

Monday 29 March 2021

Improved Pre-Qualification System Goes Live

Major Contractors Now Adopting the Common Assessment Standard

Build UK has announced that the new industry-wide pre-qualification (PQ) system is now fully up and running, simplifying a complex system for the benefit of everyone in the construction sector. The rollout of the Common Assessment Standard will significantly reduce the duplication of time, effort and resources that are costing the sector up to £1 billion a year.

Major contractors and clients – including Balfour Beatty, Costain, HS2, Mace, Multiplex and Skanska – have all adopted the Common Assessment Standard meaning that members of their supply chains will need to obtain just one certification to tender for work with them. This follows the recent implementation of a new data sharing solution, which enables contractors and clients to obtain key PQ data from any one of three Recognised Assessment Bodies: Achilles, CHAS or Constructionline.

The Common Assessment Standard is an industry-agreed question set with two levels of certification – desktop and site-based – and companies can apply to any Recognised Assessment Body to get the appropriate level dependent upon their trade, size and requirements of their clients.

Created by Build UK with the support of CECA, the Common Assessment Standard is endorsed by the Construction Leadership Council (CLC), which is actively seeking its adoption throughout Government construction procurement, including the Construction Playbook.

Jo Fautley, Deputy Chief Executive of Build UK, said:

“We’re delighted that the new system is now fully up and running and already being used by major contractors and clients. It’s been a collaborative effort, involving companies across the whole sector, and the new system is a huge step towards more efficient working, which is more important than ever in the current challenging economic climate.”

Neil Mant, Chair of the Interim Cross Industry Body, which has overseen the development of the new system, said:

“The new PQ system is a huge step forward for construction. With a single Common Assessment Standard and data sharing now in place, we have not only eliminated a huge amount of costly duplication of effort but also raised the bar in assessing the competence

of the supply chain. Supply chain companies will need certification from only one of the three Recognised Assessment Bodies, and contractors can continue to deal with the body they have an existing relationship with.”

Andy Mitchell, Chair of the CLC, said:

“The CLC is delighted to endorse the Common Assessment Standard which is set to transform the construction PQ process. It is a real and practical way of reducing bureaucracy and improving quality in the industry and it comes at just the right time. Companies will be able to demonstrate that they meet an agreed industry standard, and clients and contractors will be able to rely on the certification. The CLC will be encouraging the adoption of the Common Assessment Standard throughout public and private sector procurement.”

~ Ends ~

For more information, contact Build UK:

0844 249 5351

Communications@BuildUK.org

BuildUK.org

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Notes to Editors

1. [Build UK](#) is the leading representative organisation for the UK construction industry. Bringing together Clients, Contractors, Trade Associations representing a wide range of Specialist Contractors, and other organisations committed to industry collaboration, Build UK represents in excess of 40% of UK construction.
2. The Interim Cross Industry Body is chaired by Neil Mant, Supply Chain and Procurement Director at Vinci Construction UK, with support from Vice Chair Paul Reeve, Director of Business and Communications at the Electrical Contractors' Association. Neil and Paul, along with other members of the Interim Cross Industry Body, are available for interviews with media on request.
3. Further information on the PQ system, including the Common Assessment Standard question set, is available on the Build UK website: <https://builduk.org/pre-qualification/>.
4. There are currently three Recognised Assessment Bodies which can certify companies against the Common Assessment Standard, and they are available to provide further information on what the new system means for them. Please contact:
 - [Achilles](#) - Rebecca Bantoft / rebecca.bantoft@achilles.com
 - [CHAS](#) - Georgina Bisby / georgina@blackthorn-media.co.uk
 - [Constructionline](#) - Robert Walton / robert.walton@fortius-network.com