



CAESER GETS A RUBBER STAMP

As sustainable procurement moves to the top of the political, social and business agenda, CAESER, an online toolkit designed to help organisations demonstrate their commitment to best practice has signed up its first high profile organisation – the Home Office. The announcement marks the official launch of CEASER and the Home Office is the first in a line of public sector bodies looking to implement it.

CAESER (Corporate Assessment of Economic, Social and Environmental Responsibility) helps to address some pressing issues. To date, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has resulted in more lip service than active involvement, but the government wants this to change and is encouraging businesses to adhere to its long term principles. By way of an online data capture process, CAESER helps companies to self assess the impact that they are having on society and the environment, which can then be passed down the supply chain.

CAESER is a web-based product that allows companies to measure their CSR and sustainability performance and so help demonstrate that they are taking the issue seriously. CAESER is the only officially licensed user of AccountAbility's AA1000 AP (2008) standard in a web-based application for assessing corporate social responsibility and sustainable development. This internationally recognised standard emphasises the principles of stakeholder engagement (inclusivity), materiality, completeness and responsiveness. Whilst most companies adopt an ethical approach, there are some who engage in harmful business practices. CAESER helps the good set themselves apart from the competition with its CSR certification mark.

Leading the way in sustainable procurement, the Home Office is encouraging businesses throughout its supply chain to take part in the online data capture process. Whilst it understands that some businesses have their own methods of evaluation, the Home Office wants an easier, more consistent way to monitor its supplier's activities in order to achieve government sustainability targets; with a set structure, CAESER can help to achieve this.

John Collington, Home Office Group Commercial Director, says: "The Government has a vision for the UK in terms of sustainability. Whilst it is ambitious - it is not impossible to achieve. As one of the first government departments to be certified by the Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply, we are keen to extend our practices and commitment throughout our supply chain in improving the Home Office position on sustainability and Corporate Social Responsibility.

"CAESER provides us with a framework to assess all of our suppliers and identify any areas of neglect, improvement or potential risk. We will rely on the buy-in and commitment from our suppliers in order for it to be implemented effectively; we want to see our suppliers taking such substantive steps to improve social and environmental impact."

Chairman of the CAESER Assessment Centre, John F McClelland C.B.E. comments; "The importance of the sustainability agenda has been growing for some time, but without a straightforward way for companies and organisations to assess their own economic, social and environmental impact, we realised that it would become impossible to formally measure the success of the campaign. CAESER has been developed to address this issue and with the backing of the Home Office and other government departments, we are confident that it will help encourage continuous improvement."

CAESER has been developed in co-operation with and has the full support of The University of Bath's world renowned Centre for Business Organisations and Society (CBOS)*. It is the only official licensed implementation of AccountAbility's AA1000 AP standard** for assessing corporate social responsible and sustainable development in a web based format.

Ends

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Notes to editor

CAESER (Corporate Assessment of Environmental Social and Economic Responsibility) is the only interactive AA1000APS CSR web based questionnaire licensed by AccountAbility, the Institute for Social and Ethical Accounting.

CAESER enables any organisation to both comply with the new CSR directors duties as required by the companies' act 2006 while contributing to the Governments sustainability agenda.

Based around responsible business practice, organisations are asked to explore their fundamental policies and practice in areas ranging from CO2 reduction to data handling & assurance.

Bath University together with NQC Ltd, the creators of CAESER, brings together many years of public sector procurement knowledge and research on the impact of business in society and supports the collaborative efforts of the public and private sector on many areas that are challenging our world.

For more information go to the CAESER website at www.caeser.org or call the CAESER team at **0845 299 2994**.

For more information on NQC Ltd go to www.nqc.com.