

The importance of trade associations within safety-critical sectors

3 years ago



Tony Seddon of Seddon Management Services (SMS) is ideally placed to know the vital importance of trade associations within safety-critical sectors such as construction.

At SMS, I work with a number of leading trade associations, using my sector-specific experience (specifically regarding safety systems and equipment for working at height) to help them achieve greater success. SAEMA and FASET are two such trade associations.

SAEMA User Training – bringing greater accredited competence to the at-height sector

SAEMA (Specialist Access Engineering & Maintenance Association) delivers the best training and guidance in the temporary and permanent suspended access industry.

In January 2021, SAEMA User Training was launched as a unique way for those who work at height to be assessed on their technical understanding of the processes and equipment involved.

As a result, a greater number of engineers and operatives will be accredited as safe and competent, contributing to a safer construction industry with fewer workplace accidents.

By May 2022, the number of people who had been issued with a virtual card was 750, showing the continued popularity of this innovative method of training.

Part 1 is a theory test that can be taken remotely, at the user's convenience. It can be accessed securely on SAEMA's training website (training.saema.org) via the user's computer or device.

The theory test course gives users two opportunities to achieve the required results. The user must pass the theory test before they are certified to move to Part 2 – the practical on-site training, which has a standardised syllabus.

Upon passing Part 1 of the test, a certificate is sent to the user as proof of their accreditation. A copy can also be sent to the employer. The user is then also issued with a virtual card which is stored on their smartphone and can be checked by Duty Holders in real time when users arrive on site for Part 2 Training.

Following successful Part 2 On Site training the virtual card will be endorsed with the site details which can also be checked in real time by Duty Holders to ensure that users are trained properly in the use the systems on site.

Falls from height remain one of the biggest causes of workplace fatalities and major injuries, as reported by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). Until now, the task of giving operatives the required level of background knowledge and experience was widely variable. That's why SAEMA User Training is set to advance the industry with regard to training and worker safety delivered consistently to all users by all member companies.

It removes the need for operatives to attend a classroom course; instead, they can be trained and assessed on the background knowledge of suspended access equipment anywhere that has an internet connection. The test is carefully designed to be both comprehensive and simple to use. You can find out more at <https://www.saema.org/training/>

The FASET CSCS card

FASET (Fall Arrest Safety Equipment Training) is the established trade association and training body for the safety netting and temporary safety systems industry.

Early in 2021, FASET teamed up with CSCS (Construction Skills Certification Scheme), the leading card scheme for the UK construction industry. Working together, the organisations created the FASET CSCS card.

CSCS cards provide proof that individuals working on construction sites have the appropriate training and qualifications for the job they perform. The partnership between FASET and CSCS means that everyone who works at height – using equipment such as safety nets, edge protection and stair towers – can demonstrate their specialist skill set on their FASET CSCS card.

Most access tower specialists work for 'hire and assembly' companies, using their skills to build structures where others can work safely at height. Their service covers equipment rental, consultation, specification, specification, design, assembly and dismantling. Working closely with tower manufacturers, they are qualified to:

- Plan the build
- Select safe equipment
- Follow design drawings
- Assemble and dismantle
- Make engineer-approved alterations
- Tie structures into buildings

- Inspect towers
- Collate all paperwork
- Conduct safe handovers

The partnership between FASET and CSCS is a huge step forward for temporary safety systems on UK construction sites. If someone arrives to install safety nets, stair towers, edge protection or platform decking, the site manager can easily check they're qualified just by viewing the details on their FASET card.

Anyone holding this card has considerable experience and knowledge of temporary safety systems. Gaining industry-wide recognition of their specialist skills and level of qualification was a logical move with a big impact on height safety.

Please visit <https://www.faset.org.uk/faset-cscs-card/> to find out more. You can also apply for a FASET CSCS card on our website at <https://www.faset.org.uk/applications/>