

Dear Colleague,

Having identified, through feedback from supplier organisations, buyer groups and industry leaders, the need to increase the value suppliers receive as members of the Link-up Scheme we are introducing a new enhanced level of supplier access to the information contained in the scheme. This will be called Supplier-Patron.

Following an overwhelming response from our recent survey, where over 65% of respondents identified that they would find this useful, we are launching this to the industry on 1st August as an optional addition to an organisation's engagement with Link-up.

With all tiers of the supply chain actively engaging other suppliers there is a need to identify who is able to provide the required services and to gain some idea of the capability of these suppliers. This new "entry level" access will provide organisations with simple search functionality to identify who can offer a product or service with a check on qualification status, location of coverage and whether the product or service is provided directly or via a subcontract route. Additionally the Supplier-Patron will be able to access the Executive summary audit report and see which products and services have been audited. All of this will be in addition to the existing Supplier functionality with access to the Link-up Document Library.

We are clear from the feedback received that this does not mean that all organisations need the same level of data or tools to meet their needs in this area and as such we are offering this as a completely optional product and maintaining the existing levels of Buyer and Supplier membership to facilitate supplier choice.

We also understand, from feedback, that some suppliers have a concern over what information would be made available. When we have engaged these suppliers in discussion and explained the situation they see this as an opportunity to be available to a wider number of potential buyers. For clarity, below are details of what information will be available to users of the Supplier-Patron tool:

- Which suppliers are qualified in any product code and if they are an NCCA sponsor or Licence Holder.
- For an individual supplier, what their offered codes are and their qualification status (Registered Scored or qualified by audit).
- Which geographical areas they offer their products or services in and how they deliver those.
- What experience or example contracts they have in those areas.
- Whether they hold ISO 9001.
- Other basic company details, address, contacts as displayed on each supplier front page.
- A basic summary of what product codes have been audited and whether they have passed.

These features are offered through simple search tools to enable location of potential suppliers.

We are NOT making available the second part of the questionnaire, the Supplier Profile Questionnaire (SPQ), which covers details about the organisation including health and safety information, financial returns, organisation and insurances.

For more information, or to purchase the new supplier patron option, please contact the Link-up team on 01235 861118.

Yours faithfully,

The Link-up Team

Date: July 12th, 2010