

The ABC highlights

While there is a general feeling, halfway through Q2, that our sector is catching up from the effects of the bad weather in Q1 such as project delays, CAB remains highly active on several fronts

Mid May saw the annual CAB Aluminium in Building Conference at Jaguar Experience, Castle Bromwich entitled, *The Façade as a Protection against Fire and Flanking Acoustics*. Nearly 100 delegates listened attentively to a series of eight presentations. The first session was focused on fire safety and Merlyn Forrer, fire protection manager with Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service, set the scene with his keynote address: *External Fire Spread*. Forrer stressed the need for a holistic view of fire safety and illustrated through case studies that fire loading in the event of an accident is subject to many variables that need to be considered. As David Cooper, fire safety engineering manager at International Fire Consultants went on to stress, we must learn from history and ensure that we raise the knowledge levels throughout the industry, particularly when it comes to fire safety. The reminders were timely, coming the day before the publication of *Building a Safer Future*, the final report of the Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety.



Merlyn Forrer, fire protection manager, Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue Service delivering the keynote address on external fire spread

CAB skills card

The issue of the need for increasing competency in installation and fabrication continues to be a recurring theme in our sector. Time after time I am reminded of the costs of companies having to return to site to resolve snagging issues. For its part CAB will continue to run its one day fabricator and installer training days. Candidates who are successfully assessed on the day can apply for a CAB Skills Card which will highlight the GQA Level-2 units that have been covered. Further assessed training can be added to the skills card in the future.

CAB is establishing a new training committee to develop this initiative and expand it further with additional NVQ units to the existing ones that cover health and safety, handling of materials and fabrication or installation.

Fenestration trailblazer

More recently, CAB and some its members have actively supported the setting up of a ‘fenestration trailblazer’. This has involved groups of employers (termed ‘trailblazer group’) across the fenestration sector developing new apprentice standards for fabricators, installers and glass processors. The trailblazer group is working with the Institute for Apprentices, a



Justin Ratcliffe

body which empowers employers to help define and create high quality apprenticeships.

The key is in creating standards that are fit for purpose and have input from a representative cross section of the industry. Considerable time has been spent in developing comprehensive duties and responsibilities for each role, in addition to defining the knowledge, skills and behaviours required. It is planned for a separate curtain walling apprentice standard to be developed in the near future. □



Speaker Line Up: speakers at the recent CAB conference at Jaguar Experience, Castle Bromwich on 'The Façade as protection against Fire and Flanking Acoustics'

For further information on joining CAB (www.c-a-b.org.uk) or to find out more about our events, please contact Jessica Dean at the CAB office on 01453 828851 or email jessica.dean@c-a-b.org.uk