, after which a mandatory refresher course is taken. However, with legislation changing more frequently, ConstructionSkills recommends taking the refresher course every three years.

**About ConstructionSkills**

ConstructionSkills is the Sector Skills Council for the construction industry. It is UK-wide and represents the whole industry from professional consultancies to major contractors and SMEs. Established as a Sector Skills Council in 2003, ConstructionSkills is working to deliver a safe, professional and fully qualified construction workforce.

ConstructionSkills is a partnership between CIC, CITB NI and CITB-ConstructionSkills. All three partners are committed to working together to deliver industry-led skills and training solutions through the Sector Skills Agreement for construction. We work to negotiate the best partnership and funding deals for the construction industry to help raise standards and we develop the skills products and services employers' need.

The construction sector is central to the UK economy, generating almost 9% of UK GDP and with a turnover of more than £203bn a year. It employs 2.5 million people and requires a further 87,600 new entrants per year to 2011, as forecast by our Construction Skills Network.

The following number among the many products and services ConstructionSkills offers to customers:

- Inspire Scholarships, a placement and funding scheme designed to attract the brightest and best undergraduates to construction-related degree courses
- The National Skills Academy for Construction aims to overcome the challenges of training a fragmented, mobile industry through project-based training centres.
- ConstructionSkills Apprenticeships has the highest framework completion rates in the industry, and offers a choice of routes - traditional or Programme Led
- On-Site Assessment and Training and Experienced Worker Practical Assessment to help qualify the existing workforce.
- Health and Safety Test delivery, which forms an essential component of the industry's competence schemes such as CSCS and CPCS.
- Advice and support for employers through our network of Company Development Teams.
- Adult training and apprenticeships for young people in specialist construction skills through the National Construction College.
- Assessment services to the specialist sectors within the construction industry through the National Specialist Accredited Centre.
- Qualification review and development through the Construction Qualification Strategy to ensure qualifications meet the needs of industry.