

Plant Sector Representative Organisation (PSRO)

Notes of the Board Meeting held 7th September 2023

A meeting of the Board of the Plant Sector Representative Organisation (PSRO) was held at 10.00am on Thursday 7th September 2023 by Zoom.

In Attendance

HBF (Chair in the absence of CPA)

NFDC

FPS

Build UK

SPOA x 1

CECA x 1

Support

PSRO Secretariat

Apologies

CPA

SPOA x 1

CECA x 1

Item 1 – Welcome and introductions

1.1. The PSRO Secretariat informed members that the current Chair (CPA) would not be in attendance due to personal circumstances and that in their absence, the representative from HBF had kindly agreed to chair this meeting.

1.2. They welcomed everybody and particularly the new representatives from CECA, NFDC and Build UK.

1.3. The Board asked that its thanks and best wishes are forwarded to the outgoing CECA, NFDC and Build UK representatives.

Item 2 – Notes of previous meeting

2.1. The notes were agreed as an accurate record. There were no matters arising that were not being covered on the agenda.

Item 3 - PSRO Formation Update

Limited Company Registration and Appointment of Directors and Persons of Significant Responsibility

3.1. The Secretariat confirmed that old and new Board representatives had been updated at Companies House.

3.3. The Secretariat confirmed that the PSRO accounts had been submitted to both Companies House and HMRC and that all was in order.

Item 4 - Review of the Terms of Reference

Content

4.1. The Secretariat explained that members had considered the ToR content at their last meeting and the agreed amendments were now incorporated in the revised version and published on the PSRO website.

Board Positions - Confirmation

4.2. Due to the current Chair being absent, it was agreed that the positions of Chair and Vice Chair be discussed at the next meeting.

Item 5 - External Relationship Development Update

CLC and CSCS

5.1. The Secretariat informed members that the CSCS Alliance has reviewed the CLC Requirements and made recommendations to CLC over their updating. This would likely happen in the next few months and will be of interest to the PSRO. In particular, there is a request that more flexibility is provided over the 'minimum standard' of N/SVQs, given their demise in many sectors and also the underpinning of National Occupational Standards (NOS). It is being suggested that a high-level framework is devised as an alternative that will still demand competence-based qualifications as well as apprenticeships, but not be restricted to just N/SVQs.

5.2. They also explained that some awarding organisations are looking at developing new style competence-based qualifications in lieu of NVQs due to potential Government funding issues, based on their interpretation of the recent Department for Education's review of Level 1 and 2-based qualifications.

5.3. FPS expressed concern and explained how the NVQ has been successful in helping with the assessment of the use of different types of piling rigs. They also considered that the industry is still struggling to understand what competence means, particularly around behaviours.

5.4. HBF relayed some concerns over the new T Levels and how they will fit, given they are designed to certificate at a threshold competence level.

5.5. As reported at the last meeting, the main priority for CSCS is delivering on the CLC Requirement that demands anybody who gained a card through 'Grandfather-Rights' or Industry Accreditation having to either gain a relevant qualification or membership of a Professional Body by 2025. Many of those impacted are supervisors and managers, with many thousands expected to be affected. Despite much lobbying by employers and employees, the CLC issued a statement stating that they were standing by this requirement.

Scotland and Wales

5.6. The Secretariat informed members that there was nothing further to report since the last meeting where it had been reported that a meeting had taken place with SQA to explain in detail the role of the PSRO and other developments in the plant sector, including the CITB training standards. SQA had given an update from their side and alerted to some impending change to Scottish Apprenticeships.

HSE

5.7. The Secretariat reminded members that the HSE was now an official member of the Technical Review Group. They also pointed out that the recently-released HSE workplace-related fatality figures for 2022/2023 recorded construction as having the highest level of

workplace fatalities, with struck by moving vehicle being within the top three causes of fatalities.

5.8. FPS informed Members that their sector had seen a fatality caused through somebody clearing a hose blockage with compressed air. They have set up a task group to look at how cleaning lines can be carried out more safely.

CITB

5.9. The Secretariat reminded members that the MoU that is in place between the PSRO and CITB had been due to expire last April. This has now been renewed for a further twelve months and its scope continues to cover the development of the CITB Training Standards and the responsibilities of both organisations in their respective roles as the SSB and SRO under the CLC Requirements.

5.10. They further gave an update on the development of the CITB Training Standards. Use of these will now allow those employers requiring a CSCS logoed plant scheme to apply for CITB grant support. Currently this only applies to CPCS and NPORS. Previously grant had been restricted to CPCS carding only. The first tranche of categories has now been launched and will be treated as a six-month pilot programme. They reminded members that the PSRO TRG has been continually advising CITB on their development, mainly with guidance around delivery as well as charring category-based working groups.

5.11. The Secretariat informed members that there was some concern over how CITB will cope with the necessary auditing of centres delivering the training standards. It was not clear as to what CITB's strategy will be and may be reliant upon the card schemes to conduct the majority of audits. They confirmed that the TRG had been continually making CITB aware that effective auditing is key to the quality and success of the new standards. They also stated that there has also been some concerns by providers over the training durations set by each working group and that the PSRO TRG had provided some concessionary guidance to CITB on how and when alterations to durations and ratios could be made.

5.13. The Secretariat further pointed out that only eight of around fifty categories of plant went live and it was very unlikely that CITB will meet their intended target for developing them all. They originally had considered it possible to complete them all within six months until the TRG gave them a reality-check.

Item 6 - ALLMI and IPAF Technical Review Group Representation

6.1. The Secretariat explained the background to the issue in that CLC/CSCS wish for ALLMI and IPAF, like the other CSCS partner plant schemes, to recognise the PSRO as their SRO. This will then be reflected within their CSCS License Agreement. They explained that ALLMI and IPAF currently are already recognised SROs for their respective scope of plant.

6.2. Exploratory discussions have taken place between the Chair, Secretariat, ALLMI and IPAF as well as with both CSCS and Build UK over their engagement with the PSRO. This resulted in a recommendation that ALLMI and IPAF could be allowed permanent representation on the Technical Review Group (TRG), based on a PSRO Board-agreed criteria with both organisations. The aim of this being to allow them to understand better the workings of the PSRO and to accept it as being the SRO for all CSCS-logoed certification schemes. Both ALLMI and IPAF have been given a twelve-month extension to their current CSCS License Agreements to allow this exploratory transition.

6.3. The Secretariat pointed out that the representatives put forward will have to be independent of their card scheme and training delivery functions, with a number of

safeguards added to the criteria (as listed in the briefing paper) to ensure impartiality where conflicts of interest may arise

6.4. Build UK confirmed that they are supportive of this recommendation and consider that ALLMI and IPAF have much experience and expertise to bring to the PSRO. This can also act as a steppingstone to them fully recognising the PSRO as their SRO.

6.6. The Board agreed that, based on the criteria and on evidence supplied or to be supplied, that both ALLMI and IPAF should be allowed formal permanent representation on the TRG, subject to the terms and restrictions set out in the proposal paper.

Item 7 - PSRO Webinar Feedback

7.1. The Secretariat explained that the webinar, held 17th May, had been a success with around 45 delegates in attendance. A press release had been produced which received a very quick and broad take up by the media which was welcomed and social media comments had been positive. A recording of the webinar is available to view on the PSRO website along with the slides used during the event. All members agreed that it had been a very useful exercise and served to continue the awareness raising of the PSRO. The Secretariat also extended their thanks to Alasdair Reisner of CECA for his valuable contribution to the event.

7.2. HBF asked if the exercise will be repeated. It was agreed that this type of event should be considered when there is significant progress or information to report.

Item 8 - Joint PSRO/SCSS Eco-operations National Training Delivery Framework

8.1. The Secretariat showcased the joint PSRO/SCSS Eco-operations National Training Delivery Framework, explaining the background and process of development. The publication had been launched and was available for free download from both the PSRO website and the SCSS website, with a national press release sent to the media on the 8th September 2023.

8.2. They explained that eco-operations content identified within the framework had already been inserted within the CITB plant training standards as one of the learning outcomes. Initial discussions have taken place with CITB in the hope of providing some form of grant support for training linked to the framework.

8.3. FPS considered that the most effective use of the framework would be for its content to be embedded into training programmes and qualifications but accepted its use as providing stand-alone training. The Secretariat explained that it was the intention to showcase the framework at the next PSRO Certification Bodies meeting in order they make use of it with their training programmes and to promote it to awarding organisations and others.

Item 9 - Sub-groups

Technical Review Group

9.1. The Secretariat reported that there had been one formal meeting of the TRG since the last Board meeting but a lot of 'virtual' discussions around various matters, including the CITB training standards project and the eco-operations framework project. The last full meeting had considered a request from a certification body for PSRO support, of which the outcome had been to go back to them requesting much more detailed information. To-date, nothing further has been received from them or any other certification body seeking CSCS-partner card scheme status for plant operations.

Certification Bodies Sub-group

9.2. The Secretariat informed members that since the last Board meeting, there had been no further meetings of the certification bodies sub-group but that it was intended to organise one before the year end.

Item 10 - Any Other Business

Item 11 - Proposed Date of Next Meeting

11.1. The next Board meeting will take place in early 2024.