

## How networking is enabling SIS to deliver a different kind of engineering inspection service

4 years ago



*In this guest writer feature, Marc Ashton, founder of [Safety Inspection Solutions](#), discusses the network that has enabled him to overcome professional challenges and offer clients a more agile engineering inspection service.*

When it comes to engineering safety inspections, businesses often need a flexible, reactive solution – one that can be planned around production and tailored to their requirements. Independent inspection companies are well-placed to deliver this, responding quickly, and with greater agility than large organisations.

Launched eight years ago, Safety Inspection Solutions (SIS) has gained a reputation for its personal, highly responsive service. This launch wasn't without challenges, but networking has enabled us to overcome them – and to pioneer a new, more collaborative approach to engineering inspections.

### The challenges

I established SIS in 2014, after a nine-year stint as an engineering surveyor with a large inspection company. This experience, coupled with my skills as a mechanical engineer, gave me the confidence to launch my own business – a longstanding goal.

Today, SIS offers a range of onsite inspection services, helping customers to ensure that their working practices and equipment comply with current regulations. As a newly independent engineering inspector, I soon recognised that I could deliver these services reactively and cost-effectively, working around busy

production schedules in a way larger organisations were often unable to.

I also encountered a range of challenges – not least, lack of resource. If I became unwell or sustained an injury, I could no longer rely on colleagues to pick up outstanding work. This lack of support made it difficult to fulfil large national contracts, which involved travelling across the country. Despite my years of experience, I also missed being able to turn to a team for advice and support.

In short, independence was both a blessing and a curse. While customers benefited from a more agile and focused approach, a lack of resource threatened to stymie SIS's growth.

A network for engineering inspectors

After connecting with a group of like-minded engineers, I realised that they had encountered similar hurdles. We resolved to support each other, first building a shared, cloud-based reporting platform. This portal ensured, not only that we were working to the same standards, but that we could access technical information and expert support from peers, as and when needed.

We went on to launch the [Engineer Surveyor Inspection Network](#) (ESiNet), of which I am a director. ESiNet helps engineer surveyors and small, independent companies to grow. Members can discuss the challenges they encounter, join technical forums, and attend monthly online group meetings. It gives us the opportunity to share advice and best practice; now, if I have a reset issue or need a second opinion, I turn to ESiNet for support, using imagery and video streaming. Members also operate as a network, providing nationwide coverage.

Looking ahead

ESiNet helps SIS (and businesses like it) to deliver agile, highly responsive service without compromising on efficiency or reliability.

This new approach to engineering inspection benefits clients and surveyors alike. With a network of peers to turn to, the latter are better supported, and can achieve a better work-life balance. For customers, the benefits are clear: consistent service, expert problem-solving, and access to a team of specialist engineers across the UK.

Already an associate member of the Safety Assessment Federation (SAFed), SIS recently achieved ISO 9001. We are now ready to grow our team, and are looking to recruit an engineer surveyor apprentice via SAFed's Level 4 apprenticeship scheme. Candidates must have three years of engineering experience, and a background in disciplines like mechanical, electrical, fluid, or pressure plant engineering.

This new team member will enable SIS to extend and improve its inspection services, supporting a growing customer base across the UK. Indeed, with new appointments on the horizon and a network of supportive industry experts to rely on, the future looks bright.

To learn more about SIS and its services, visit [www.sis-ltd.org.uk](http://www.sis-ltd.org.uk).