



## A new competence regime for installers

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**With the publication of the 'Setting the Bar' report back in October 2020, the drive to raise individual competence standards across the built environment has shifted decisively into the implementation phase.**

Work on an 'Overarching Framework for competence of individuals' (BSI 'Flex' 8670) was already under way in October and it is expected to be finished soon.

Once ready, the Overarching Framework will be a springboard for a suite of sector-specific competence frameworks – beginning with disciplines most closely related to fire safety, but ultimately extending much further.

ECA and FSA have been closely involved with the ongoing developments on building safety competence. This reflects the significance of our sector footprint and recognises the technical expertise our Members and staff can provide.

Both FSA Chair Tom Brookes and Mike Smith (ECA Technical Director) made significant contributions to Working Group 2 – Installers. Mike Smith has also been an active member of the BSI Advisory Group, which oversees development of the Overarching Framework.

To assist with implementation, the increasingly influential Construction Leadership Council (CLC) has stepped

up its own involvement. This includes direct collaboration with Working Group 2 to prepare the ground for 'pilot' groups developing a first wave of sector-specific competence frameworks. These are based on the Overarching Framework and Working Group 2's own recommended five-point model for installer competence – namely:

- Accredited third party certification of companies.
- Level 2 or 3 qualifications for individuals.
- A card scheme such as, but not limited to, the CSCS.
- CPD refresher training and the maintenance of individual skills.
- All installers to have a core knowledge of fire safety in buildings – training to be standardised and made mandatory.

Ruth Devine (SJD Electrical and TESP and ECA Skills Committee Chair) and I are active contributors to this project through our involvement with the CLC People and Skills Network. A great deal of preparation is required before each of the pilot groups has the right membership, information and resources to fulfil their remit effectively. The goal remains to have this first wave of competence frameworks completed by the end of 2021.

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