

Talking Waste Management Standards

Peter Kelly, ISG's regional sustainability manager and Chair of the UKCG Waste Working Group comments on the wider adoption of PAS 402:2013.

The UK Contractors Group, (UKCG) recently released a statement expressing member support for the wider adoption of PAS 402:2013. As the UKCG represents 28 of the largest construction contractors many of which are key clients of the CIWM membership, you may ask why we want more WMCs to be certified against the standard?

The PAS was originally created in 2009 by BSI and Constructing Excellence in Wales. The aim was to improve the quality and consistency of waste data provided by WMCs – and on which construction contractors are reliant for their reporting.

Currently over 30 waste management contractors have been or are in the process of being certified against PAS 402:2013 in Wales. The next step is to kick-start the scheme across the UK – and the UKCG statement hopes to give impetus to that process.

Why is this so important for contractors? The construction industry is currently reliant upon the data provided by waste management organisations to meet legislative and reporting requirements, such as 'Duty of Care' and BREEAM. However, at present, verification of the information provided is limited. By contracting with waste organisations that meet the requirements of PAS 402:2013, UKCG members will gain greater assurance in the data provided, and confirmation that the practices employed represent current industry best practice.

Adopting the PAS will benefit both WMCs and the contractors they work with. There is already a lot of good practice amongst WMCs and the PAS aims to build on that. By creating a standard reporting methodology, the PAS will help create a level playing field across the industry. Importantly for WMCs it provides further assurance on the quality of their waste data and shows they are looking to provide additional benefit to the customer.

When introducing the requirement for waste reporting systems to be audited, there is a financial cost. This cost will be different for each waste management company that decides to be certified depending on the maturity and robustness of their current reporting systems. However, given that many waste management companies will be tweaking these existing systems to meet the PAS, the costs are not expected to be significant.

The PAS 402:2013 requires a waste management organisation to report the landfill

diversion and materials recovery rates it achieves and the Green Compass Scheme is the scheme set up to verify this data. However, although this scheme covers the UK, the company that undertakes the inspections, Tarian Inspection Services is based in Wales. This is not to say that English companies cannot avail of Tarian, however there is a need for an English inspection body that can more readily meet the needs of English based companies. The good news is there are two notable English bodies currently undertaking feasibility studies in order to offer inspection services against the PAS.

UKCG members will be encouraging WMCs in their supply chain to adopt the PAS. It is crucial that implementation of the PAS is not seen as an addition to waste contractor's activities, but a different approach to what contractors are already doing. Feedback from the waste management contractors in Wales that have been through the process is that in changing their reporting processes to align with the requirements of the PAS, it has allowed them to provide a better service giving their clients what they need.

The adoption of the PAS by waste management companies in England is likely to lead to a level playing field in terms of waste reporting and improve business relationships with construction clients. These benefits should outweigh the costs. UKCG members benefit from having confidence in the data supplied allowing the ability to identify those companies that are implementing best practice to increase reuse and recycling rates and decrease waste to landfill.

On the 30th April, Powerday became the first waste management company in England to be certified to PAS 402 – we hope more will follow.

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