

**Meeting:** Groundwork Committee Meeting  
**Date:** Wednesday 13 Oct 2021  
**Time:** 10:30 – 12:30  
**Location:** Springfield Lodge, Colchester Road,  
Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 5PW  
**Chairman:** Dave Armsworth  
**Paper:** Minutes of meeting – Meeting 03



## Attendees

Steve Hammond (Chairman)	Anderson Group	Dave Armsworth	CONSTRUCT CSG
Dave Campbell	CONSTRUCT CSG	Robert Aitkin	Realtime CE
Robert Moore	Byrne Bros	Richard Knight	Anderson Group
Paul Johnson	Careys	Dan Bannister	AJ Morrisroe
Costel Anastasiei	Getjar	Martin Cragg	MPB
Chris Gearren	VP Groundforce	Igor Stojmanovski	Toureen Gp
Josh Barker	VP Groundforce		

## Apologies

Patrick Hennigan	Togher	Sean Brosnan	O'Shea
David Sheath	Oliver Connell	Michael Gleese	Modebest

---

## 1. Welcome & Apologies

Dave Armsworth (CONSTRUCT) welcomed the attendees to the 3rd CONSTRUCT Groundwork Committee meeting. DA informed the meeting that there were a few apologies on the day. Apologies would be recorded in the minutes of the next meeting. A list of attendees would be included in the minutes. Dave thanked Steve and Richard for hosting the meeting at the Anderson Gp head office and also thanked Chris and Josh for coming to speak to the group. An attendance sheet was passed around.

Richard Knight (RK) provided a safety briefing before the meeting continued. The agenda was also introduced using PowerPoint and the CONSTRUCT Competition Law Policy was read out. Dave asked for a round of brief introductions to take place.

---

## 2. Minutes of the Last Meeting held on Wednesday 30 June 21 and matters arising

There were a couple of action points discussed:

- SH talked about lifting attachments for excavations such as pipe lifters and fork attachment. There is little information provided by the machine manufacturers to help with the planning of lifting operations using various attachments. SH opened this up for discussion. LW echoed the frustration and said that they are not provided anything other than what the contractors are. The Specification sheets are the best that can be obtained from the OEM. LW agreed that the attachment will de-rate the lift capacity of the machine. Some companies are moving away from using excavators to lift and only employing plant which has lifting operations as their primary function. Using cranes in groundworks operations would be

---

problematic in itself. Also, the suppliers of the attachment will not provide any information on affect to the operating capacity of the machine with the attachment in use. It was agreed that the topic is not going to be solved very easily. LW agreed to take the issue to the OEMs when he next engages with them. It is hoped that he will report back to the group. The CPA could also be approached for their view.

- DA is awaiting a response from Ardent. CPA to be contacted for comment.
- A subcommittee was formed to discuss deep excavation safe systems of work. The minutes of that meeting were distributed across the CONSTRUCT Group.
- The minutes of the meeting held 30 June 21 were distributed via email and posted on the CONSTRUCT website. No comments were returned.

---

### 3. Guest Speaker – Chris Gearren and Josh Barker from Groundforce:

Chris and Josh introduced themselves to the group and then Chris provided some background information on Vp Groundforce and the evolution of the company.

VP Groundforce have an attachments division which would be interested in the conversation around OEM operating instructions and interface with machine. **Action DA to liaise further with CG and contact the attachments division. Subcommittee to be considered.**

CG also suggested that the hire companies may not be the specialists in the attachment options and therefor the POC should be the OEM. CG can assist with contacts.

SH reiterated that opportunities to present to the CONSTRUCT membership must be made available so as not to favour a single supplier.

CG mentioned that only 17% of their customers have received any kind of specialist training. SH said that shoring is part of the groundworkers course however it only covers timber shoring; more conventional means are also covered. VP Groundforce will provide a TW Design however they also provide a user-friendly guide for the groundworkers rather than a long 40 page document which would be glossed over. They will also assist the customer with their training requirements by visiting site.

CG and JB showed the VP Groundforce demonstration video on use of trench boxes. RK and SH spoke about soil investigation and classification regarding the stability of ground. Trying to obtain professional input to determine if ground is self-supporting<sup>1</sup> is hard to achieve. CG agreed and suggested that as safety professionals it is our job to assess the risk and put in place measures that are reasonably practicable. As a note, if the risk assessment comes back as a medium then further mitigation is needed and if red then the task in that form must not be carried out. Part of the presentation highlighted that, fatalities within excavations are still occurring.

DB spoke about the lack of current standards; he suggested that a review takes place. Paul, agreed and suggested that the groundworks space very much needs to be brought forwards in terms of standards as at present the worker demographic is of an older age and some may be seen to be stuck in their old ways of work and demonstrating risk taking when working with younger operatives how again will learn from the bad practice sides.

DB asked CG if VP Groundforce deliver courses that train supervisors of groundwork operations so that they have the education on soil stability, excavation techniques, backfilling correctly and compaction. VP Ground force training on excavations does cover

---

<sup>1</sup> What is self-supporting ground? Are there too many variables that could change this statement? Group to discuss at next meeting.

---

some of these elements including risk assessment and awareness. DB is keen that education which detail importance of permits, hold points and checks on TW designs. He feels that the SMSTS / SSSTS course is too generic and a course designed to target groundwork supervisors is needed. **ACTION – DA and SH to discuss and plan accordingly, including common standards.**

SH thanked CG and JB for giving their time to deliver the presentation and joining in with the discussion. He asked CG if they would be interested in Joining CONSTRUCT as a Supplier Member and then being part of the discussion around training and excavation standards. **ACTION – DC to approach VP Groundworks on membership.**

---

#### **4. Feedback from the Council by Dave Campbell**

DC briefed the attendees on the following points.

- CONSTRUCT Day was a success with 550 attending at the new location of Tobacco Dock. Dave Campbell encouraged attendees to submit feedback via the online link if they were in attendance.
- Secretariat – The Council were currently in the process of finding new arrangements for the secretariat when Build UK stops providing services from 31 December. Members would be informed once The Chairman and the Council had the new secretariat confirmed. CONSTRUCT would continue to remain a Trade Association member of Build UK and all the benefits of membership this provides. Dave Campbell and his team were focussing on ensuring a smooth handover to the new secretariat to ensure no change in service to members.
- CONSTRUCT was working with the wider sector to lobby government on the labour shortage issues, including short term visa options and working on the longer term priority of training more new entrants
- The National Specialist Concrete Specification (NSCS) was still development with Jenny Burrige from the Concrete Centre (who also sits on the CONSTRUCT Council). Dave Campbell and his team were preparing the technology so that it would be accessible online when the new edition is launched allowing for free and easy access to the specification, as well as an easier mechanism to update the document between major revisions.

---

#### **5. Feedback from the CFTF by Dave Campbell**

DC briefed the attendees on the following points.

- Qualification and Standards Review – a number of standards were currently under review by CITB, including many concrete standards, that would be distributed to CFTF members for comment. Dave Armsworth was also now involved with the review of the Temporary Works Training Courses in the CITB Siter Safety Plus (SSP) suite of courses, and would then look to develop a concrete specific bolt on, if needed after this review.
- Online resources – CFTF would soon publish a list of training providers across the country that offered concrete apprenticeships, and the concrete structures school lesson plan resources would also be published shortly. Dave Campbell encouraged members to become STEM ambassadors which would help them deliver these resources in schools.
- CITB has appointed its new CEO Tim Balcon, and CONSTRUCT has been on a call with him recently to discuss the need for radical change in the organisation in light of the 'yes' vote in the consensus process this year. CONSTRUCT, Build UK and other industry bodies are resolute in ensuring that CITB delivers for the industry.
- Talent View – the new portal designed to be the hub for all new entrant opportunities in the construction sector was now live, and members can advertise

---

their apprenticeships, traineeships, work experience, or entry level opportunities on the platform for free.

DA updated the group on the TWC/S re-write that is currently ongoing with CITB and individuals from industry so that the course can be better tailored to the user requirements. DA will distribute an information trawl from the members and these that are interested to be part of the development.

---

6. **Discussion on Safety.**

Forward tipping dumpers (cameras and alarm systems). SH spoke about the CPA guidance on cabbed dumpers which states that the operator should stay in the cab when being loaded if the cab is of an OPS (Operative Protective Structure). He asked if any of the members had been given operating instructions from the OEM which states that the operator can safely stay in the dumper cab while being loaded (or words to that effect); no-one was able to provide a definitive answer but will check. This is significant as in the event of an accident the OEM instructions for use will be referenced heavily and checked for conformance in the respective safe system of work. One of the members commented that the risk assessment has to be balanced against the prevalence of injury sustained to operatives when accessing and egressing from the cab in addition to walking over uneven and soft ground against the likelihood of the driver being injured due to a cab collision when being loaded.

Paul Johnson was happy to take an action point and approach the OEM as Careys were in the process of acquiring new dumpers. **After note – Paul has since replied and provided a copy of an OEM Operators Manual (attached) for a Wacker Neuson Dual View Cab. In essence there is no clear direction that the operator can stay in the cab while being loaded and in fact the nature of the sticker on page 56 suggests that the OEM intends the operator to dismount to a place of safety before being loaded. The document also states that a Risk Assessment must be written (this is the legal responsibility of the employer and not the OEM)**

Robert Aitken (RA) – asked if anyone has been told that any operatives that is to use the CAT & Genny needs to be New Roads and Streetworks trained; this is a new stipulation from SRM or has been communicated to be to RA. This has not been experienced by others as yet. DB asked if there is a standard used by CONSTRUCT for avoidance of underground services. SH mentioned that the current HSE governing document is HSG 47. It was suggested that when selecting training providers, the company should be EUSR accredited to deliver CAT & Genny Courses where the practical training is a main focus. SH cautions that we may need to take a view on this. DC suggested that as a collective we could engage with SRM and ask for their reason for such stipulation.

---

7. **Discussion on quality & training. – Committee Chairman**

Labour shortages and standards of available LOSC and subcontractors – **To be discussed at the next meeting due to time.**

Clarification of NPORS requirements – SH informed the ground that NPORS now requires their trained operators to use the operators log book which can be downloaded from their website.

Temporary Works co-ordinator and supervisor update **To be discussed at the next meeting due to time.**

Plant log book requirements SH informed the ground that NPORS now requires their trained operators to use the operators log book which can be downloaded from their website.

CSCS & CPCS renewal test coordination SH informed the ground that NPORS now requires their trained operators to use the operators logbook which can be downloaded from their website.

**Apprentices** – The provision of groundwork apprenticeships throughout the country is minimal. at present there is 3 main providers in the south of England, 2 of which only

---

provide residential courses. there is also a distinct lack of experienced (industry) tutors preventing colleges from providing certain courses. Residential courses may not fit the requirement of all companies, some of which may prefer a day release type programme. Bircham Newton for instance delivers the apprenticeship in 4-week blocks, it is generally felt this is too long for a newly recruited person to be away from their normal work place. Considering there is a major skills shortage at present especially within the groundworks sector it is felt that more should be done to increase the number of training providers. Due to the groundwork apprenticeship moving over to the new standards it is felt that tutors may require some form of upskilling to ensure that students gain the best possible start to their career.

Members are requested to forward all issues and/or concerns with regards to Groundwork Apprentice provision and recruitment.

---

8. **Discussion Occupational Health. – Committee Chairman**

**To be discussed at the next meeting due to time.**

Update on the pandemic and current site situations

RPE – use of powered respirator systems following the pandemic

---

9. **Discussion on Environmental Considerations.**

**To be discussed at the next meeting due to time.**

Gullies and prevention of silt

---

10. **Sharing Good Practice. - Committee Chairman**

**To be discussed at the next meeting due to time.**

Members are welcome to share good practice.

---

11. **Accidents and Near Misses. - Committee Chairman**

**To be discussed at the next meeting due to time.**

Dumpers – striking personnel and static vehicles – reduced are of observation

Members to share

---

12. **Any Other Business**

Future Meetings and any subcommittees.

- Subcommittee - Look at how the group can develop standards for groundworkers including competencies and what could be expected from a company that is a member of CONSTRUCT.

PJ, talked about a topic that appears to be at the forefront of the HSE campaign at the minute with is work related stress. It may be a good time to review your company policy, risk assessment and interaction on mental health and wellbeing. On the HSE website there is guidance on how to produce a policy and also how to manage and monitor employee's wellbeing and performance while working at home. SH reminded that DA can deliver Mental Health First Aid England courses to our members.

SH closed the meeting and thanked everyone for attending. The next meeting should be at the earliest point in December; all others agreed.

---

13. **Future Meetings**

- Tuesday 7 December – Careys are hosting.
- Wednesday 23 March 2022 – Host TBC
- Wednesday 22 June 2022 – Host TBC

