

Wednesday 9 December 2015

Build UK Celebrates First 100 Days

Today Build UK reaches its 100-day milestone following its successful launch on 1 September 2015 and *Chief Executive Suzannah Nichol MBE* has taken the opportunity to look back at what has been achieved by the new organisation so far.

Leading the Construction Industry

The first outcome to celebrate is the fact that we actually have Build UK. Report after report on the industry said that it was too fragmented with myriad trade bodies and we successfully brought together all 27 Main Contractors and 40 Trade Associations representing 11,500 Specialist Contractors in membership of UKCG and NSCC. This was no mean feat and the response from Government, clients and other stakeholders has been very positive. I am delighted that we round off this success having recruited our first new member with the European Fencing Industry Association joining us from 1 January 2016.

An Effective Solution for Pre-Qualification

We began life as Build UK by getting stuck into one of the industry's most frustrating issues: pre-qualification. Build UK and CECA members have unanimously supported a proposal which will see the process of pre-qualification simplified whilst still providing clients with the reassurance that their project supply chain is competent to operate. Build UK is currently working with relevant Government departments and key private sector clients to agree an industry-wide question set that will include an updated version of PAS 91. Explaining the proposal to accreditation schemes and the wider supply chain will be the next step to rolling out an effective solution across the industry.

The Great Payment Debate

The issue of payment has also been high on the agenda and, whilst the discussions have been lively at times, the contracting supply chain is aligned on the objective: everyone, whatever their size, wants cash to flow in a way that means they can run a profitable business. As well as agreeing that Build UK should support the Construction Supply Chain Payment Charter, Build UK members are keen to explore business models for payment that will result in a thriving industry capable of delivering the necessary infrastructure and built environment across the UK.

Ensuring the Skills for the Future

Build UK led the industry response to the Apprenticeship Levy consultation which has resulted in Ministers listening to the industry and looking at how the existing CITB Levy and Grants Scheme could work with their proposals. The industry is facing up to the need to attract young people and those looking for a change of career as well as retain its existing workforce and we are looking at how we bring together the wide range of campaigns and initiatives to present construction as a career of choice. We also need to address our training system which does not meet the needs of today's employers or the workforce. For example, an exciting project with Leeds College of Building looking at a new way of delivering apprenticeships has the potential to increase the number of apprentices across all occupations.

Implementing Best Practice

By working together to create a business environment in which companies of all sizes can flourish, we can make a real difference within the industry. We have the potential to address the day to day issues by developing and implementing consistent standards across the sector. For example, focussing our activity on card schemes carrying the CSCS logo, health and safety issues on site, vehicle and cycle safety, and the restriction of construction activities in local areas, we can drive a lasting culture shift that will improve productivity and make the industry fit for purpose.

The Next 1,000 Days

It is just the beginning for Build UK and we have a long way to go but our achievements in the first 100 days are already demonstrating the value of having the contracting supply chain around the same table. As Barack Obama said, 'the first 100 days are important but it's the first 1,000 days that make a difference', and we look forward to making construction the go-to industry for skills, solutions and success.

Build UK will hold its first major event on 2 March 2016 at the top of the Leadenhall Building, also known as 'The Cheesegrater'. I look forward to sharing the afternoon with our members and stakeholders taking in a view that shows our great industry and all its capabilities, in full glory.

~ Ends ~

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Notes to Editors

1. Build UK provides a strong collective voice for the contracting supply chain in construction. We bring together 27 of the industry's largest Main Contractors and 40 leading Trade Associations representing over 11,500 Specialist Contractors - www.BuildUK.org.
2. To find out more about Build UK's initial priorities, see the [Build UK Action Plan](#).
3. Suzannah Nichol MBE is the Chief Executive of Build UK. She was previously Chief Executive of NSCC for 13 years where she demonstrated her capabilities by leading an effective and recognised representative organisation and reforming industry practices on fair payment, pre-qualification and training. Suzannah was awarded an MBE in 2005 for Services to the Construction Industry, was recognised as one of the top 50 Power Part Time leaders in 2012 and was named CITB Personality of the Year in 2014.
4. As part of the [Spending Review and Autumn Statement](#) on 25 November 2015, the Chancellor announced that the new Apprenticeship Levy will take effect in April 2017. The [Build UK response](#) to the consultation earlier this year set out the implications of the levy on all members as well as the CITB Levy and Grants Scheme.