

Umbrella passport scheme enjoys success

A safety passport and competency profiling scheme is said to be raising standards in hazardous industries while helping organisations cut costs

HSM first reported on the EMSS scheme in 2009. Since then Essential Minimum Safety Standard (EMSS) has received support from both the HSE and British Safety Council which the scheme's organisers says is testament to its innovation.

"HSE's strategy for health and safety in the 21st Century calls on organisations to show leadership including in the sharing of knowledge and good practice. EMSS is an example of knowledge sharing to meet the needs of the current world of work, helping companies and individuals to access training records and to verify levels of competence in a mobile workforce," comments HSE chair Judith Hackitt, adding: "EMSS provides an effective system for recording health and safety competence."

Julie Nerney, chief executive of the British Safety Council has also said that the BSC fully supports the scheme.

EMSS is an independent and 'not for profit' social enterprise comprising of decades of expertise drawn from within the industry. The mantra 'by the industry, for the industry' has been embraced domestically and is quickly spreading throughout the world and across all industry sectors.

"No-one is making a profit out of the EMSS as any monies left are put back into the scheme for improvements and in future will be invested into other training and development programs. As Chairman of the Tees Branch of IOSH I believe supporting EMSS will benefit a wide range of employers

and individuals" explains Pete Walker, chairman IOSH.

EMSS not only serves as an umbrella scheme for minimum safety qualifications but also allows users to upload other training to their online profile. Client sites can instantly audit them and see proof of their competence when they turn up on site or before they arrive.

"EMSS is not looking to exclude anyone; all the most popular safety passport schemes currently in the industry have been audited to a stringent standard using the best expertise available coupled with HSE Guidance. If you have one of these safety passports why should you have to prove yourself again to get on a different site that recognises a different safety passport? This money would be better spent on more industry

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specific safety or induction training?" explains Alan Bassett chairman of NESHEP.

Prior to EMSS, clients had to validate contractors' safety passports and request copies of training certificates to prove they were up to the job they had come to do. EMSS provides a universal vehicle to access all that information on their profile instantly.

EMSS is said to benefit the industry from several perspectives:

Users

Users can upload their relevant industry training to their profile and instantly share it with their employer and any sites they will attend. The minimum entry requirement for an EMSS card is an approved, valid safety passport or equivalent qualification. There is no need for a new qualification to enter the EMSS scheme. Audited and approved schemes are BSC Level 2 Award or BSC Level 3 Certificate, CCNSG, The National Safety Passport, SPA, VCA (European Passport), IOSH Managing Safety and NEBOSH General Certificate. EMSS not only asks for proof of a candidate's safety passport, we also audit their qualification with the awarding body providing even more time and cost savings to the industry.

Employers

Employers can network staff to a free 'network profile'. From here they can add in house training for their people and instantly share their profiles with clients prior to the individual attending a site. No more need for sending over documentary evidence of staff's relevant skills; they can be instantly shared electronically saving both employer and client a great deal of admin, time and money.

Client sites

Client sites can access any EMSS card holder's training records and assurance that they have an in-date, audited and approved industry standard safety passport or equivalent. Sites can live audit EMSS card holders via web on the job or when they arrive on site. EMSS card holders can also share their profile via email before they even arrive on site. Contractors can also share multiple profiles with a client site ahead of a job saving everyone time and money in unnecessary admin. This system is at zero cost to the clients.

Visit: www.emssonline.org and click on the 'I' icon for more information.