

# BESA CREATES KEY BUILDING SAFETY ROLE

2 years ago



Rachel Davidson has been appointed to the new position of Director of Specialist Knowledge at the [Building Engineering Services Association](#) (BESA).

She will have a particular focus on the Building Safety Act and its implications for BESA members and the wider specialist building services sector.

Davidson has worked at BESA for more than 30 years in a variety of roles most recently as Director of Certification. She was also Head of Technical Schemes and Knowledge for 10 years until 2013 and served as a board director of Piper Insurance, which provides critical illness cover for the building engineering industry.

The Association has now asked her to bring her considerable experience and expertise to bear on what it regards as the most important legislative development in a generation.

It said the Building Safety Act would bring about “profound change to the UK’s construction and engineering professions” and lead to widespread ‘culture change’ in the wake of the Grenfell Tower disaster and the subsequent public inquiry.

“The new Act is just starting to make its presence felt but represents a fundamental shift in the way building engineering companies will need to go about their business from now on,” said BESA chief executive officer David Frise.

## Implications

“This new senior role, therefore, is hugely important to the Association, its members, and the wider

building services community. There is considerable concern and confusion out there about the implications of the Act and it is increasingly clear that contractors desperately need a dedicated source of expert information and guidance.”

Davidson said she was delighted to be taking on “this crucial work” which will involve building up in-depth knowledge of the Act and the secondary legislation that will be used to implement its measures. She will lead a dedicated in-house team who will produce advice, guidance, and tools to help contractors understand and comply with the changes.

BESA is also setting up a Building Safety Act Advisory Group to support this initiative. The group, which will include members from a variety of industry sectors, will play a pivotal role in gathering diverse perspectives and representing the concerns of the entire supply chain. The Association said its unique insights will allow the group to harness the depth of knowledge and expertise needed to explore the practical and operational implications of the legislation and examine some of the more theoretical aspects.

The Association already disseminates news and updates about the Act via [its online information hub](#) and plans to considerably enhance that service with details specifically tailored for building services companies and individual engineers.

#### Competence

“It might take some time, but there is no doubt that the Act will bring about profound and positive change to our industry. Changes that will go well beyond safety,” said Davidson. “It will introduce a much more rigorous focus on competence and compliance, underpinned by strict legal requirements to provide digital evidence and improve record keeping that will have implications for all aspects of our work.

“However, to make this possible we need much better collaboration and communication between clients, designers, and partners on site – and everyone must be aware and take ownership of their responsibilities. Central to the act is compliance with the Building Regulations and making sure organisations and individuals are competent to carry out their specific tasks,” she added.

“When projects are approached in the right way, the outcomes should naturally support the required compliance standards.”

Davidson pointed out that BESA already had several schemes and tools in place to help contractors meet the new demands and would continue to develop and expand these services as the impact of the legislation gathered pace.

For more information about the Act visit the BESA hub at: [www.thebesa.com/building-safety-act](http://www.thebesa.com/building-safety-act)