

## **RoSPA SUPPORT FOR INDUSTRY ACTION ON RED TAPE**

A move to cut health and safety bureaucracy in the construction industry has been welcomed by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents.

The Safety Schemes in Procurement (SSIP) Competence Forum, launched today, aims to encourage mutual recognition between the pre-qualification schemes used by contractors to demonstrate their health and safety competence.

It is an example of the type of practical action recommended by RoSPA's National Occupational Safety and Health Committee to reduce the burden of red tape on small and medium-sized firms (SMEs) while also making the essential requirements of health and safety management clearer.

Last year, the committee's ongoing inquiry into the health and safety help available to small firms found that SMEs were facing problems when tendering for contracts. This was because their prospective clients used a wide range of pre-qualification schemes to assess their approach to the prevention of accidents and ill-health.

A lack of mutual recognition between the schemes meant that firms were facing unnecessary and time-consuming form filling as they sought to meet the requirements of each one.

In response to the finding, clients and other third parties were encouraged to accept the results of any competent assessment based on a set of agreed core criteria.

The new SSIP Forum has been founded by a number of the pre-qualification schemes operating within the construction industry.

Roger Bibbings, RoSPA occupational safety adviser, said: "RoSPA warmly welcomes the launch of the SSIP Forum and is pleased that it is using agreed core criteria to assess the health and safety management capability of contractors.

"The scheme marks an important step forward in the drive to get small businesses to prove that they are taking health and safety seriously.

"In addition to helping both contractors and clients, RoSPA hopes that this initiative will be of value to other stakeholders including insurers, investors, enforcing authorities, trades unions and industry associations.

"As the next stage in its small firms inquiry, RoSPA's National Occupational Safety and Health Committee will be reviewing a range of industry-specific campaigns to see what lessons can be learned and made available to other sectors."

See [www.rospace.com/occupational-safety/sme/](http://www.rospace.com/occupational-safety/sme/) for more information about the inquiry being conducted by RoSPA's National Occupational Safety and Health Committee.