

Plant Sector Representative Organisation (PSRO)

Certificating Bodies Standing Sub-Group

Notes of a meeting held 18th January 2022

A meeting of the Plant Sector Representative Organisation's Certificating Bodies Standing Sub-Group was held at 2.00 pm on Wednesday 18th January 2022 by Zoom.

In Attendance

Peter Brown (PSRO) (Chair)
Kevin Minton (PSRO)
Tom Wakefield (ALLMI)
Liam Knight (AITT)
Grahame Tobin (BRITTOp)
Phillip Renner (CMPE)
John Robinson (CMPE)
David Nicholson (CMPE)
Paul Roddis (IPAF)
Alec Hands (LANTRA)
Carl Hassell (NOCN/CPCS)
Tim Brownbridge (NOCN/CPCS)
Huw Jones (NPORS)
Dean Spiers (MPQC)
Nick Welsh (RTITB)
Laura Nelson (RTITB)

Support

Nick Gooderson (PSRO Consultant)

Apologies for Absence

Patrick Bowles (MPQC)
Patrick Bowring (Qualified Contractors Ltd)
Giles Councill (IPAF)
Stephanie Craig (LANTRA)

Item 1 – Welcome and Introductions.

1.1 Peter Brown welcomed everybody and outlined that the purpose of the meeting was to provide an update on progress with the establishment of the PSRO, discuss the PSRO competency framework that had previously been distributed, explain the application process for gaining PSRO support and to update the group on other developments, such as a national PSRO Eco-operating syllabus.

1.2 Peter Brown also noted that there has been some delay with progressing some of these matters but the pandemic and the fact that the PSRO was 'trailblazing' the establishment of a formal SRO, along the pressures of serving association members meant that progress had not been as efficient as hoped. There was a lot going on behind the scenes however and work is now being speeded up.

Item 2 – Update of PSRO Governance Matters

2.1 Kevin Minton reminded members of the history to the formation of the PSRO. The main driver came through feedback received through the CPA review of certification scheme meetings, held in 2018. There was a strong call for better engagement between employers, training providers, certificating bodies and others involved with plant training and certification. The introduction of the Construction Leadership Council (CLC) requirements also supported the establishment of a Sector Representative Body (SRO) to act as a single employer voice to guide CLC, CSCS and CITB, in its role as the Standard Setting Body, in agreeing suitable standards and qualifications for the sector.

2.2 He explained that the PSRO is now established as a Private Ltd Company at Companies House. Work is now taking place transitioning to full establishment with each PSRO member organisation becoming a part of the company.

2.3 An internal governance structure has been put into place, comprising the Board along with the technical review and certificating bodies groups. Further groups will be established if required and these may be task and finish or other form depending on the need. The important factor was achieving the outcomes required.

2.4 The PSRO has now established formal relationships with CLC, CSCS and CITB. They have all acknowledge the PSRO as being the SRO for construction plant. The involvement with CLC includes looking at the outcomes of the Hackett report and Building Safety Bill, which will ultimately impact on all the industry and its certificating bodies. CSCS looks to the PSRO to provide guidance and recommendations as set out in the CLC Requirements for Partner Card Schemes. CSCS views the PSRO as providing the necessary representation from both the sector and the wider industry.

2.5 Nick Gooderson explained that CITB and the PSRO are in the final stage of developing a formal MoU to set the protocol for an SRO's and SSB's to work together in advising on various aspects of the CLC Requirements. The MoU sets out the roles and responsibilities of each organisation in relation to the CLC Requirements and the expectations around how they should work together. It also covers the development of the CITB Short Duration Standards project. It is hoped that the MoU will be finalised and signed by both parties by March 2022.

2.6 Peter Brown informed the group that the PSRO Technical Review Group is operational and has been key to the development of the PSRO Competence Framework. It is also looking at other matters, such as the certificating body application process for gaining PSRO support. The group is made up of individuals nominated by PSRO member organisations and who had to be suitably experienced, and with a background and active in the plant sector. The group is advised by Peter Brown and Nick Gooderson, both who have much experience in standards and qualification development work including with the plant sector.

Item 3 – PSRO Competency Framework Update

3.1 Peter Brown explained the purpose of the competence framework for plant occupations and showcased the document. This has been developed in four parts as follows:

- Part A is the principles of competency as outlined in many previous documents including the 2014 Pye Tait Competency in Construction report. This is being reinforced within the latest BSI overarching framework for building safety – competency of individuals guidance.
- Part B is the principles for certification and details the learning journey stages and compliance requirements by employers and certificating bodies.
- Part C is a specification for compliance for certificating bodies.
- Part D is the compliance/guidance requirements for employers.

3.2 The framework supports the CLC requirements and will provide a consistent benchmark for individuals, employers and certificating bodies. There is no intention to provide specific plant-type technical training detail but instead to signpost to the relevant sources of information. The content of each section was explained in detail.

3.3 He further emphasised the need for schemes to be transparent over what it is they are offering. This did not have to be detailed curriculum information, but should provide a precis of course description, duration and what the outcome of any course will be so that employers can make an informed choice of what certification or carding to use.

3.4 Laura Nelson asked for clarification of the need for trainer qualifications listed on the OfQual Register of Regulated Qualifications. This was confirmed as being the case.

3.5 Paul Roddis questioned why there was no mention of the ISO standards, such as those for MEWPS. Peter Brown said this was an omission and that this will be corrected. **Action: Peter Brown.**

Item 4 – CSCS Partner Card Applications

4.1 Nick Gooderson reminded members of the CLC requirements for CSCS-logged card schemes. Any application to become a recognised CSCS Partner Card Scheme for plant-related occupations will first require the formal support of the PSRO. Gaining this support demonstrates sector and wider industry support, which is a clear CLC Requirement. The PSRO will use its competence framework to consider such applications. There are pending applications to become CSCS Plant Partner Card Schemes waiting for consideration by the PSRO.

4.2 The application process was explained in detail. This is a separate process to the CSCS Partner Card Scheme application. If a scheme is successful in gaining the PSRO support, they can then move forward and apply to CSCS to become a Partner Scheme.

4.3 The application form is being finalised and will soon become available as a download from the PSRO webpage (currently hosted on the CPA website at <https://www.cpa.uk.net/skills-training/plant-sector-representative-organisation>)

4.4 Laura Nelson asked if the certificating bodies that have already been approved as CSCS Partner Schemes will have to gain the PSRO support to continue. Nick Gooderson said that the CLC/CSCS are not intending to mandate this in the short term.

4.5 Peter Brown explained however that in the short term, existing CSCS-approved bodies should aim to meet the competence framework requirements as the PSRO will eventually introduce this as an additional SRO requirement to all. This is because the sector expects all certificating bodies to be compliant with its requirements, although the timescales will be discussed with CSCS as the contract remains with them and the relevant body. It was also hoped that plant certificating bodies sitting outside of CSCS will also use it.

4.6 Laura Nelson was pleased to hear this as she considered the document was very good and it will provide an opportunity to demonstrate good practice and help achieve better consistency across the bodies.

Item 5 – National PSRO Eco-operating Syllabus

5.1 Peter Brown explained that the PSRO, through its Technical Review Group is developing a PSRO-derived and badged Eco-operating syllabus as an 'open-source' programme that will be promoted to industry in support of CarbonZero initiatives.

A PSRO-led working party is to be formed and will become ‘custodians’ of the standard, drawing in expertise from across the sector as well as liaising with entities such as the Supply Chain Sustainability School, who already have short video-based learning tools as part of their Energy and Carbon strand. It was considered that it needed oversight from an impartial body such as the PSRO.

5.2 The syllabus will cover emission reduction and fuel saving. This is particularly relevant given the withdrawal of red diesel for the sector from April 2022. It will not be machine specific, but quite general with the ambition of changing ‘hearts and minds’ when it comes to achieving carbon zero targets.

5.3 Discussion will take place with CITB over potential grant aid for the syllabus

5.4 Laura Nelson considered it a very worthy exercise and hoped that it can be introduced as soon as possible. She considered it lent itself to blended and/or e-learning.

5.5 Carl Hassell asked if it was the intention for certificating bodies to record achievement of the syllabus on cards. Peter Brown said that this was an ultimate aim of the initiative.

Item 6 – Any Other Business

CPA Research

6.1 Peter Brown informed the group that the CPA had commissioned Pye Tait Consulting to carry out research into the needs of its members in respect to skills and training provision. The final report is now being considered by CPA prior to it being published on its website.

6.2 One of the initial report findings indicates there is considerable confusion around what constitutes competence and what cards schemes are offering. Peter Brown suggested to the group that they should consider being more clear on what they offer and how when engaging with employers and others.

CITB Training Standards and Grant Strategy

6.3 Peter Brown explained that better and more productive meetings are being held with dedicated CITB staff to support the needs of the plant sector, who are progressing their training standards for plant operators and underpinning grant strategy. The PSRO is providing CITB with guidance over this work and having some influence. It is important that whatever is produced meets the needs of the sector.

Apprenticeships

6.4 Peter Brown updated the group over the English plant operating apprenticeship standard. There are now 220 apprentices registered onto the construction plant operative apprenticeship along with 10 providers delivering it and 3 approved end-point assessment organisations. He explained that the criteria for an apprenticeship-type card has been devised and detailed in the competency framework and provides opportunities for certificating bodies and their centres to be involved in delivery and assessment. He also mentioned that Qualification Wales is also developing an apprenticeship for plant operators and has approached the PSRO for guidance and support.

6.5 He further also mentioned that the Lifting Technician Apprenticeship standard for crane operators is now starting to see more healthy registrations.

CSCS Partner Card Application

6.6 Grahame Tobin asked how certificating bodies seeking PSRO support will be able to demonstrate superiority over schemes that have already been approved by CSCS. Peter Brown explained that it will be for schemes to demonstrate valid reasons for wanting to become a CSCS Partner Card Scheme and what benefits they will bring to the construction sector in doing so.

There is a dedicated section within the forthcoming application form. There was currently no formal guidance over what constitutes 'superiority' but the Technical Review group will evaluate each application to ascertain what benefits have been detailed by the applying body.

Date of Next Meeting

7.1. To be arranged. **Action: Peter Brown**