

DEMONSTRATING *commitment to Health & Safety*

Derbyshire County Council



Derbyshire County Council first signed up to HERS in 2005 when they recognised and adopted the Highway Sector Schemes. HERS also assists them to demonstrate employee competency as required by the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations. They currently have just under 100 per cent of their highways electrical employees registered, due to employee movement, and are working towards their target of achieving 100 per cent during 2010.

The council appreciates the benefit of using HERS to support an effective training and development programme, highlighting any shortfalls in the employees' qualifications or underpinning knowledge at an early stage and

for mapping out the path of progression to which employees can aspire.

Since adopting HERS and being convinced of its benefits, Derbyshire County Council specifies HERS in all its contract documentations that include highway electrical works. In addition, they raise the issues of non-registered organisations being employed (how the consistency of standards of work are being delivered and how the competency levels of those delivering the work is monitored), with developers. This supports the level of Health & Safety compliance required from organisations working on electrical assets on the Highway Network and potential adoptable highway network, which is also the ethos of HERS.

Other benefits that Derbyshire County Council enjoy by being registered with HERS include being able to be included on tender lists for contracts, which specify the requirement for Organisation and employee registration. Peter Booth, Head of Commercial Services at Derbyshire County Council, stated: "HERS gives the organisation recognition for being committed to Health and Safety and demonstrates our compliance to industry standards. It means we can tender for external work on an even footing with the private sector organisations and we can easily confirm the competency of our employees. HERS registration is also a mandatory requirement for our highways electrical designers both for highways lighting and traffic signals. This helps to ensure that Derbyshire as an Overseeing Organisation of new and maintenance works ensures compliance with the requirements of HERS.

"In addition, with the growing pressure on budgets and the move to show efficiencies, HERS has been useful for targeting cost effective employee training and development. We have also have a need to demonstrate value for money through effective and quality service provision compliance with HERS as an industry competency standard assists with this."

The Highways Electrical Registration Scheme (HERS) is the Competency Scheme for highway electrical works.

It requires that employees working in the highway electrical industry be assessed for competence by their employers and be issued with a certificate that identifies the employee as an Authorised Person allowed to carry out work appropriate to the level of competence against which they have been assessed. In addition, the Scheme requires that a Technical Audit be carried out at intervals no greater than every two years to ensure the validity of the assessment process.