

# BAA launches quarry compliance scheme

Initiative will help employers ensure they are meeting all their legal responsibilities.

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QUARRY OPERATORS can now ensure they meet all legislative requirements – and prove it – by undertaking the British Aggregates Association (BAA) Certificate of Compliance.

The scheme, launched last week, is designed to ensure all BAA members are aware of their legal responsibilities and are meeting the legislative requirements.

The initiative is being administrated by BAA, but all assessments are being carried out by independent assessors who have a background in quarrying and health and safety.

Speaking at last week's Hillhead exhibition, BAA executive officer Richard Bird said the initiative would help operators when they are challenged to prove their competency.

The certificate covers areas in the Quarries Regulations 1999, as well as site management, procedures and compliance and ensuring that all staff are up to speed and involved in health and safety issues.

It works on a 'traffic light' system, with areas which are fine receiving a green light, an amber for some work required, and red where action is needed. "The document is thorough and rigorous and it's not easy. It will

take operators some time to work up to it," warned Bird.

Once awarded, the certificate is valid for three years unless there is a change of management or key personnel, in which case it will need to be renewed.

"We trialled this with four quarries, and it did highlight some areas for improvement such as risk assessment and rescue equipment. It showed that while people might be running a safe site, it may not meet the regulations. But our members are very positive about it and see it as something which is really helping them," said Bird.

CONSTRUCTION NEWS  
5 July 2007

## Quarry audits

Industry body the British Aggregates Association launched its latest site audit and competency scheme in a bid to improve safety in quarrying. The launch was welcomed by the Health & Safety Executive.

## Health inspectors plan to home in on smaller quarry firms after accidents rise

THE HEALTH & Safety Executive is on a mission to bring its safety message to the smaller businesses in quarrying, following an increase in accident figures for the sector.

The Executive is to target inspections on reducing silica dust in quarries next year and is currently aiming to cut falls from vehicles.

Quarries inspector Helen Turner said: "We need to

concentrate hard on accident reduction, as the figures went up for the last year of available statistics.

"We don't know whether it was a blip, but we knew it would get harder to reach the sector's goal of zero accidents under Target Zero, as we did the easier things first.

"But there are many micro operators who have no contact with industry associations and

these are difficult to reach."

She said firms should be looking to design out the risks of dust exposure. "With dust it is down to good plant design. Having air-conditioning in the cabs is probably important than things like damping down haul roads.

"For crushers, for instance, the control cabin should be pressurised, enclosing the equipment where possible and

separating the workers from the source of dust."

Ms Turner added that manufacturers needed to supply good access to large plant to prevent falls.

She said: "We were pleased to see that Komatsu has fitted good staircase access on machines on its stand.

"But we were disappointed other manufacturers hadn't followed suit."