

BESA appoints first chief operating officer

7 months ago



The [Building Engineering Services Association](#) (BESA) has appointed its first chief operating officer as part of a major strategic transformation.

Tony Gilbert joined the organisation full-time at the start of 2025 having worked as a consultant to the Association since last year. He was previously with the management consultancy illumini consulting for 15 years where he specialised in helping organisations manage change and position themselves for increased growth.

Clients included the Medicines & Healthcare products Regulatory Authority (MHRA), the Ministry of Justice, RedRock Consulting, France Telecom, Airbus, Rolls-Royce, BAE, and the STthree group.

Before that he spent 10 years as group technology director for France Telecom – Orange after founding his own management consultancy in 1993. He has worked with senior leadership teams in the US, Switzerland, France, Belgium, Netherlands, Denmark, Poland, Romania and Slovakia.

“Tony brings enormous experience and vision to the Association and has already played a key role in our strategic review and re-organisation,” said BESA’s chief executive officer David Frise.

Refocus

“We are delighted that he has now agreed to join us full-time to guide us through the next vital stage as we put our plans into action and refocus our products and services in line with an incredible time of change across the building engineering sector.”

Described by previous colleagues as an “inspiring and visionary leader with a broad range of skills and experience”, Gilbert said he was looking forward to putting his vision into practice to ensure BESA continued to provide leadership and support to the sector.

“It has been a real privilege to work closely with the staff and membership of this historic and forward-looking trade body as it re-sets for an exciting and challenging new era in building services technology and practices.

“Our members and their clients are facing an unprecedented range of challenges, including very tough trading conditions and skills shortages, alongside significant business opportunities such as the rapid deployment of digital technology and an urgent drive towards decarbonisation of the built environment,” said Gilbert.

“The Association’s leadership has been working flat out to ensure members have the information, tools and support they need to, not just survive, but thrive in this new environment.”