



dti

**INTRODUCING THE  
CONSTRUCTION SECTOR UNIT**

MARCH 2004

# Introducing Construction Sector Unit

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Working for businesses,  
employees and consumers to  
drive up UK productivity and  
competitiveness to deliver  
prosperity for all.

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**Construction Sector Unit** is the lead unit within the Department of Trade and Industry on construction issues. Construction is hugely important to the economy. Our role is as a 'critical friend' of the sector, working with partners in Whitehall and elsewhere to achieve our Vision - "... for the UK construction industry to be consistently world class in delivering products and services that maximise value for money for end-users, and exceed expectations."

**Our aims are:**

- To drive up the productivity and competitiveness of the industry
- To provide effective links between industry and Government, ensuring policy is based on a clear understanding of the industry's needs and concerns
- To ensure that legitimate industry concerns about legislation or policy are addressed by relevant parties

## What areas of the industry do we cover?

The Unit covers the following sectors:

- materials and products; suppliers and producers
- building services manufacturers, providers and installers
- contractors; sub and specialist contractors (building, civil engineering, engineering construction)
- construction professionals, advisors and consultants
- construction clients
- construction research organisations
- facilities management organisations

## How we work

**By ensuring we understand the needs and concerns of our sectors** – The Unit is part of the DTI's Business Relations Group. A key element of our work is the development of close relationships and partnerships with the main industry bodies and major companies within our sectors.

**Focusing on key partnerships** – Construction is a highly fragmented industry with a high proportion of small companies. The Unit therefore engages primarily with organisations best able to exercise leverage through their own industry relationships, e.g. industry-wide bodies, key contractors managing supply-chains. Contacts with research bodies, the Small Business Service and other intermediaries are also crucial enabling the Unit to provide an effective interface with the industry.

The Unit supports and is fully involved with the Strategic Forum for Construction, which gives the strategic direction to work addressing the challenges facing the industry. Other key strategic partners are Constructing Excellence, nCRISP (Construction Research and Innovation Strategy Panel), and the industry Sector Skills Councils (CITB-ConstructionSkills and SummitSkills)

The Unit works closely with key areas of government relevant to the industry including Building Regulations, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM); the Commission for Architecture in the Built Environment (CABE); the Office of Government Commerce (OGC); Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA); and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

**By influencing strategic policy development –**

Much of what we do involves influencing and we seek to ‘punch above our weight’ whether in terms of our dealings with industry, other parts of Government, or the EU. Regulatory issues feature significantly in our work.

**Providing evidence-based policy advice –**

The Unit depends on reliable data and analysis to inform its policies and planning. We undertake research in conjunction with industry to develop Key Performance Indicators, benchmarking and other key information. This helps government, industry and companies to monitor the progress and competitiveness of the industry internationally, and enables companies to benchmark their performance within the sector.

**By encouraging good practice and innovation –**

Ranging from management and leadership, and sustainable and lean construction, to research, development and use of innovative products and processes such as off-site production and standardisation. For some time we have supported and worked closely with Constructing Excellence (formerly Construction Best Practice and Rethinking Construction Ltd). Aspects of their work include demonstration projects, a regional network of Clubs, a major website, and other programmes. The Unit promotes the industry change agenda through its business relationship and other direct contacts with the industry.

Constructionline is a register of local, and national pre-qualified construction services, designed to save firms time and money, and reduce their administrative burden. Instead of firms having to supply information to each prospective client or contract, and repeatedly completing pre-qualification questionnaires, this information is made available from one central online location.

In the domestic sector, the Unit is rolling out Quality Mark which helps consumers identify reputable builders (repair, maintenance and improvement) and demonstrates that there are many decent firms operating in construction.

**Prioritising on the main strategic issues –**  
Key areas are: client performance, improving the construction process through use of integrated teams, e.g. quality of the built product and the components within it, reducing the impact of construction on the environment and minimising waste.

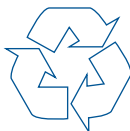
### **More information and getting in touch**

**Construction Sector Unit  
Department of Trade and Industry  
151 Buckingham Palace Road  
London SW1W 9SS**

See also the associated leaflet **Construction Sector Unit – How we can help you.**

## Some useful Web addresses

Construction Sector Unit nCRISP	<a href="http://www.dti.gov.uk/construction">www.dti.gov.uk/construction</a> <a href="http://www.ncrisp.org.uk">www.ncrisp.org.uk</a>
CITB-ConstructionSkills Strategic Forum for Construction	<a href="http://www.citb.org.uk">www.citb.org.uk</a> <a href="http://www.strategicforum.org.uk/report.html">www.strategicforum.org.uk/ report.html</a>
Constructing Excellence SummitSkills	<a href="http://www.constructingexcellence.org.uk">www.constructingexcellence.org.uk</a> <a href="http://www.summitskills.org.uk">www.summitskills.org.uk</a>
ODPM (Building Regulations) CABE	<a href="http://www.odpm.gov.uk">www.odpm.gov.uk</a> <a href="http://www.cabe.org.uk">www.cabe.org.uk</a>
OGC	<a href="http://www.ogc.gov.uk">www.ogc.gov.uk</a>
DEFRA	<a href="http://www.defra.gov.uk">www.defra.gov.uk</a>
HSE	<a href="http://www.hse.gov.uk">www.hse.gov.uk</a>
Inland Revenue (Construction Industry Scheme)	<a href="http://www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk/cis/section4.htm">www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk/ cis/section4.htm</a>



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