

SITE ACTIVITY COMPETENCE ASSURANCE

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PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This procedure mandates a formal management of competence for site based roles and activities for personnel undertaking key site safety critical activities when working on the delivery of National Grid's Electricity Capital Plan.

This procedure is applicable to Principal Contractors, consultants and contractors.

An individual's acquisition of knowledge, skills, qualifications, experience and qualities appropriate to their duties equate to their level of competence.

For competence to be achieved there is a need for an effective and coherent Competence Management System (CMS) to be put in place to establish, implement and maintain safe and efficient delivery of all work.

A Competence Management System (CMS) provides a framework to facilitate employers providing competent people for every activity carried out on their behalf.

In addition, Legal responsibilities lie with an employer to undertake suitable and sufficient measures to ensure individuals are competent at the activities they will carry out as defined in the Managing Safety at Work Act, the CDM Regulations, ACOP and in the supporting HSE documentation.

PART 1 – PROCEDURAL

1 LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (HSW Act) places general duties on employers and the self-employed to ensure that employees and others who may be affected by the work of their undertaking, are not, so far as is reasonably practicable, exposed to risks to their health and safety. In particular this includes the provision of safe systems of work, supervision and training.

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (MHSW Regulations) require employers to undertake a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risk that their activities present to their employees and others, including contractors and the public.

Measures developed from such a risk assessment need to encompass training, knowledge and experience.

The CDM Regs 2007 (Regulation 4 refers) place requirements on duty holders to ensure they assess the competency of key individuals.

2 COMPETENCY

Individuals must be competent for the task(s) which their employer requests them to undertake on their behalf. For a person to be competent, they need qualifications, experience, and qualities appropriate to their duties. These include:

- such training as would ensure acquisition of the necessary knowledge of the field for the tasks that they are required to perform
- adequate knowledge of the hazards and failures of the equipment for which they are responsible
- knowledge and understanding of the working practices used in the organisation for which they work
- the ability to communicate effectively with their peers, with any staff working under their supervision, and with their supervisors
- an appreciation of their own limitations and constraints, whether of knowledge, experience, facilities, resources, etc., and a willingness to point these out.

3 COMPETENCY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (CMS)

A CMS will enable staff to fulfil responsibilities and perform activities to recognised standards of competence on a regular basis by incorporating the following key areas:

- Knowledge - Familiarity, awareness or understanding gained in the field for the activities/tasks they are required to perform. Obtained from recognised core training programs, external courses and where appropriate refresher training.
- Skills - Application of knowledge in a practical way to achieve a desired result
- Experience - Repeating active participation in an activity on a regular basis enables skills to be practised and enhanced, e.g. acquisition of experience through on the job supervision, training and mentoring, ultimately leading to accumulation of knowledge.
- Attitude - Commitment and willingness to perform with an understanding of ones own limitations.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) sets out useful guidance on how to produce and execute a CMS in 'Managing competence for safety-related systems', 2007. The 'Essentials of the competency model' and the 'Outline of the principles for planning, design, operation and review' from the HSE are available in Appendix A and B of this procedure.

A CMS is much more than a training database and cannot efficiently and effectively be managed by manual systems or spreadsheets, nor rely upon an individual to manage their own competence.

Principal Contractors, consultants and contractors shall produce and execute a CMS in accordance with the guidance provided by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) 'Managing competence for safety-related systems'.

The CMS shall have the following capabilities:-

- Ability to input and retrieve data at both a project and organisational level;
- Capture the full spectrum of competency –related information, including but not limited to:
 - o Training;
 - o Knowledge;
 - o Experience;
 - o Workplace briefings;
- Ability to transfer data between projects;
- Comprehensive reporting and audit functionality, including pro-active refresher reminders;

National Grid has a strong preference for a single electronic, web-based system which provides secure data storage, full data back-up capability and utilises SMART card technology.