

CSG white paper proposes new standard to unite the sector behind construction product competence

4 years ago



A new white paper has been published that sets out how the entire built environment sector can unite behind a single, agreed standard to determine, demonstrate and recognise construction products competence (CPC).

The white paper 'Built environment – proposed construction product competence standard – white paper' has been developed by Competence Steering Group (CSG) Working Group 12, led by the Construction Products Association (CPA). The CSG was tasked with responding to the competence issues raised in Dame Judith Hackitt's report 'Building a Safer Future' and the subsequent requirements set out in the Building Safety Act following the Grenfell Tower fire.

All industries of the built environment sector use construction products, but their misuse can lead to dangerous and potentially fatal outcomes. Ensuring those who use construction products are competent is vital to producing buildings and a built environment that is safe, efficient and performs as required. However, there is currently no universal way to demonstrate that an individual has the correct competence for the tasks they are accountable and responsible for.

This white paper confirms that radical change is needed around the area of construction product competence. Individuals who supply, use, or otherwise work with construction products need to be properly assessed and deemed competent to do so. This would include those from manufacturing, merchants, design, contractors, maintainers, and many others from right across the supply chain.

The proposal for a new standard comprising five core levels of competence, as well as a methodology that defines how these can be mapped consistently by the different industries to their competence frameworks. This would ensure that everyone applies CPC in the same way and would assist regulators and duty holders in identifying what levels of competence are needed for everyone who works with construction products.

The levels outline fundamental knowledge bases applicable to all tasks with all construction products. They are designed to give a clear path of progression through the necessary competences required for different levels of responsibility and accountability. It can be used by industries to map against their existing training and qualifications and create any additional training infrastructure that may be needed.

The white paper also proposes that the standard be added to the existing BSI 8670 series, which specifies requirements for competence frameworks for individuals working in the built environment.

Peter Caplehorn, CPA Chief Executive, says: "Dame Judith Hackitt rightly pointed out that our industry needs to take responsibility for competence and work in a non-siloed manner. Now the Building Safety Act is making clear that regulators will no longer tolerate an industry that does not evidence its competence. The CPC levels have been designed to provide a single framework for everyone to work to, and I would urge the industry to read this white paper and get involved in testing it together."

The are being published now to allow everyone in the built environment sector to review and consider how to apply them in their industry. It is for the different industries to recognise the necessity of clear, demonstrable CPC. Once this is recognised, it is for each industry and its organisations to take on the principles proposed in the white paper and test them. It is the aim of CPA, the CSG and WG12 that by the time the proposals go through the formal standards process, industries will have had the time to practically trial them ready for entering feedback via public consultation.

There will also be a series of panel-led webinars tailored to individuals who work in the following sectors: manufacturing, design, contracting, operations & maintenance, and merchants/distributors.

The White Paper 'Built environment - Proposed Construction Product Competence Standard' is available to download online [here](#).