

# Special report

Regulation, compliance and certification

## Keeping a step ahead of compliancy issues

Ever-changing government policies and customer requirements are adding to the challenge for installers of keeping up with regulations

On top of the raft of regulations covering gas, electricity and water, the HVAC sector is coming to terms with the various requirements of delivering renewable energy safely and effectively.

While the technical aspects are seen as relatively easy for engineers qualified in the installation and maintenance of traditional technology, there is also the need to gain the appropriate accreditation to tap into the opportunities surrounding the Feed-in Tariff, Renewable Heat Incentive and the Green Deal.

There are also updates and changes to existing regulations to consider, such as the Combustion Performance Analysis (CPA1). From 1 April 2012, failure to hold CPA1 means an engineers' Gas Safe registration for domestic boilers and fires will not be valid.

This applies to all registered engineers holding CEN1 (central heating boilers), CENWAT and/or HTR1 (gas fires). Anyone renewing their core CCN1 will also have to undertake assessment in combustion analysis (CPA1), as a part of the assessment.

Among those providing courses, the NICEIC is offering a 15 per cent discount on its CPA1 certification fee through its network of Approved Assessment Centres before the looming 31 March deadline.

Last year saw a great deal of discussion about the Building Engineering Services National

Agreement (BESNA), developed on behalf of some of the sector's largest employers by the HVCA.

### BESNA progress

HVCA president Bob Shelley says many have already signed up to the agreement, which is designed to harmonise operatives' pay and terms and conditions of employment for mechanical, electrical and plumbing operatives.

"It is also all about establishing a framework for the future of our industry and is designed to reflect the new modern, multi-skilled and multi-disciplinary industry in which we all work," he says.

"The recent protests against a new, single working agreement were politically orchestrated by the radical arm of trade unions and it is still a minority of workers who are unhappy about the proposed changes."

The old agreements were drawn when the demarcation lines between traditional trades were clear and relevant – those days are gone, he explains.

Most firms are now trying to work in a more collaborative way and most employees are already multi-skilled. Also, the growth of modern methods of construction, such as building information modelling (BIM), is creating an environment that encourages collaboration.

Mr Shelley says clients are running out of patience with a sector that cannot organise itself



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Bob Shelley, HVCA

to produce the improved quality and cost savings that are key to cohesive project teams. They are frustrated by delays and quality issues, particularly when they know there is a better way of doing things.

"Our business environment is extremely tough and we have at least another year of this to get through. We have to modernise and move forward so that we can survive and then thrive in the future," says Mr Shelley.

Ductwork has also seen changes to relevant legislation, with the launch of the new BS EN 15780:2011 Ventilation for buildings – Ductwork – Cleanliness