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**HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMISSION
CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CONIAC).**

DESIGNER PREQUALIFICATION

Summary

To inform CONIAC of this initiative being taken forward by the Construction Confederation and the Construction Industry Council, and to invite participation.

Issue

1. The Construction Special Interest Group (SIG) is a group drawn together by the Construction Confederation, following earlier work undertaken in relation to subcontractor prequalification by the Major Contractors Group. The SIG has developed a set of Pre Qualification Criteria for designers. These Criteria are reproduced at Annex 1 to this paper.

Timing

2. The SIG includes representatives from a number of organisations including the Contractors Health and Safety Assessment Scheme (CHAS), the MCG, CIC, Foster and Partners, National Britannia, Loughborough University, and HSE. The Initiative enjoys the support of the National Contractors Federation (NCF), and is expected to be adopted by all of these organisations following its launch in the European Week of Health and Safety in October 2004. Other potential partners, such as the Construction Clients Group, Office of Government and Commerce (OGC), Department of Trade and Industry, and the Engineering

Contractors Association are aware of the project and will be approached to seek support.

Background

3. The HSE has over the past two years taken a more strategic emphasis in its work with designers. Evidence suggests that around one third of designers in construction have limited knowledge of their duties under the current Regulations. The use of a simple and short prequalification questionnaire specifically setting a standard of health and safety management for designers to achieve should help to improve awareness and raise the standard of health and safety management amongst designers.
4. The prequalification criteria set out a common set of indicative evidence to allow demonstration of a minimum level of competence under CDM. The criteria requires simple evidence under five headings; Experience, H&S Knowledge, Technical Professional Knowledge, Managing Design Hazards, and Subcontracting. Its adoption requires procuring organisations to only ask for the evidence set out in the criteria. An aim of the criteria is to reduce the bureaucratic burden on design organisations and to facilitate cross recognition between those procuring design activities. The criteria accept that there may be tender specific requirements for competency, and these are outside the scope. An important principle of the criteria is a recognition that organisations are not to be excluded on the basis of non-compliance if they demonstrate a willingness to meet the standard, and commit to doing so within a set timescale.
5. The definition of a designer under CDM is wide, and includes those such as clients, who specify design changes to a building structure. However, this Pre Qualification Questionnaire is intended to be applied to organisations whose prime contribution to a project is design activity, such as architects or structural engineers.
6. There will be considerable advantages in establishing a common standard in partnership with industry and through working with CONIAC members, who may be able to champion this initiative in their own constituencies.

Matters for decision.

4. Members are invited to consider what they may be able to do to :
 - To promote the initiative;
 - To raise the profile of this issue amongst professional bodies, centres of education and training, etc;
 - In their personal capacity as 'champions'.

Action

5. Members are invited to contribute to the debate at meeting M2/2004 and provide feedback to the Designer Pre-qualification SIG.

Annex 1

Health & Safety Pre-qualification of Designers

The Construction Confederation/Construction Industry Council Pre-Qualification Criteria have been produced to set out the health and safety management arrangements that participating organisations wish to see in the design contractors/design consultants they engage. The definition of a designer under CDM is wide, and includes those such as clients, who specify design changes to a building structure. However, these criteria are intended to be applied to organisations whose prime contribution to a project is design activity, such as architects, design contractors and consultants, or structural engineers.

No participating organisation will ask for evidence that is not specified in this document. Additional project-specific health and safety information may be required as part of any particular tender application. However, for less complex structures and projects, compliance with this standard constitutes a minimum acceptable level of competence under the CDM Regulations. The express intention of this standard is to encourage a move away from the exchange of large amounts of paperwork during pre-qualification. This standard is used to best effect as a means of establishing an auditable trail for verification at the discretion of the purchasing organisation. It is a requirement of this standard that the designer must agree to submit to an interview to verify the information if requested by the purchaser. Users are urged to not request any additional paperwork apart from a simple submission stating the evidence below. In the vast majority of cases, this should be achievable with a document of 1-2 pages.

The evidence specified below should be available for inspection if requested at a later date. This can be done at interview, or if necessary via despatch of paper copies or email. Nothing in this document should be taken to mean that any company working for a participating company does not need to meet their legal requirements under the Health and Safety at Work Etc. Act 1974, and all associated Regulations.

Where the designer cannot provide the necessary evidence required below, a participating organisation would seek evidence of a willingness to meet the standard. This should be demonstrated by undertaking a review of the designer's current health and safety arrangements against the requirements of the criteria. The designer should then establish objectives with an action plan to comply. Designers will not fail to meet the criteria provided they can produce a Health and Safety Action Plan that adequately addresses those shortfalls identified, and sets out a timescale for implementation.

<i>Issue</i>	<i>What the procuring organisation/companies want you to do</i>	<i>What evidence the pre-qualification criteria requires (provide where requested)</i>	<i>What does criteria <u>not</u> require of you.</i>	<i>Questions you are likely to be asked by organisations/ companies</i>
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate that your team has experience of similar types of projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Records of previous projects with detailed references (building type, procurement route, industry sector, size of job, areas of expertise etc) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not forward large amounts of paperwork or contract documentation from those projects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide details of previous projects including type, size and complexity. • Provide evidence to show that designs have been undertaken to the standards used on this project.
Health and Safety Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide staff with construction H&S training, with particular reference to CDM and key site hazards • Provide access to up to date H&S information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nominated Construction Health and Safety Coordinator for company • training provided to (or competence of) this individual • means of this person communicating to other design staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not provide copies of the training materials and content • Do not provide details of in-house training that has been provided to the Construction H&S Coordinator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the duties of the designer under CDM? • How do you communicate H&S information including residual risk? • How do you co-operate with the PS and other designers? • Has the Construction H&S Coordinator undertaken any recognised training in construction H&S?

<i>Issue</i>	<i>What the procuring organisation/companies want you to do</i>	<i>What evidence the pre-qualification criteria requires (provide where requested)</i>	<i>What does criteria <u>not</u> require of you.</i>	<i>Questions you are likely to be asked by organisations/ companies</i>
Technical Professional Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify a project director, coordinator and key project staff • Employ suitably qualified & experienced staff • Operate a formal procedure for identifying staff training needs • Provide training in accordance with identified needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nominated primary contact at senior management level with responsibility for ensuring competency of staff supporting the contract. • Professional qualifications/ membership of institutions held by this person. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not send copies of all training records & CSCS cards for the whole of your organisation and your proposed subcontractors. • Do not send copies of your management system or all your procedures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have all your staff received appropriate training for their work • Who will you allocate to the design team and how will you operate on this project? • What are the technical qualifications and experience of your personnel on the design team?
Managing Design Hazards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a formal system for the identification' elimination, and mitigation of hazards. • Have clear and effective arrangements for design coordination, planning and change. • Operate an effective document control system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple documented hazard management process, including defined means of communicating risk to all duty holders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not provide details of risk assessment proformas, previous risk assessments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are your arrangements for planning/ coordination/ approvals/and change control? • What are your document control arrangements? • What are your methods for risk assessment/hazard identification? • How can you demonstrate skills, knowledge and experience (relating to design risk management) of your staff?

<i>Issue</i>	<i>What the procuring organisation/companies want you to do</i>	<i>What evidence the pre-qualification criteria requires (provide where requested)</i>	<i>What does criteria <u>not</u> require of you.</i>	<i>Questions you are likely to be asked by organisations/ companies</i>
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you cooperate with other designers and specialist subcontractors? • How do you communicate residual risks to contractors?
Subcontracting Design Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess all subcontractors on their capabilities before appointment. • Supervise the work of subcontractors during the design period 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application of this criteria to all subcontractors with design responsibilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Do not produce long-winded questionnaire responses you have received from your subcontractors that do not deal with the core issues in this standard. ○ Do not repeat assessments for every contract. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How do you assess the competence (and resource) of your subcontractors? ○ How do you ensure that subcontractors' employees are qualified to undertake work ○ How do you control further sub-contracting? ○ How do you communicate on H&S issues with specialist subcontractors undertaking design activity?