

The Registered Organisation Scheme inspection bulletin May to July 2024

RO scheme

CifA's Registered Organisation (RO) scheme is a unique quality assurance scheme. Registered Organisations have demonstrated the skills to provide informed and reliable advice and carry out work professionally. ROs normally submit a new application for registration every three years. As part of that application they are [inspected by a panel](#) made up of their peers.

Inspections

This year's round of inspections of Registered Organisations (ROs) started in May. As always there have been some very interesting conversations on a variety of topics. There has also been some useful feedback for CifA.

Members comments to CifA

At inspections we talk to people from all areas of the organisation. We have spoken to keen members and advocates of CifA. We have also listened to non-members who want to find out more about what individual accreditation will bring to them, especially when they already work for an RO.

Applications for accreditation

We have heard comments about the time and effort it takes to write an application for individual accreditation. Many ROs pay the subscription and allow time in the working day to complete an application or upgrade. People often tell us they are too busy to take the time out for an application. If that is the case, talk to your line manager and see if there is a compromise.

Accessibility

At inspections we use this opportunity to remind people that CifA is determined to make the accreditation process more accessible. Recently CifA has held a series of focus groups and 1-2-1 meetings with members, particularly those who are neurodivergent, to gather feedback on some of the unintentional barriers in the accreditation process.

We have also heard about the importance of CifA writing in a style that makes it easier for people with dyslexia. We appreciate we have some way to go in the RO scheme. On a personal note this comment has made me reflect on my own writing style. Currently I am trying to reduce the number of clauses in each sentence.

Health and safety

We don't inspect health and safety, but panel members sometimes bring experience from their own organisation. They don't give advice but they do share good practice. At one inspection a panel member told us about Red Zone training. This will be a principle familiar to everyone who works on site, but the title was new to some of us. The Red Zone is "the exclusion zone for plant where the pedestrian is close enough that they could be hit by the counterweight or bucket as the excavator is slewing, could be run over if the excavator or loader moves, or could be injured by falling materials". This panel member had put all their team through Red Zone training.

Carbon reduction

This year we are looking at the work organisations are doing to promote carbon reduction. This often starts with a Carbon audit to establish a baseline. Practices are then put in place to reduce carbon

emissions. Some organisations have started by modifying their buildings. Other initiatives include monitoring travel; using tools to measure the carbon impact of journeys and to identify journeys with a smaller footprint. ROs are also looking at the management of waste. Staff in one RO suggested the introduction of a standardised recycling structure for company and staff waste on site.

I attended the [Heritage Carbon Literacy training](#) recently and recommend it. The next course is 11/12 September 2024. It is incredibly good value. Historic England has covered the cost of delivering this training so delegates will only be charged £10 to cover the cost of the end of course certificate. It is also now being [offered for free](#) to individual organisations to train their own teams in-house.

Public Benefit

Public benefit always plays a key role in inspections and the [July Responsible Post Holder meeting](#) looked at the [Public Engagement Toolkit](#) and a variety of other [related resources](#). The Responsible Post Holders discussed how they respond to the challenges of incorporating public engagement activity into projects of all sizes. There were some great ideas and case studies. These will be used to inform any future development of the toolkit.

Archives

Archives are a perennial problem with many organisations struggling to find a repository. Some practices have changed and evolved to make the archive more manageable. Transfer of title is increasingly sought at a much earlier stage and by the Project Manager rather than leaving it to the post-ex team. Most ROs now seem to have dedicated archive staff. This ensures the necessary expertise and resources are committed to the task. A number of ROs are contributing at a national level to the debate on how to manage future archives.

Feedback

We hope you have enjoyed this roundup. If you work for an RO and would like to give your feedback on this or any other topics, please email Kerry.wiggins@archaeologists.net.