



NEWS and INFORMATION

ISSUE 23

1 November 2006

MAJOR CONTRACTORS GROUP POLICY FOR QUALIFYING THE WORKFORCE

The Major Contractors Group (MCG) — representing the major builders — have issued a policy statement re-affirming their commitment to a fully qualified construction industry workforce, as follows:

- a** From 1 October 2006, everyone covered by the *CSCS construction trades* and intending to work on MCG sites must either have an appropriate skills card or be able to demonstrate that they have registered for their card;
- b** MCG members will no longer accept completion of just the health and safety test as adequate evidence of progress towards becoming qualified; and
- c** **From 1 January 2007, everybody working on an MCG site must have an appropriate skills card.**

The MCG statement goes on to say: “MCG members are unanimously agreed to this policy, which is consistent with overall construction industry trends and expectations from major client bodies”.

CSCS/CITB “SkillsDirect”

In parallel with the MCG policy, CSCS/CITB have devised a “fast track” approach to assist in the process of helping to get people qualified, called “SkillsDirect”. This applies only to a limited number of occupations and “SkillsDirect” is not applicable to any of the occupations in the building services engineering industry.

However, CITB, as “gate keepers” to the SKILLcard/CITB health and safety test, have written to a number of SKILLcard holders to advise them of how they can register for a card through “SkillsDirect”. These communications are capable of causing confusion among employers of building services engineering personnel and employees alike. They should be ignored, for the following reasons:

- The “SkillsDirect” route to applying for a card is **not** open to personnel in the occupations covered by Engineering Services SKILLcard.
- If applications for cards from personnel in the heating, ventilating, air conditioning and refrigeration industry are fast-tracked through the “SkillsDirect” route, this could result in the wrong kind of card being issued — i.e. a mainstream CSCS card, instead of an Engineering Services SKILLcard.

Personnel in the heating, ventilating, air conditioning and refrigeration sector who are invited to apply through the “SkillsDirect” route should be advised that this is not appropriate for them. Instead, for a card relevant to their occupation they should register through Engineering Services SKILLcard.

Contact details for SKILLcard are shown on the front page of this *News and Information Bulletin*.

DISTRIBUTION:

HVCA
OSC/SSC/PMDG/RUG
ADCAS
Agencies
BAFSA
BRA/FETA
CSA