

Joint statement

Basic health and safety requirements and SMEs

To benefit small and micro-businesses and to support the practical implementation of health and safety management in smaller companies, we the undersigned undertake actively to support the development, implementation and widespread recognition of health and safety 'SME core criteria' (see A below).

We believe that adopting the core criteria will help to:

- Reduce time, and the cost of dealing with supply chain health and safety enquiries
- Reduce duplicated paperwork
- Reduce the range of health and safety questions posed to SMEs
- Make the essential requirements of health and safety management clearer for small businesses
- Improve training, giving trainers and customers a clear view of the topics to be covered by basic SME training and
- Improve competency by allowing knowledge to be more easily demonstrated and transferred between businesses

In turn, these benefits are likely to help SMEs to engage more effectively and benefit from improved health and safety management and practical risk reduction.

A: 12 Essential health and safety criteria for SMEs

1. Health and safety policy and organisation
2. Arrangements for ensuring health and safety measures
3. Risk assessment (and safe systems of work)
4. Access to competent advice
5. Training and information
6. Individual qualifications and experience
7. Workforce involvement
8. Contracting procedures (i.e. using contractors)
9. Co-operating and co-ordinating with others
10. Accident/near hit reporting and investigation
11. First aid (and other emergency measures where applicable, notably fire)
12. Monitoring, checking and reviewing performance.

Note: Construction core criteria include 'Welfare provision' but to allow for wider application to SMEs, this is replaced by Criterion 11 'First aid and emergency provision' (thereby maintaining 12 core criteria).

We believe that the widespread adoption of health and safety 'SME core criteria' will help to resolve the current confusion and administrative burdens associated with a variety of current SME assessment schemes. Clients are likely to find the criteria are a valuable guide for 'Stage 1' supply chain assessments, whilst still being able to ask for further information, if need be (e.g. for specific types of work such as higher hazard operations) or work with those at particular risk (such a young persons).

We therefore encourage all stakeholders who work with SMEs to support these core criteria and to:

- Apply them when setting their own supplier/contractor assessments or when adopting a health and safety assessment scheme
- Improve mutual recognition between existing schemes, in line with the criteria and
- Adapt any training and information for small businesses, to help comply with the criteria

Signatories to this declaration

Name	Organisation	Job title
Tom Mullarkey	Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents	Chief Executive
Paul Reeve	Electrical Contractors' Association Ltd (ECA)	Health, safety & environment manager,
Briony Krikorian	Association of British Insurers (ABI)	EL Tracing Service Manager
Mike Ford	Achilles Information Ltd	Director, Assessment Policy & Standards
David Moore	British Constructional Steelwork Association (BCSA)	Director of Engineering
Peter Newport	Chemical Business Association (CBA)	Director and Secretary
John Murphy	CHAS	CHAS Scheme Manager
Shelley Atkinson-Frost	Construction Confederation	Director, Health and Safety
Richard Hill	Constructionline	
Howard Fidderman		Consultant
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Dermot Maurer	Exor Management Services	
Mary Boughton, MBE	Federation of Small Businesses (FSB)	Chair of Health, Safety & Risk Management Committee
Richard Jones	Institute of Occupational Safety and Health	Head of Technical Affairs
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Chrissy Falck	Learning and Skills Council (LSC)	Health and Safety
Darran Hughes	National Britannia Ltd.	Operations Director of SAFEcontractor
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Mike Long	The National Federation of Roofing Contractors Ltd	President
Teresa Budworth	NEBOSH	Chief Executive
David Wilson	NHBC	
Ian Simms	Royal Mail Group	Premises Compliance Manager
John Nelson	Specialist Engineering Contractors' (SEC) Group	Executive Secretary
David Bryant	The Health and Safety Academy	