

ECIA

Supervision

Best Practice Guide - no.6



Foreword – Supervision

The ECIA Productivity Improvement Committee (EPIC) commissioned this Best Practice Guide on Supervision to facilitate the sharing and utilisation of knowledge. From the information contained within the Guide, improved work practices can be developed to assist with improving productivity and performance.

Throughout this document the term ‘Supervision’ refers to both the roles of ‘Senior Supervisor’ and ‘Supervisor’ and to the process of Supervision itself¹, which involves directing people, co-ordinating workface activities through relationship driven engagement and motivating the teams under their control and influence. Effective ‘Supervision’ ensures that all parties can discharge their duties safely, productively and correctly first time.

In producing this Guide a work group, comprising Contractor, Client, Trades Unions’ representatives and Supervisors from forums held at a number of different sites², has captured industry best practice and made recommendations aimed at reducing or eliminating barriers to productivity.

The contents of the document are aimed at helping you understand, implement and improve the effectiveness of the deployment and management of supervisory functions in your organisation; information and best practice guidelines given here are intended for all stakeholders within the ECI and the wider industry.

This Guide is intended to be part of a continuous improvement process. In the future, the effectiveness of a strategy for Supervision and its implementation can be monitored against it, and the contents adjusted as working practices evolve and improve. Companies are encouraged to actively apply the best practice principles described here.

The ECIA wishes to thank the many stakeholder representatives who contributed both directly and indirectly to the production of this document. Industry support for its production is indicative of a commitment to a continuous improvement process to increase the performance and competitiveness of the UK Engineering Construction Industry.

For further information please do not hesitate to contact ecia@ecia.co.uk

¹ *The specific responsibilities of the Senior Supervisor and Supervisor are described in the Definitions section on page 3.*

² *See Appendix B.*

Definitions

The following key terms are used in this document:

Client: The asset owner, developer or operator.

Contractor: The contractor who has a responsibility to the Client for delivery of the Project, event or Repair & Maintenance (R&M) activities.

Subcontractor: Any contractor in the supply chain carrying out tasks on a Project.

Project: Describes all aspects of a contract from conception through to completion, including site operations directly involved in the construction, Repair & Maintenance activities, as well as management and administration activities. For the purposes of this Guide, the term **Project** is interchangeable with **Site**, **Work** and **Works** in that all terms are used to describe the environment and/or activity in which the Supervisor is acting. We have considered the whole range of activities within Engineering Construction to ensure the Guide is equally relevant to New Build and Repair & Maintenance.

There are many different supervisory and management roles within a Project; for the purposes of simplicity within the Guide we have deliberately reduced these to the following:

Project Manager: responsible for the Project for on and off-site activities; reports to Executive Level Management.

Site/Construction Manager: responsible for on-site activities; reports to the Project Manager.

Site/Project Engineer: responsible for managing an aspect of the on-site activities, whether a function, location or specialism; reports to the Site/Construction Manager.

Senior Supervisor: responsible for managing the supervision of the day to day workplace activities; reports to the Site/Project Engineer and/or the Site/Construction Manager.

Supervisor: responsible for supervising and co-ordinating the day to day workplace activities; reports to the Senior Supervisor or as otherwise instructed.

Chargehand: a skilled craft worker (Grade 6 under NAECI) with some limited supervisory responsibility additional to their normal 'on the tools' work; reports to the Supervisor or as otherwise instructed.

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1. Introduction

Why promote best practice to improve productivity in Supervision?

The 'Changing to Compete' report highlighted the need to use best practice in the management of projects

Section 1 gives the background and defines the main areas of investigation for the promotion of best practice

1.1 Background

The UK Government's Review of Productivity and Skills in the UK Engineering Construction Industry ('Changing to Compete'³) contained a total of 13 recommendations to drive improvement in the Engineering Construction sector and thereby improve the success of future projects. A number of the recommendations related to Supervision and form the basis of the terms of reference for this document.

The means of managing effective labour relationships to ensure project completion to time and budget has rested with the National Agreement for the Engineering Construction Industry (NAECI) since 1981. The NAECI was ground breaking when it was first introduced, and with subsequent revisions has remained the agreement of choice for Engineering Construction for more than 30 years.

Strict compliance with NAECI terms and conditions by all stakeholders is essential to providing a basis from which Supervision can encourage high levels of productivity.

³ Mark Gibson's report: 'Changing to Compete'. Review of Productivity and Skills in UK Engineering Construction, published on 1 December 2009.

Establishment of EPIC to Examine Best Practice

The ECIA hosted a conference in October 2011 to explore productivity performance. Following this, the ECIA Productivity Improvement Committee (EPIC) was established to look at best practice within the Industry.

The committee was tasked with three main areas:

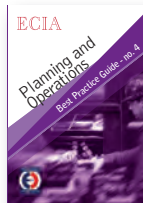
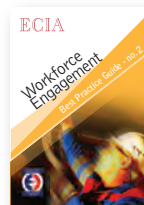
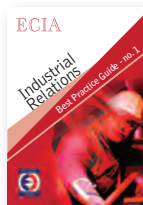
1. To identify barriers to delivering successful projects and Repair & Maintenance work in the Engineering Construction Industry.
2. To establish and disseminate best practice to overcome and mitigate barriers found.
3. To benchmark performance and measure improvement.

In November 2011 EPIC commissioned an independent report to identify the key barriers to productivity in the UK Engineering Construction Industry (ECI). This report 'Barriers to Productive Performance in the Engineering Construction Industry 14 March 2012' identified, amongst others, three initial areas that EPIC would investigate further:

- Industrial Relations
- Workforce Engagement
- Contract Management.

Subsequently, additional areas for investigation were identified:

- Planning and Operations
- Workforce Planning
- Supervision.



Work groups comprised of experienced people drawn from all aspects of the ECI produced Best Practice Guides for each of these areas, which were published in 2013 (Industrial Relations; Workforce Engagement), 2014 (Contract Management; Planning and Operations) and 2015 (Workforce Planning; Supervision)⁴.

This Guide continues the process of examination of best practice, considering the activities and behaviours that can enable Supervision to reduce or eliminate barriers to productivity.

⁴ The Guides are available on the ECIA website (www.ecia.co.uk), under the EPIC menu on the left.

2. What Did the Group Look at?



2.1 Terms of Reference

The work group looked at the significant potential of a good Supervision strategy in a number of organisations, basing their views on researched evidence which the group deemed to be appropriate to the Engineering Construction Industry.

Key areas that the work group were requested to address relate to the main activities which impact on Supervision and the role of the Supervisor. These include:

- The link between Supervision and productivity
- The importance of accurately defining the role and responsibilities
- The key considerations in selecting and recruiting Supervisors
- How good induction and deployment procedures contribute to effective Supervision
- The issues affecting the implementation of duties in the field
- The on-going development of Supervisors to promote continued effectiveness.

After examining these key areas, the work group identified and recommended a number of good practices for Supervision.

2.2 Approach and Purpose of the Guide

The Guide has been written in sections which follow a logical order to aid a continuous read through but each section equally stands alone for dipping in and out. Each section concludes with a checklist of best practice considerations/actions and these are summarised at the end of the Guide in [section 9.2](#).

The purpose and aim has been to produce recommendations incorporated within a Best Practice Guide that is easily understandable and:

- Identifies best practice in relation to Supervision, bringing benefits to the Project, the Employer and individual Supervisors
- Is equally relevant to New Build and Repair & Maintenance
- Recognises the important role of the Client in supporting and enabling best practice throughout the lifecycle of a Project
- Considers the importance of a best practice culture and the benefits that can be accrued when properly implemented
- Covers the full supervisory cycle from definition of the role, through selection and induction to implementation of skills within the Project and on-going training and development.

2.3 Benefits of Best Practice

Establishing and following best practice in Supervision can bring the following benefits:

- Helping all levels of Management to understand their roles and responsibilities
- Encouraging Supervisors to utilise best practice in managing project activities at the workplace, contributing to successful project delivery
- Early identification and removal of barriers to productivity, both before the Project starts and during the course of the Project
- Supervisors who are more likely to feel valued and empowered and therefore engaged with the goals of the Project. This ultimately leads to improved project delivery in all aspects.
- Improved inter-company and workgroup communications, minimising lost time
- Greater levels of responsibility and accountability
- Career Supervisors who can add value over a longer term.

Best practice is a key driver in successfully delivering projects safely, on time and within budget; this enhances a Company's reputation and ensures the Company remains fiscally robust.

3. Introduction – Supervision and Productivity

What is the importance of Supervision within the Engineering Construction Industry?

Supervision has the position of most influence over productivity at the workplace

Section 3 introduces Supervision and how it influences productivity and summarises key actions in the Supervisor's lifecycle

This section describes the importance of Supervision and its relationship to Management, as well as the key role that a Supervisor has to play in enabling productivity. There is also a summary of the key actions in a typical lifecycle of a Supervisor on a Project.

3.1 Importance of Supervision

Supervisors are an essential part of the management structure on any site or Project and have a key, and possibly the critical role in delivering productivity.

They are the line of management which is closest to both the workforce and the workplace; they are, or should be, present and visible where the work gets done.

Given the importance of the Supervisor's role, it therefore follows that there should be strong and wide ranging support from Management, with mentoring and coaching considered as part of a structured and meaningful programme of development.

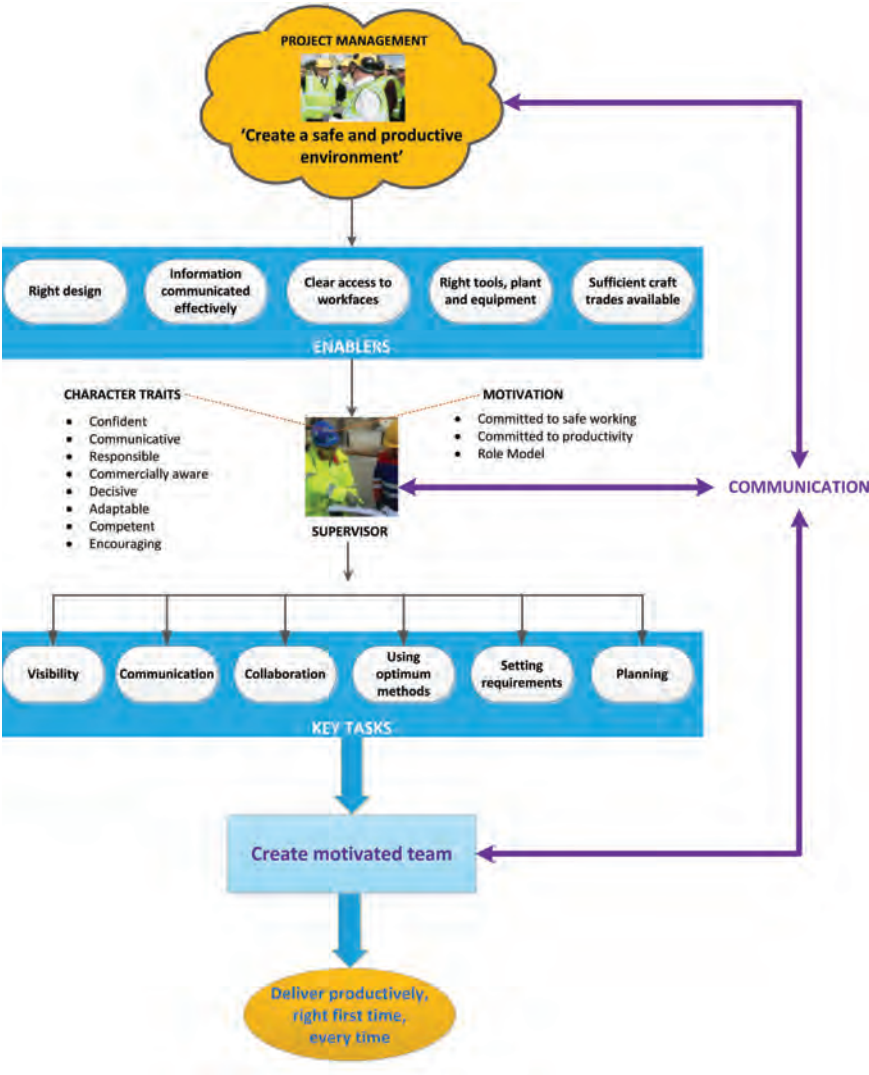
Supervisor Motivation

Motivated Supervisors are an Employer's best chance of having a motivated workforce. To be motivated, Supervisors must feel engaged and this is best achieved when they:

- Feel confident in an equal opportunities environment
- Understand their role within the Company and on the Project
- Are supported in implementing their duties
- Have their contributions recognised and valued
- Are encouraged to develop, with career progression opportunities for all.

3.2 Supervision and Management

There is a clear demarcation of responsibilities for Management and Supervisors in enabling productivity. The roles of each party are distinct and are summarised in the picture below:



Role of Management in Enabling the Supervisor

The Employer, through their Management Team, has the responsibility of making sure that the appropriate framework is put in place to enable the Supervisor to do their job properly. This will help the Supervisor to encourage productivity on a Project.

Enablers

Management must ensure that key enablers are in place for the Supervisor to perform; within the correct framework the Supervisor can develop a high performing team, co-operating together towards a shared vision, which will deliver productivity. The result is that more activities are done 'right first time' to the appropriate level of quality.

The Employer must make sure that the Supervisor has:

- The correct technical skill set and is suitably qualified and experienced for the job
- The right personal traits and frame of mind to carry out the role.

The Employer must make sure that Management:

- Provides information at the correct level of detail
- Provides safe and clear access to all areas of work
- Provides the right equipment, plant, materials and tools for the job
- Provides suitably qualified and experienced personnel, motivated towards successful completion of the job
- Enables the Supervisor to spend the majority of their time at the workplace.

3.3 Supervisor's Influence on Productivity

There are a number of areas where the Supervisor can have an influence on improving productivity, in particular by good planning, optimising installation methods and motivating the workforce through encouraging a 'one team' approach.

In general, productivity improvement depends on adopting lessons learned and building these lessons back into a Project's processes. This should be an on-going approach from Project to Project and is very much dependent on encouraging feedback at all levels.

Introduction

The role played by the Supervisor is critical to achieving good productivity, through commitment to optimum man management and a 'getting it right first time' approach to the job. Supervisors have responsibility for motivating and supporting their team, however Management must create the appropriate framework and environment, delegating roles and responsibilities at a high level, to provide the enablers (described in [Section 3.2](#)) for the Supervisors to achieve productive working.

Approach to Productive Working

Once a plan has been put in place by the Management Team, it is necessary to determine what resources are needed to achieve the final objective, provide those resources and then monitor activities against a plan.



So that the resources can be managed efficiently and effectively, it is essential for all parties, including Management, Supervisors and Trades Unions' representatives to understand exactly what needs to be done to achieve successful completion of the Project and the importance of good performance and productivity in reaching this goal.

Maximising Productivity

There are many approaches to maximising productivity, including practising cost efficiencies, cutting waste and making the most efficient use of the workforce.

Of particular importance is the implementation of the appropriate methodologies and best practices by the Supervisor for the work to be undertaken, establishing how long it will actually take to complete each activity and task and supporting the safe and timely completion of the work. This goal is dependent on the full engagement of the workforce.

Once a plan is in place, measuring performance against defined goals is essential for the evaluation of how successful a Project has been; the resulting lessons learned can then be applied on future projects. Performance measurement is a key contributor to continuous improvement.

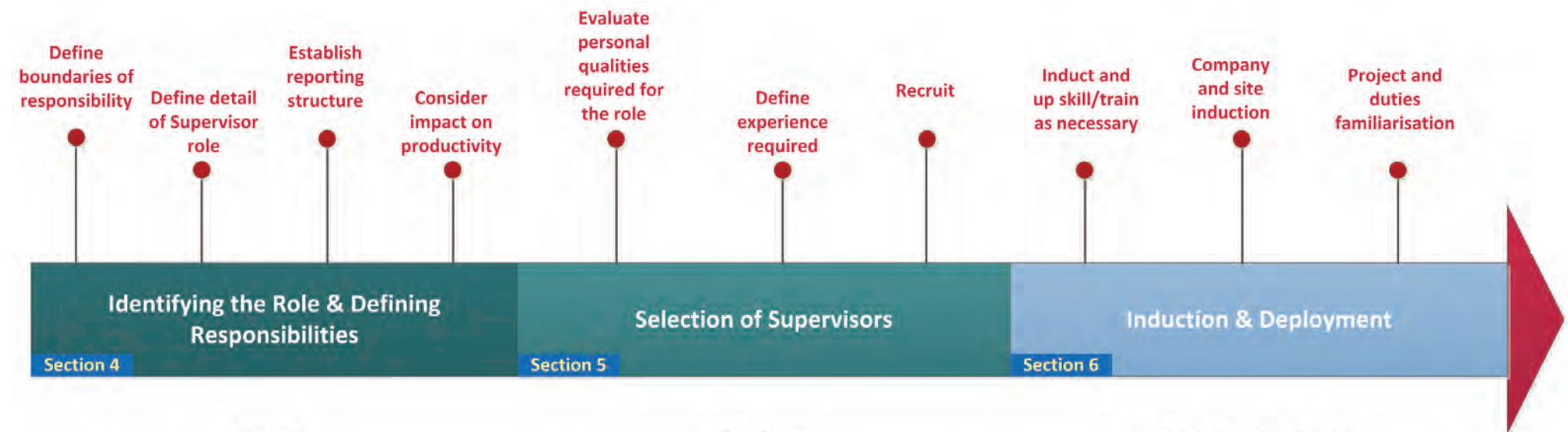
Early consideration should be given to likely barriers to productivity that could be encountered; these could be:

- Organisational issues (e.g. management and systems)
- Motivational factors (e.g. worker engagement)
- Practical matters (e.g. team orientation and working conditions).

The approach and skills of the Supervisor are crucial to assisting with the identification and elimination of such barriers.

NOTE:

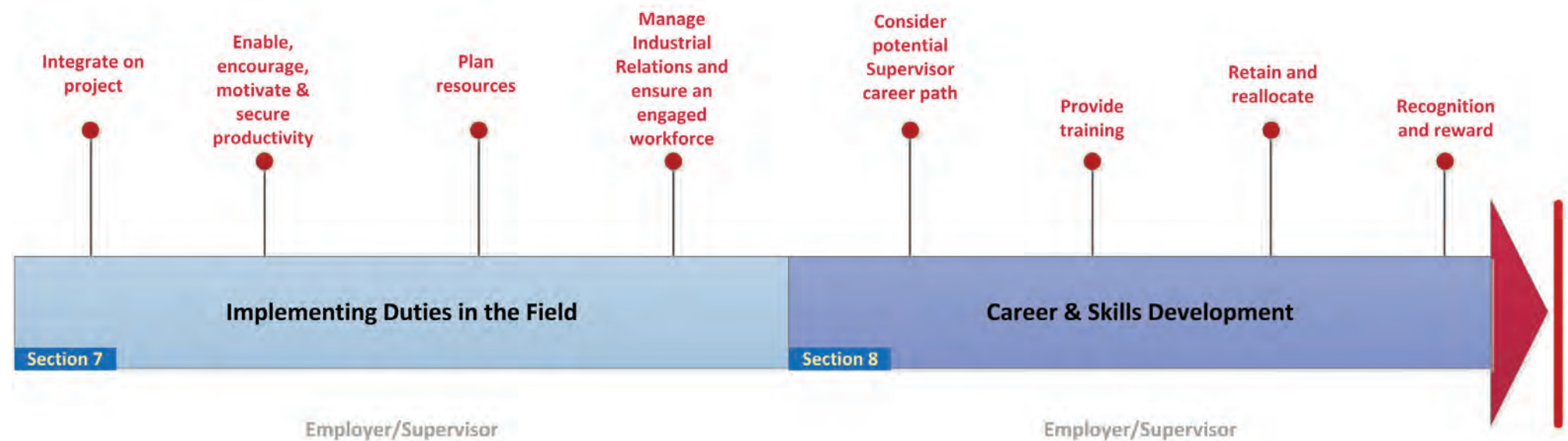
See also Best Practice Guide 2 – Workforce Engagement



Employer

Employer

Employer/Supervisor



Employer/Supervisor

Employer/Supervisor

3.5 Best Practice

INTRODUCTION – SUPERVISION AND PRODUCTIVITY

Enabling the Supervisor	<p>The Employer should determine that the Supervisor has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The right skill set and character ■ An understanding of their role and that of the Trades Unions' representatives ■ Full support in carrying out their duties ■ The right information, access, materials and tools for the job ■ The right team of people ■ A clear remit.
Barriers to productivity	<p>The Supervisor should consider potential barriers to productivity and take the necessary steps to mitigate problems relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Organisational issues (e.g. management and systems) ■ Motivational factors (e.g. worker engagement) ■ Practical matters (e.g. team orientation and working conditions).
Maximising productivity	<p>The Supervisor should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Always prioritise Health and Safety ■ Have a good planning strategy and implement the appropriate methodologies and standards for task completion ■ Promote optimum methods of time and resource management ■ Use the most appropriate technologies to measure performance ■ Optimise installation methods and best practices ■ Focus on workforce motivation ■ Communicate effectively at all levels ■ Pursue a policy of continuous improvement, based on lessons learned and feedback.

4. Identifying the Role and Defining Responsibilities

What are the key considerations in identifying the Supervisor's role and responsibilities?

Defining the function and duties of a Supervisor, and the duties, qualities and responsibilities of the role

Section 4 summarises the function and role of a Supervisor, boundaries of their responsibility, reporting structure and duties

This section describes the key elements in identifying a Supervisor's role and defining the related responsibilities and duties.

4.1 Function of a Supervisor

The prime function of a Supervisor is to supervise personnel under their charge so that their team discharges its duties safely and productively.

It should be brought to an Employer's attention if a Supervisor's other duties are preventing sufficient time being available to actually supervise. Additionally, the Supervisor should be encouraged and empowered to make any suggestions that would assist in correcting such an imbalance and put forward any ideas they may have regarding the enhancement of field performance, safe operation and productivity.

4.2 Boundaries of Responsibility

To support the Supervisor in discharging their duties, it can be beneficial to establish and agree boundaries of responsibility for all roles within the Management Team. This provides clear lines of reporting and support and can help new Supervisors to understand and grow in their own areas of responsibility.

The limits of authority for a Supervisor could be defined within the following boundaries:

- Having a good understanding of the legislation covering Employment, Health and Safety and Environment, knowing who the experts on these topics are and having the confidence to ask for advice when and where necessary
- Understanding NAECI
- Advocating and supporting compliance with site rules and regulations in relation to Health and Safety and Environment, timekeeping, procedures, productivity and work quality
- Co-ordinating/prioritising day to day work and activities
- Directing and supervising Chargehands in relation to craft labour, plant, materials and access requirements
- Liaising with other Supervisors
- Notifying instances of breaches or non-compliance to the Senior Supervisor, or as otherwise instructed
- Defusing workplace conflicts when they arise, at the lowest level
- Implementing schedule changes at the workplace.

4.3 Supervisor's Roles

Best practice would be that a Supervisor should join a Project as a dedicated Supervisor and remain so throughout the duration of the assignment. Furthermore, when a craft worker is promoted to Supervisor, consideration should be given to moving them onto a different site with a different group of workers to those they have previously worked with.

When Supervisors are promoted on a short term basis only, their effectiveness as a Supervisor can be compromised; the imminent return to the ranks can mean that relationships and loyalties to fellow craft labour give rise to conflicts of interest and reduce the detachment and authority an effective Supervisor needs for future projects.

As part of their role, Supervisors need to be aware of other functions and behaviours that they may be required to undertake; the most effective Supervisors will understand (or have been trained to understand) when application of these functions is appropriate.

It is also clear that the Supervisor's role within the Management structure changes with each situation; one result of this can be that employees can veer between seeing them as part of the Management to seeing them as a personal friend and supporter, sometimes simultaneously. A Supervisor must be prepared for this and encouraged to behave consistently and in line with Company/Project guidelines at all times.

Coach

Coaching requires the Supervisor to lead by example, delegate work and provide on-going encouragement, guidance and support. Coaching is aimed at improving performance through a continued series of small steps, in a positive environment.

It is important to remember that a Supervisor sometimes has to walk a fine line between being a Supervisor and being an employee's confidant.

Mentor

Mentoring involves a one to one relationship which requires the Supervisor to assist in the development of a particular employee and provide on-going direction and career advice. In this case, best practice for mentoring requires the Supervisor to have a comprehensive understanding of the area in which they are mentoring.

A good Supervisor mentor can become a valuable influence on the career of an employee and can have a positive effect on improving productivity.

Advocate for Organisation

As the first line of Management and the person with most day to day contact with the workforce, the Supervisor will usually be the person asked to explain and/or justify any changes to Company policy, practice or procedure. Supervisors should be prepared to respond to frustration and cynicism with understanding and tact, but also with explanation, justification and clear direction.

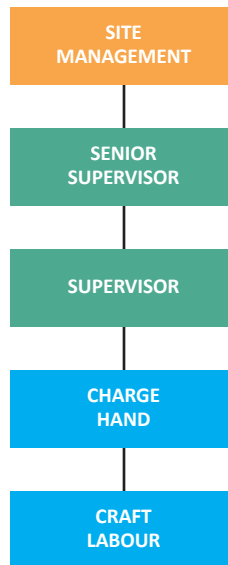
In order for the Supervisor to be able to do this with any confidence, the Employer must provide the Supervisor with the appropriate background information in the first place.

Advocate for Employee

The Supervisor will usually be the person asked to support employees' individual concerns such as advancement or adjustments due to personal circumstances, often representing such issues to Management. Any such issues should be handled with the same tact and understanding as previously indicated, and responses should be consistent.

4.4 Reporting Structure

A clear and uncomplicated reporting structure for Supervisors should be established with full integration into the Management Team. Responsibilities and mutual expectations must always be clearly defined, easy to follow, communicated and agreed.



Roles and responsibilities during the different phases of a Project are typically as follows:

- **Project Manager:** Responsible for managing the overall direction and safe and timely progress of all Project construction activities to the required standards of the Programme of Work.
- **Site/Construction Manager:** Responsible to the Project Manager for leading, overseeing, organising, managing and co-ordinating construction activities and all on-site resources and activities.
- **Site/Project Engineer:** Responsible to the Site/Construction Manager for ensuring that everything is in place to enable the craft labour to perform productively.
- **Senior Supervisor:** Responsible for ensuring that the supervision of work activities is properly resourced so that it can be carried out safely, to the right quality and productively. This is predominantly an office-based strategic role with regular planned time in the field, as well as undertaking work on an 'as and when needed' basis. He/she is expected to undertake audits and be the critical link between workplace activity and Management, as well as having significant liaison responsibilities with the Client.

- **Supervisor:** Responsible for ensuring that the craft labour works safely, productively and in line with Management aims and objectives. The Supervisor works predominantly in the field alongside the craft labour but off the tools, supervising the work, resolving queries and technical issues and liaising with others, especially Supervisors of other teams/Employers. They will have some office based duties and some contact with the Client, particularly in their own area of expertise.
- **Chargehand:** A skilled working craft operative, on the tools, and essentially a representative of the Supervisor. Supervisory responsibilities are likely to be part-time and limited to a small team working in a defined area and/or a particular activity for a specified duration.

NOTE:

Not all these roles will necessarily be distinct; responsibilities may be merged depending on the size of the Project or task.

4.5 Duties and Responsibilities

The main function of a Supervisor is to represent their Employer as the first line of Management, delivering safe and productive working which is in line with the aims of both the Employer and the Project. Fundamentally, the Supervisor is key to implementing the programme and delivering productivity.

A Supervisor's duties and responsibilities include but are not limited to the following:

- **Supervision:**

- Ensuring that the correct numbers and grades of craft labour are deployed to enable each task to be undertaken and completed in a safe, correct and timely manner
- Being the initial point of contact for Chargehands
- Raising any issues that are considered of sufficient importance with the Senior Supervisor and Site Management, particularly additional work/changes
- Identifying and correcting areas of non-performance
- Managing and reducing potential areas of conflict, as they arise
- Encouraging a performing and motivated team that 'gets it right first time, every time'
- Spending time at the workplace and being visible to employees.

- **Health, Safety, Quality and Environmental:**

- Promoting the safety and wellbeing of all who may be affected by work activities
- Ensuring Health and Safety measures are in place before signing permits and RAMS
- Monitoring all workplaces so that they are always in a safe and tidy condition with clear access and egress

- Monitoring compliance with Health, Safety, Quality and Environmental requirements
- Knowing when to stop an activity when emergent risk is present, and being empowered to do so.

■ Performance assessment:

- Undertaking on-going performance assessments of their team, fairly and openly. Best practice would be for weekly assessments during the probationary period and at regular intervals thereafter, reviewing:
 - Compliance with Health and Safety rules and practices
 - Approach to work, focussing on productivity and performance.

NOTE:

See also Best Practice Guide 5 – Workforce Planning, [Section 5.5.2](#)

■ Planning:

- Looking ahead, pre-planning, setting out and co-ordinating future work activities, considering:
 - Scheduling and prioritisation of tasks
 - Co-ordination with other trade activities, across contractors
 - Access and permits, RAMS and other relevant information
 - Availability of the correct labour/skills
 - Availability of plant, materials, tools and equipment.
- Highlighting any additional work, changes or potentially onerous situations as and when they may arise
- Setting priorities in line with a Project's critical path and undertaking field activity and craft labour planning for their team.

■ Work delivery:

- Investigating ways of optimising methods of installation to reduce waste and improve productivity
- Optimising delivery methods relating to:
 - Access to both workplace and welfare areas and general site logistics
 - Maintaining clean and clear areas of work
 - Materials, plant, tools and equipment.

■ **Assisting with technical issues:**

- Being responsible for obtaining, issuing and controlling installation requirements
- Checking that the latest revision drawings, documents and specifications are available and being worked to
- Assisting employees with technical interpretation of drawings and specifications.

■ **Monitoring compliance:**

- Monitoring the team's strict compliance with all relevant permit and control policies
- Promoting correct behaviour, particularly in terms of punctuality and reliability
- Having a comprehensive knowledge of Disciplinary and Grievance procedures
- Knowing when to seek assistance/advice from the Senior Supervisor/Management.

■ **Quality:**

- Inspecting quality of work as it is undertaken to 'get it right first time, every time'
- Monitoring and supporting the correct application and timely deployment of skilled personnel and the availability of the correct plant and equipment
- Encouraging quality workmanship resulting from the deployment of good trade skills, best practices and team working.

■ **Toolbox Talks (TBTs):**

- Delivering talks and briefings, ensuring engagement and understanding
- Promoting full understanding of the RAMS and any other relevant information
- Gathering feedback from the workforce.

■ **Reporting back:**

- Deciding how best to measure and appraise the workforce objectively and reporting back to those assessed and to Management
- Communicating a positive safety message, best practice and good news
- Being responsible for maintaining records as required by Management; best practice would be to maintain a Daily Diary, recording:
 - Details of work undertaken
 - Weather information
 - Any unusual events.

4.6 Best Practice

IDENTIFYING THE ROLE AND DEFINING RESPONSIBILITIES

The Supervisor's role and responsibilities

The Supervisor should join the Project as a dedicated Supervisor and remain so through the duration of the assignment.

Compliance

- Understand and enforce all Health and Safety, Quality and Environmental measures
- Promote the safety and wellbeing of the workforce and monitor compliance (e.g. use of PPE items)
- Maintain strict compliance with Project/site rules and regulations
- Optimise installation and delivery methods
- Encourage quality so as to minimise rework and 'get it right first time, every time'
- Plan and allocate work activities
- Contribute to continuous improvement.

Communication

- Act as coach, mentor and advocate for the organisation and employee
- Have the ability to resolve areas of conflict should they arise
- Provide assistance with technical issues
- Deliver Toolbox Talks and workforce briefings and communicate good news
- Assess performance, monitor and encourage productivity
- Report appropriate measures to Management.



5. Selection of Supervisors

What are the key considerations in selecting a Supervisor?

Defining key personal qualities needed for the role of Supervisor, criteria for selection and subsequent recruitment

Section 5 summarises essential personal requirements as well as abilities and experience, with points to consider when recruiting

This section describes the criteria for a Supervisor's interview selection, and the essential experience, abilities and personal qualities that are a pre-requisite for the job. It also covers points to consider when carrying out the recruitment process.

In *Changing to Compete*, Gibson recommends that *"Front line supervisory staff should be selected for aptitude in people management, given the right training and be regarded and supported as part of the Management structure on a site"*.

5.1 Introduction

The modern day Supervisor's role has developed into a highly skilled and challenging occupation that bears little resemblance to what was expected from the Foreman of the past. Traditional recruiting ground for Supervisors is from the Engineering Construction Industry's advanced craftsmen, but consideration for possible advancement should not be based on the misconception that the best advanced craftsman makes the best Supervisor. Selection needs to be based on individual leadership qualities, ability to function under pressure, capability to manage constant change and an appetite for continual personal learning.

Where possible and practicable, the best solution is always to deploy a person with known skills as a Supervisor. Where this is not possible, the examples in the following sections outline the minimum needs and requirements for applicants for the position of Supervisor.

5.2 Essential Requirements for the Role of Supervisor

Key Qualities Required

The exact key qualities required for a Supervisor may vary from Employer to Employer depending on the nature of the role and environment they will be working in, however there are some common qualities that should be looked for. Best practice would be to consider the qualities listed in the following sub-section, refer back to the role and environment that is being recruited for and develop a Person Spec, listing qualities in columns as to whether they are Essential, Desirable or Advantageous. The Person Spec can then be used against the Job Spec to evaluate candidates fairly and objectively.

Personal Qualities

This aims to be a comprehensive list of traits/qualities to consider when developing the Person Spec. It is unlikely that anyone will possess all these attributes, so judgement is required to prioritise them, which is where the Job Spec can help.

The approach to the list below assumes recruitment of a new Supervisor and is based on the typical potential qualities the recruiter should be looking for. When recruiting an experienced Supervisor, the process should be the same but the identification of the traits required should be that much easier.

- **Confident:** confident in themselves and in front of others
- **Communicative:** able to get their point across and listen to others
- **Responsible:** responsible in their attitude and understanding of the Employer's aims and objectives and able to represent them to others
- **Decisive:** able to make decisions, perhaps on their own initiative, and follow them through
- **Adaptable:** responsive to the requirements of the Team/Project/Management, including developing themselves as needed
- **Analytical:** able to think about the work they're doing and discuss it
- **Approachable:** able to develop a decent rapport with others at both the same and different levels of responsibility
- **Competent:** with conduct and actions appropriate to their role at the time and able to delegate work appropriately, knowing their limits
- **Encouraging:** able to enjoy and share others' successes and identify future potential.

5.3 Selection Criteria

All applicants for Supervision roles must have experience and expertise which is verifiable and relevant to the role. This should be determined before any applicant is considered for employment/deployment.

In general terms, the Supervisor needs to demonstrate the ability to apply a hands-on approach, leading by example, and be able to meet and satisfy the duties and obligations of the position and the needs of the Employer and Project, as clearly defined within the Supervisor's Terms and Conditions of Employment.

They should be assessed according to their experience and qualifications in:

- Working knowledge and understanding of the role
- Experience and ability to safely and correctly carry out the duties and responsibilities
- Possession of necessary trade skills to correctly supervise others in the same/relevant trades

- Competency for:
 - Effective and efficient overseeing, inspecting and monitoring of the work
 - Team leading, activity planning, field co-ordination and organisation
 - Supervision of craft labour including all aspects of Health, Safety, Quality, Environmental, Industrial Relations and Productivity
 - IT skills, for the purposes of efficient communication and reporting back.

Experience

The Supervisor should:

- Have the capability of deploying the skills of their team to the best interests of their Employer and the Project
- Possess the experience and expertise to satisfactorily meet the requirements of the position, including working to objectives and issuing instructions
- Have relevant experience and substantive Employer references
- Have a good working knowledge and understanding of NAECI and have the ability to follow, and be seen to follow and implement the relevant procedures, systems, controls and reporting structures.

Abilities

Fundamentally, the Supervisor should be able to perform their duties and responsibilities as outlined in [Section 4.5](#), including leading an effective team.

They should also be able to implement best practice, as guided by Management, in:

- Encouraging their team to be productive so that implementation of best practice in the field is always maximised
- Monitoring, overseeing and supervision of compliance with all relevant Health, Safety and Environmental legislation including Employer and site rules, regulations, procedures, systems, policies and requirements (including housekeeping)
- The reading and interpretation of construction drawings and specifications
- Communicating with Senior Supervision and Management, particularly with regard to field problems, managing and resolving them as and when they may arise
- At all times ensuring full compliance with all procedures including Disciplinary and Grievance
- Recognising when and where training, skill enhancement and refreshers are required, including additional training that Supervisors themselves would like to receive
- Liaising with Clients' and other Employers' Supervision and Management as required, regarding inter-trade interfaces, and supporting at all times the wellbeing of all persons under their charge.

5.4 Recruitment

Given the significance of the Supervisor's role in motivating and delivering productivity, there are certain key points that should be given greater priority and time when recruiting.

Key Points to Consider

Some or all of these points may already be part of normal Company procedure but, if not, they should certainly be incorporated when recruiting Supervisors:

1. A written application/CV should be received from each candidate.
2. Each applicant should be reviewed against the personal qualities and selection criteria previously established, focussing on people management skills and technical competency.
3. Proof of competency must be established by taking references and copies of all relevant documents and qualifications.
4. The right interviewer must be available and should allocate enough time to properly explore the applicant's attributes and where/how they match with the role's requirements. The advice is to allow at least 1 hour and preferably 2 to allow time to reflect and consider between interviews/returning to other work.
5. Consider bringing a smaller number of applicants back for second interview with a different interviewer to further explore things from a different perspective. This can potentially be an experienced Supervisor/Senior Supervisor.
6. Consider the use of specialist recruitment bodies.

NOTE:

See also Best Practice Guide 5 – Workforce Planning, [Section 5.3](#)

5.5 Best Practice

SELECTION OF SUPERVISORS	
Essential personal requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Good understanding of the role, including dedication and personal qualities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Confident, communicative and approachable ■ Able to take responsibility for their own conduct and that of others ■ Demonstrating an understanding of the Employer's aims and objectives ■ Competent and analytical ■ Adaptable and responsive to the needs of the Project and their team. ■ Displaying a 'best fit' according to a previously defined Person Spec.
Selection criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Relevant experience, skills, qualifications and references ■ Demonstrable ability to satisfy the duties and obligations of the position ■ Tested for technical skills and/or understanding ■ Possessing the required trade skills and qualifications ■ Competency in: overseeing the work, team leading, supervision of labour and IT skills ■ Working knowledge and understanding of NAECI ■ Interested in implementing best practice in all areas.
Recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Receipt of written application/CV required ■ Reviewed against agreed and defined criteria ■ Proof of competency established ■ Sufficient time allowed for the interview ■ Use of specialist recruitment bodies to be considered.

6. Induction and Deployment

What are the key considerations in induction and deployment?

Defining the process for welcoming Supervisors into a Company and onto a project and preparing them for their role

Section 6 summarises the approach to inducting Supervisors through Corporate and Project integration prior to deployment

This section provides guidelines for the process used to induct Supervisors into an organisation and onto a Project, in preparation for their role in the field. It is important to introduce Supervisors to their work environment and their set-up within the organisation in a structured way within a formal programme.

A well-rounded induction and deployment programme is part of an organisation's Knowledge Management process and is intended to enable the Supervisor to become a useful, integrated member of the team. Done properly, it can lead to positive outcomes such as higher job satisfaction, better job performance, greater organisational commitment and reduction in occupational stress; this is key to developing loyalty and making employees feel part of the Company, which leads to improved retention.

These outcomes are particularly important to an organisation looking to retain a competitive advantage in an increasingly mobile and globalised workforce.

6.1 Induction Programme

Formal induction programmes introduce employees to their work roles and the organisational environment and should facilitate understanding of Company culture. Consideration must be given as to how best to achieve the aims of the induction: who should be involved, how the messages should be communicated, what media and materials should be used and if the information is clear and to the point. It is also important to consider what is taken away from the induction programme, for example reference handbooks or other written material. The success of an induction programme can be measured in how well it succeeds in communicating the Company and Project aims and their cultures and structures.

In order to fully benefit both Employer and Employee, the induction programme should be planned in advance. A timetable should be prepared, detailing the induction activities for a set period of time, and include a named person who is responsible for each activity. This plan should be circulated to everyone involved in the induction process, including the Supervisor.

Key steps in the induction programme and deployment of a Supervisor are:

- Introduction of the Supervisor to Company ethos, values and behaviours
- Ensuring familiarity with statutory requirements, including Health, Safety and Environmental
- Project integration
- Training.

The expected outcomes of an effective induction programme are that the Supervisor:

- Is fulfilling their role to the standards expected
- Is familiar with key Project objectives and how they and their team fit into them
- Can demonstrate confidence in their role, including knowing their limitations
- Knows where to go when in doubt or in need of further advice
- Feels that they belong and are committed to the success of their Employer
- Has a clear view of their future personal development pathway.

6.2 Corporate Integration

Introduction to General Company Policies

A Supervisor induction programme is an important process for bringing Supervisors into an organisation and onto a Project and familiarising them with Company policies. The programme should focus on how Supervisors actively prioritise and promote safety and apply all Company procedures.

Supervisors are an integral link in the co-ordinated effort that delivers good productivity and ensures the sustainability of a Project. Productivity is a variable and is influenced by many factors, however the Supervisor is seen as the focal point of contact in delivering organised productive working on the site. Genuine workforce engagement is essential to an approach where a job is done 'right first time, every time'; the Supervisor's leadership qualities and influence on the people they manage in the workplace is a crucial factor in this.

Supervisors should understand the work schedules and the need to achieve the defined completion dates. Their involvement at all stages of the process will enable the implementation of the right quality and productive performance standards, and they should support their teams in this objective. They also need to understand the provisions of NAECI and be able to assert themselves in a professional, positive and effective manner.

Key Aspects of the Induction Programme

Supervisors should understand the responsibilities of their own personnel as well as those of their Employer and Client and have the confidence to seek advice, where appropriate.

Health, Safety and Environment

The Supervisor has a responsibility to employees who are under their control and influence for their Health, Safety and general welfare. It is best practice for the induction to explain the HS&E expectations of the Employer, the Client and Principal Contractor, as well as statutory requirements.

Management is duty bound and committed to provide sufficient time, resources and personal encouragement to support a safe and enjoyable work environment for all.

Management and Supervision can support this aim by:

- Encouraging compliance with the Employer's policies and procedures
- Providing training, instruction and guidance to enable employees to perform their work tasks in a safe and proper manner

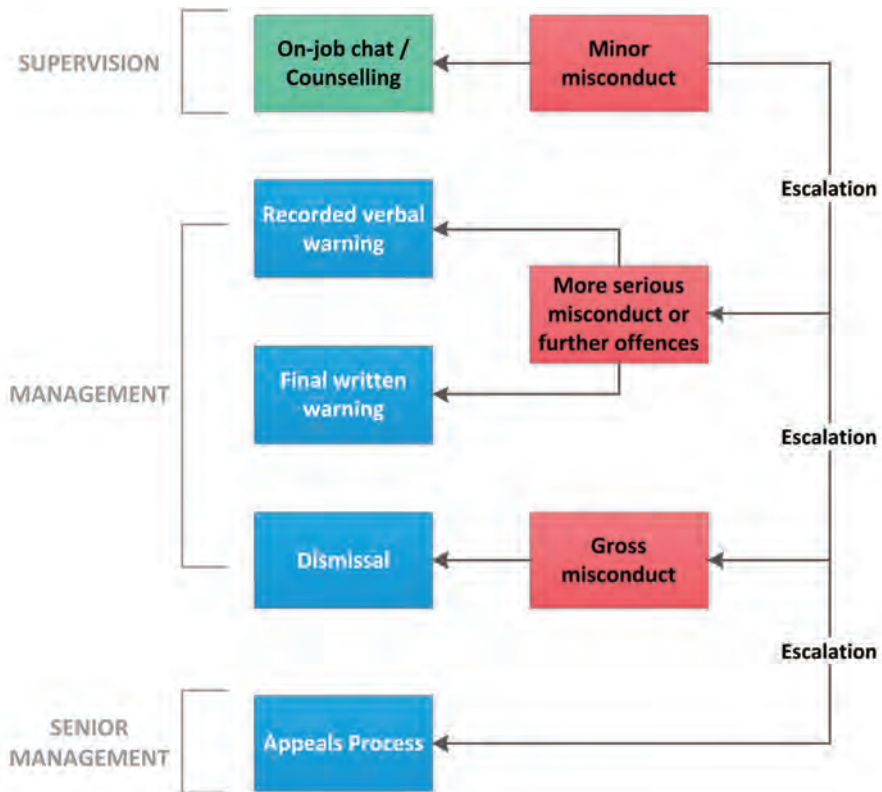
Employment Law

The induction programme should include an overview of basic Employment Law and other employment obligations.

Handling Disciplinary Matters

Handling disciplinary matters is a very important aspect of a Supervisor's role and sufficient time should be allowed in the induction for it to be explained clearly and succinctly. A fair and consistent procedure must always be applied in accordance with the Employer's procedures.

The picture below illustrates the typical stages in the disciplinary procedure. The Supervisor has a role in determining whether they can deal with a rule infringement or the Employer's disciplinary procedure should be invoked. Beyond that stage the responsibility lies with Management (blue boxes).



IR Principles

Supervision must be at the forefront of working towards achieving and managing harmonious Industrial Relations on a Project⁵. Both Managers and Supervision should be inducted and trained to fully understand how to achieve, manage and maintain good Industrial Relations and avoid disputes and grievances. The induction process is one vehicle for communicating at an early stage the principles of effective Industrial Relations.

The ability to work harmoniously with all parties, including the Trades Unions, is an integral part of the duties and responsibilities of a Supervisor. It is also important to understand the statutory responsibilities of the Shop Steward.

NOTE:

See also Best Practice Guide 1 – Industrial Relations

General Policies/Procedures/Processes

The Supervisor should be given access to and familiarised with all relevant general Company policies, procedures and processes (e.g. IT procedures).

6.3 Project Integration

Once a Supervisor has been through the corporate integration process, they will need to be familiarised with the requirements of the Project.

A Supervisor's Project induction should focus heavily on:

- Developing understanding of the site IR framework, for example the Supplementary Project Agreement (SPA) / Local Agreement
- Communicating specific Project rules and requirements
- An overview of the initial set-up and establishment of the on-going structures needed to support safe and productive working
- Integration with other stakeholders on site, such as the safety function, to encourage mutual support in driving the project forward.

NOTE:

See also Best Practice Guide 1 – Industrial Relations

The Project induction is also a good time to establish any project-specific training needs and/or offer refresher courses so that Supervisors arrive on site confident in themselves and their future development. Best practice would be to establish this as part of the Employer's training and development culture.

⁵ The ECIA offers an IR training course to member companies. Please contact the ECIA for details.

Examples of areas to concentrate on are included in the following sub-sections.

Planning and Productivity

- Understanding the design, planning and layout of the site and welfare facilities
- Being fully conversant with the appropriate Method Statement and sequence of work
- Being aware of the procedure for issuing permits
- Understanding the Project Management structure
- Working to the latest drawings and look-ahead programme
- Planning labour, materials, equipment and access in advance of forthcoming activities
- Regularly reviewing the effectiveness of individuals and the capability of their team as a whole
- Encouraging their team and leading by example.

Risk Assessment and Toolbox Talks

Risk Assessments and Method Statements (RAMS) are a key part of the safe system of work and must always be followed. Supervisors play a key role in ensuring that all employees acknowledge, through signature, their understanding of the RAMS.

With regard to Toolbox Talks, the Supervisor should:

- Prepare in advance, taking into account the appropriateness of the location
- Deliver the briefing in an enthusiastic, confident and positive way
- Ask for questions and concerns and answer these in a timely manner
- Check for understanding and record attendance
- Provide positive feedback.

Quality

- Strive for good quality work delivered 'right first time, every time'
- Know the relevant specifications and quality standards for their work
- Work closely with the Engineering, Safety and Quality professionals
- Be proud of work well done and share good practice with fellow Supervisors.

Progress and Productivity Reporting

Accurate Progress and Productivity reporting (PPR) enables the Supervisory Team to forecast remaining schedule durations and manning levels at any point.

The Supervisor is instrumental in supporting the compilation of accurate daily returns and allocation sheets to feed commercial and planning activities so that realistic progress and performance can be captured and reported.

Project Controls (Requisitioning)

Supervisors play a vital role in overseeing control of a Project's requisitioning and order placement process. Consideration should be given to ensuring that the induction process adequately covers important requirements such as:

- The process for placement of purchase orders
- The securing of Change Order Instructions (COIs)
- Levels of authority.

Daily Activity Briefing

The main functions of the Supervisor are to supervise and motivate the team in their charge, to encourage good morale and to lead by example through direct and regular contact. They must be good communicators and are at the focal point of briefing their team about productive and best work practices in the field.

Clear and effective communication is vital when conveying objectives and expectations. The induction can reinforce the message that a daily briefing given by the Supervisor affords the opportunity to impart key information but also the chance for the Supervisor to listen to and discuss any matter with the team under their charge. This should cover discussion points such as:

- Is everyone fit for work and is there a balanced team?
- Does the RAMS reflect the work to be done and is everyone clear about the task in hand?
- Are there any problems or positives that have arisen from previous work?
- Is weather a consideration today?
- Do nearby activities impinge on the team's activities?
- Are there any issues with welfare facilities?

The team should be asked for feedback to open up a two way dialogue.

6.4 Best Practice

INDUCTION AND DEPLOYMENT	
Induction	<p>The Employer should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide a formal induction programme as far as possible and issue an induction pack to the Supervisor ■ Promote familiarisation with Company policies and procedures ■ Discuss future personal development/career path.
Integrating into the Company	<p>The Supervisor should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Promote safety ■ Be familiar with statutory legal and Employer's responsibilities relating to Health and Safety and Employment Law ■ Understand commercial pressures ■ Understand the impact of good/poor productivity ■ Understand the Project schedule ■ Have the ability to handle disciplinary matters ■ Help develop and maintain good IR.
Integrating into the project	<p>The Supervisor should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Understand clearly statutory and Employer's site rules ■ Know their responsibilities with regard to planning and productivity ■ Be fully conversant with RAMS ■ Be able to successfully undertake Toolbox Talks ■ Understand quality control and quality assurance requirements ■ Understand the importance of providing appropriate, timely and accurate feedback ■ Supervise and motivate their team, using clear and effective communication methods. <p>The Employer should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Develop project-specific training for Supervisors.

7. Implementing Duties in the Field

What are the key considerations in implementing the Supervisor's duties in the field?

Defining the Supervisor's responsibilities from mobilisation through resource planning to workforce motivation

Section 7 summarises the benefits of early mobilisation, resource planning, approach to Industrial Relations and motivation of the team

This section describes the implementation of the Supervisor's duties in the field from mobilisation through delivering productivity to resource planning, including how to encourage motivation and engagement in the workforce.

7.1 Introduction

Deployment and placement of Supervisors is critical to a Project and the variances between the differing aspects of the Engineering Construction industries can be significant. For this reason it is important to consider whether or not their experience, knowledge and skills are appropriately aligned with the work site environment. Supervisor motivation is also a key factor in delivering on a Project's goals and achieving productivity; an Employer must take this into account and provide the necessary scope for development and engagement.

7.2 Project Integration

Supervision is covered by the following two roles:

- Supervisor
- Senior Supervisor.

When integrating Supervisors into a Project, the nature of the roles and responsibilities required should be considered; this will then determine the number and seniority of the Supervisors required. Consideration should also be given to the use of Administrative Assistants for general office based functions.

Supervisor

The primary job role of the Supervisor is to:

- Deliver productivity
- Provide a day to day point of contact for craft labour
- Make sure everything is in place to enable the workforce to work safely and productively in regard to:
 - Access and permits
 - Plant and materials
 - Correct numbers and types of trades
 - Behaviour and performance.
- Report progress against schedule
- Be responsible for reporting back to the Senior Supervisor (and others as required).

Senior Supervisor

The primary job role of the Senior Supervisor is to:

- Create an environment in which productivity can be improved
- Co-ordinate and manage the activities of the Supervisor
- Plan and allocate work to allow the most effective use of resources
- Enable the Supervisor to focus on the day to day work activities of his/her team
- Support the Supervisor in their role and development
- Function as a reporting conduit to Management, and potentially the Client.

7.3 Mobilisation/Debriefing

Early mobilisation and post completion debriefing of Supervisors are both strongly recommended and there are many benefits to doing this.

Early Mobilisation

Early mobilisation of Supervisors can allow greater depth of preparation in the following activities:

- Permit system training and awareness
- Familiarisation with site layout, rules and regulations
- Planning and scheduling activities for craft labour
- Involvement with recruitment and inductions
- Collating and gathering of 'approved for construction' drawings and installation information
- Compiling job packs
- Installing and setting up site facilities and supporting/control systems
- Co-ordination of material, PPE, plant and equipment requirements
- Involvement with generic and specific Risk Assessments, Method Statements and Inspection Test Plans
- Attendance, time-keeping and recording systems
- Site transport requirements and parking arrangements.

Post-Completion Debriefing

Post-completion debriefing of Supervision should include at least the following activities:

- Overseeing completion of punch lists/snag lists/butt lists/remedial work, together with required completion and handover certification and documentation
- Assistance with compilation and finalisation of close-out and handover reports and final contractual/commercial close-out negotiations.

7.4 Delivering Productivity

It is essential to build an effective and motivated team comprising Supervisors and employees under their charge, avoiding at all costs any 'Them and Us' situations from arising.

For a team to be successful, mutual targets, practices and actions must be defined at an early stage.

The following acronym sums up this approach:

- **T = Together**ness at all times (no 'them and us' situations)
- **E = Ensure** it is always 'we' as there is no 'i' or 'u' in the word 'Team'
- **A = All** parties working and thinking as a team
- **M = My** problems and your problems do not exist. They are 'our' joint challenges.

A Supervisor should get to know the members of their team, including identifying the strengths and weaknesses of each team member, and allocate tasks according to competence and effectiveness.

A good team spirit can be developed within both formal and informal situations, with this greatly contributing to a safer, more harmonious, happy and effective working environment and, ultimately, a more successful team.

Ratio of Supervision to Employees

To avoid supervision becoming ineffective and over-stretched, a sensible ratio of Supervisors to employees should be assessed and determined, depending on: the site, the complexity/criticality of the work and the number of Chargehands available.

Workforce Motivation

Factors that affect employee motivation include individual differences, job characteristics, and organisational practices. Supervisors must consider how these factors interact to affect performance and then seek to exert influence to motivate employees to higher levels of productivity.

Communication with Employees

Communication at all levels is critical to the successful running of a Project.

The Supervisor should:

- Develop constructive relationships with employees
- Share positive news and hold Project briefings
- Ask the workforce for feedback (for example how they think things could be done better).

It is also the responsibility of the Supervisor to liaise with other people outside their immediate team, such as their Client, Employer, Management and other Supervision.

Performance Assessment

Supervisors should actively and effectively support Employer and Project-led productivity initiatives to encourage continuous improvement.

At the heart of any improvement and development plan is the individual performance assessment (see also [Section 4.5 \(Performance Assessment\)](#)). When approached positively, this can offer significant benefits for both employee and Employer, providing opportunities for improved communication regarding training needs, performance issues and career development. The aim of any assessment should always be to improve the current situation for all parties.

NOTE:

See also Best Practice Guide 5 – Workforce Planning, [Section 5.5.2](#)

7.5 Resource Planning

Companies use resource planning to identify and manage the resources that are needed to achieve Project goals.

The Resource Plan can include human, financial and technological resources, in addition to incorporating third party expertise, materials, plant and equipment. Involving Supervisors in the Plan enables them to play a key role in supporting and contributing to it; utilising their experience to ensure it is comprehensive leads to the mobilisation of a balanced workforce, which is fully resourced to complete the Project.

Regular and continual feedback from Supervision ensures Management is kept aware of any changes to the Scope of Work and/or engineering variations; this allows efficient and timely mitigation measures to be implemented, if required.

Best practice resource planning, which would include input from Supervision, enables supply and demand to be balanced on a Project, maximising resource utilisation over the Project lifecycle.

Role of Supervisor

The role of the Supervisor in resource planning includes:

- Completion of daily job cards for all members of their team to provide accurate reporting of progress for each individual
- Controlling the issue of work packages to members of their team, including supervision of the handling and receipt of all materials
- Ensuring all equipment, materials, tools, scaffolding and required access are available at the workplace prior to the commencement of work
- Preparing work allocation sheets on a daily basis.

Role of the Senior Supervisor

The role of the Senior Supervisor in resource planning includes:

- Liaising with Materials Control regarding deliveries to and from the workplace
- Appraising/supporting the resourcing and allocation of employees

- Authorising the requisition of materials and purchase orders, when required
- Preparing and issuing work packs to Supervisors
- Co-ordinating all Supervisors' work activities and work interfaces
- Ensuring plant, equipment and access equipment are available for work, as and when required.

7.6 Industrial Relations

It is of vital importance for Supervisors to be at the forefront of working towards achieving and managing harmonious Industrial Relations on a Project, so as to avoid issues developing into grievances, disputes or industrial action. It is essential that appropriate training is provided for Managers and Supervisors so that they fully understand how to achieve this goal, whilst complying with all policies and procedures.

Training in Industrial Relations must cover NAEI and the role of the Trades Unions and their representatives on site. Effective communication between Supervisors and Shop Stewards/Senior Stewards is key to ensuring a motivated workforce.

ECITB offers a 2 day NAEI Awareness course for Supervisors and Stewards to attend jointly; this course should be offered as soon as practical after work has commenced on a Project. If the contractors should increase in number or change over the course of the Project it would be best practice to run it again, inviting different people and/or using it as a refresher.

As previously noted, ECIA offers a one day NAEI Awareness course for Managers and Supervisors of member companies.

Managers and Supervisors should also recognise that problems and issues affecting other Employers on the same Project (that are outside their direct influence and control) can adversely impact on their own activities. To minimise any such problems, there should be regular and on-going dialogue between Employers, with regular meetings to foster awareness of and keep abreast of events on the Project.

Promoting an Engaged Workforce

To promote an engaged and committed workforce, it is important to pick the right people for the job and provide appropriate inductions with on-going two way engagement. Individuals need to feel involved and valued and that their skills are being fully utilised to achieve maximum productivity on a Project.

It is important to take account of the appropriate induction programmes required as well as opportunities for individual employee development.

NOTE:

- See also:
- *Best Practice Guide 1 – Industrial Relations*
 - *Best Practice Guide 2 – Workforce Engagement*
 - *Best Practice Guide 4 – Planning and Operations*

7.7 Best Practice

IMPLEMENTING DUTIES IN THE FIELD	
Project integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employers should clearly define the roles and responsibilities for Managers and Supervisors Focus Supervisors on activities at the workplace Focus Senior Supervisors on supporting Supervisors and liaising between stakeholders.
Early mobilisation – debriefing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enables training and familiarisation with Project scope, including site rules and regulations Debriefing should be carried out to support close-out reports and negotiations.
Employee motivation	<p>The Supervisor should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide visible leadership Enable and encourage continuous improvement Encourage a safe, healthy, productive workplace Be able to communicate and work effectively with others.
Resource planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employers should clearly define the resource plan, explaining levels of authority and responsibilities Supervisors should ensure availability of resources at the workplace to maintain productivity Senior Supervisors should focus on co-ordination of resources to support all activities/teams.
Promoting good Industrial Relations	<p>The Supervisor and Senior Supervisor should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receive appropriate training in IR and NAEI Attend the 2 day joint Supervisor/Shop Steward NAEI course, offered by ECITB Encourage on-going dialogue and communication between all involved parties (Employers, Trades Unions and workforce) Promote an engaged workforce.



8. Career and Skills Development

What are the key considerations in career and skills development for Supervisors?

Defining career progression, training and competency requirements and the importance of retention and reward

Section 8 summarises a possible career progression path, training strategy and the approach to retention, recognition and reward

This section describes the possibilities for career progression available for a Supervisor, including training programmes and required competencies, and a strategy for retaining Supervisors and recognising and rewarding them appropriately.

8.1 Introduction

A structure needs to be in place to actively encourage and finance Supervisors to develop their knowledge and skills. Best practice would be to discuss a proposed development path with the Supervisor, starting with the notes from their initial employment in the role; these should have highlighted any areas requiring development and considered any areas the Supervisor particularly wanted to develop.

In *Changing to Compete*, Gibson concludes that the “*quality of supervision is key*” in “*affect(ing) commitment to a project or Employer*”, and this was endorsed by the ECF (Engineering Construction Forum⁶) Report. Commitment delivers productive working, so any development plans must consider enhancing those skills and aptitudes that enable commitment, principally to Industrial Relations, Workforce Engagement and Leadership.

Linking development programmes to training bodies that offer recognised accreditation, such as the Institute of Leadership and Management, can add perceived value in the programme and boost motivation.

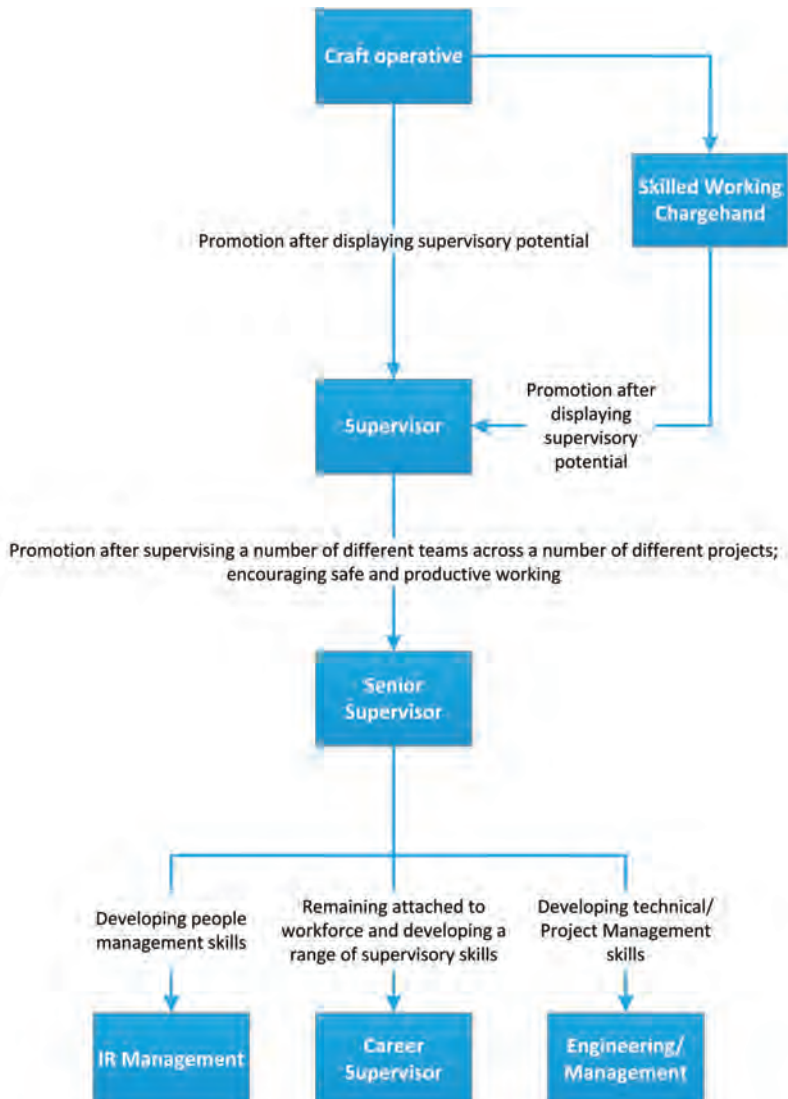
NOTE:

See also Best Practice Guide 2 – Workforce Engagement, [Section 6](#), which covers this area in more detail and provides specific recommendations.

⁶ The Engineering Construction Forum was formed in February 2010 following the Gibson Review of productivity and skills in the Engineering Construction Industry. The ECF brings together Clients, Contractors, Trades Unions, the NJC and the ECITB in order to consider how best to tackle the barriers to productivity in the Industry.

8.2 Typical Career Progression Path

Whilst the nature of the ECI and changing levels of workload can make it difficult to offer everyone a structured career path, it should be recognised that developing such a structure could encourage movement into supervisory roles. Given that the number of Supervisors is significantly linked to productivity (Gibson and ECF), Employers should consider whether the following career progression for Supervisors might help demonstrate the longer term opportunities:



8.3 Training and Competence

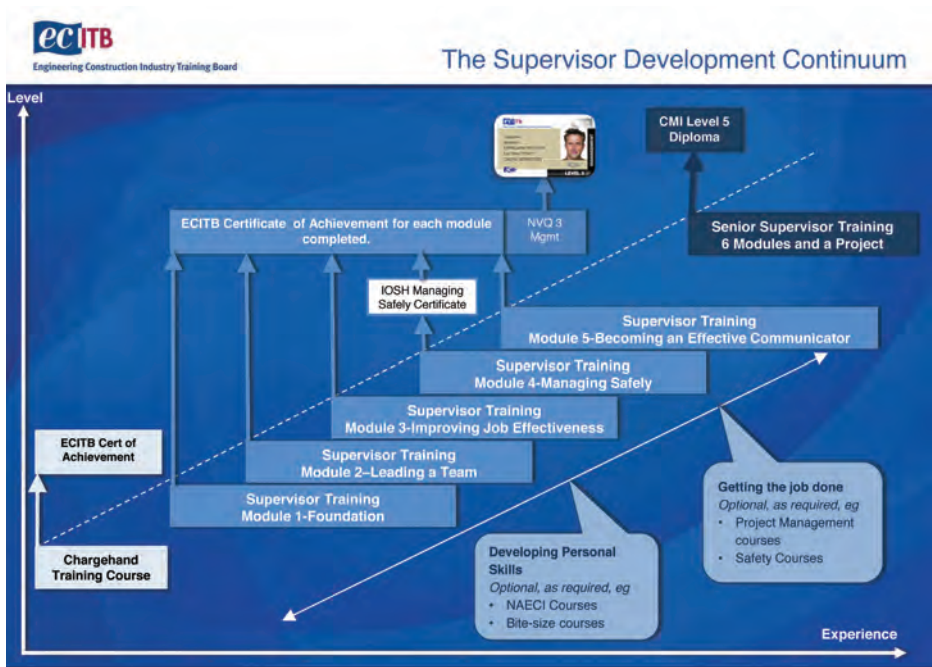
Introduction

Gibson and ECF are united in identifying a lack of quality Supervision as a barrier to productivity. Both recommend that:

- *“clients and contractors...show their commitment to building supervisory and project management capability through nominating candidates onto the (training) programmes”*

Training will be most successful where it acts as a route to personal development, and is seen as a fundamental part of an Employer’s behavioural culture. Training can be equally as effective whether it’s on or off the job; the key is to make it relevant and interesting, and then support it.

To help demonstrate the longer term career development of Supervisors, Employers are recommended to offer training and recognition linked to career progression, covering both core skills and additions such as the NAECI course. A structure for such training, based on currently available ECITB courses, could look like the picture shown below.



Securing engineering construction skills, now and for the future

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Relevant Competencies

It is for individual Employers to determine in what areas Supervisors should train, ideally in discussion with the Supervisors themselves. Best practice would be to prioritise people management skills, but there are clearly a range of competencies which could, and should, also be developed.

Further to the recommendations in Gibson and ECF, a group of ECI Employers facilitated by ECITB developed a suite of competencies upon which Supervisor training would be designed. Best practice would be to at least include all these competencies over the course of a development programme (i.e. on-going training).

A graphical representation of these ECITB competencies is displayed below:



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To encourage continuous professional development, it is important to encourage individuals to embrace these principles.

The sub-sections that follow highlight some of the issues covered by these competencies but this is by no means an exhaustive list of topics.

Management of Safety and Sustainability

Responsibilities of the Supervisor include:

- Understanding and applying Health and Safety legislation, Environmental sustainability and Employer and site safety rules
- Compiling and monitoring work procedures such as Risk Assessments, Method Statements and permits to work
- Monitoring Health and Safety performance and addressing any non-compliance.

Technical Capability

Technical capabilities required of the Supervisor include:

- Comprehensive knowledge of the trade skills they will be supervising
- Understanding of skills and qualifications required for the trade skills they will be supervising
- Ability to read and interpret plans, drawings and technical data.

Planning and Productivity

In the areas of planning and enabling productivity, the Supervisor should be able to:

- Understand the Employer's key objectives and performance targets
- Plan work schedules and allocate resources in terms of craft labour, time, plant and materials
- Evaluate and identify improvements to work activities to increase productivity.

Management of Relationships (IR and Project)

The importance of building and maintaining good relationships is critical for a Supervisor. To this end, they should understand:

- The role of the Trades Unions and their representatives
- The content and application of NAECI
- How to negotiate effectively and manage issues as they arise.

Management of Self

On a personal level, the Supervisor should:

- Understand and accept accountability
- Know where their authority and responsibility both begin and end
- Be capable of efficient time management
- Take responsibility for their own professional development.

Employment Legislation

A basic understanding of relevant employment legislation is essential and covers areas such as:

- Basic Employment Law, including inclusivity, discrimination and harassment
- Employer and NAEI provisions and procedures, where appropriate.

It is also important that the Supervisor understands the limits of acceptable behaviour and can deal appropriately with actions that go outside these limits.

Communication

Communication plays a key role in the course of a Project and it is important for the Supervisor to:

- Develop and practise effective communication skills, both oral and written
- Co-ordinate and build sustainable relationships with others, particularly with employees from other Employers and/or the Client
- Relay the Employer's objectives to the workforce.

Developing and Training

Development and training of the team is part of the remit for the role of Supervisor.

A Supervisor should:

- Undertake team inductions
- Identify the development needs of their team
- Understand and fulfil the roles of mentor and coach as appropriate.

Leading a Team

The successful function of team leadership requires the Supervisor to:

- Understand different leadership styles and their effective use at a practical level
- Have flexibility in their personal leadership style
- Observe performance, praise good performance and address under performance, as appropriate
- Define roles, set expectations and monitor performance.

8.4 Retention

A potential barrier to productivity is the lack of retention of Supervisors in their supervisory roles. It is recognised that relatively uncertain workloads can make it difficult to keep people in supervisory positions and the practice of dropping back onto the tools is widespread. Where this happens, Supervisors can lose the degree of separation they need to effectively lead, represent the Employer and assess their team.

Retained Supervisors develop a greater familiarity with their Employer's culture, procedures and objectives, and can assist their Employer in mobilising more rapidly and effectively onto new projects.

Employers are urged therefore to do everything they can to provide Supervisors with continuity of employment, in a dedicated position, to best enable them to gain this critical experience and develop fully in their career path.

8.5 Recognition and Reward

Gibson cites the level of remuneration for taking on supervisory duties and the lack of a structured career path as barriers to improving the quantity and quality of Supervisors; these are arguably the biggest barriers to productivity that the ECI faces.

Best practice for an Employer is therefore to:

- Remunerate Supervisors to a level commensurate with the wide range of skills they need to undertake their duties and in line with their value to the Employer, aligning earnings potential to defined targets and milestones
- Provide genuine opportunities for development and advancement in a structured manner
- Communicate regularly to ensure that contributions are recognised, concerns are addressed and inclusive support is the norm.

8.6 Best Practice

CAREER AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT	
Career path and support	<p>The Employer should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Discuss potential career paths and relevant training ■ Hold regular reviews, which are recorded and measured.
Training and competence	<p>The Employer should ensure that the Supervisor's training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Is relevant, interesting and mirrors the role and objectives ■ Is linked to career progression, in accordance with a formal structure (such as the ECITB Continuum in Section 8.3) ■ Has covered all key competencies, such as those defined by ECITB ■ Enables the Supervisor to implement the policy on Health and Safety ■ Includes the policy on Disciplinary and Grievance ■ Covers Industrial Relations, including liaising with Trades Unions ■ Includes access to the NAECl Awareness training course ■ Includes performance assessments at designated intervals.
Retention	<p>The Employer should ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Support is in place for Supervisors' wellbeing ■ Everything is done to provide continuity of employment ■ Wherever possible, Supervisors are retained as Supervisors.
Recognition and Reward	<p>The Employer should ensure that Supervisors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Are remunerated to a level commensurate with their role ■ Have genuine opportunities for development and advancement ■ Are as a matter of routine recognised for their contribution.



9. Conclusions

What are our conclusions?

Summary of recommendations for implementation of best practice in Supervision

Section 9 describes the conclusions for a good Supervision strategy and includes a summary of recommendations

9.1 Strategy for Supervision

To support good Supervision strategy, this document contains guidelines and recommendations to encourage the sharing of experience and putting best practice into everyday use.

The document has built on the Engineering Construction Forum's conclusion⁷ that *"The NAECl and its major project Supplementary Project Agreements provide both a framework and a stable and structured environment for project execution"* with the aim of looking at ways to *"establish and encourage the adoption of practices by clients that would promote a strong, productive and harmonious UK Engineering Construction Industry"*.

[Section 9.2](#) summarises the Guide's best practice recommendations.

For Engineering Construction Work, checklists contained in [Appendix A](#) should be utilised to assess the extent of the implementation of best practice; there is an individual checklist for each main section covered in the document.

The recommendations contained in this Guide are designed to encourage a proactive approach to capturing lessons learned and implementing best practice. The overall objective should be to support a continuous improvement process to be followed so as to increase the performance and competitiveness of the UK Engineering Construction Industry.

All stakeholders, especially Supervision, have a key role to play in achieving these goals.

In order to fully implement the recommendations made, and indeed best practice in general, Management must ensure that the environment/culture ('one site, one team') within which Supervisors work supports and encourages the desired aims and behaviours.

NOTE:

See Best Practice Guide 4 - Planning and Operations for more details on planning and operating an environment/culture for success.

⁷ ECF Report in response to 'Changing to Compete – Review of Productivity and Skills in UK Engineering Construction' February 2012

9.2 Summary of Recommendations

A summary of the Guide's recommendations follows but the fundamental activities for removing the barriers to productivity within Supervision are:

- Stakeholders engaging early to:
 - Allow proper planning and familiarisation time
 - Develop the shared vision, in terms of Construction and IR
- Developing a best practice culture, and sharing and promoting it
- Communicating roles, responsibilities and expectations clearly and at all levels
- Investing in the training and recognition of Supervision.

NOTE:

See also [Appendix B – Findings from Supervisor Forums](#).

RECOMMENDATIONS

**Introduction -
Supervision and
productivity**

- Clear understanding of duties and responsibilities for Management and Supervisors to enable productivity
- Strong support from Management in recognition of the importance of Supervision
- Clear understanding of the role of Supervision within the Company and recognition of the value of each individual
- Appropriate framework in place to ensure optimum performance and productivity
- Key enablers in place for the Supervisor:
 - Right technical skill set, attitude and experience
 - Correct information, support and tools to carry out the job
 - Safe, timely and clear access to the work site.
- Implementation of the appropriate methodologies and best practices for planning and monitoring the work to encourage and assist productive working
- Early consideration, identification and removal, where possible, of potential barriers to productivity.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Identifying the role and defining responsibilities

Management:

- Agree and establish boundaries of responsibility for Supervision, with understanding of the limits of their duties, obligations and responsibilities:
 - Employment, Health and Safety and Environmental legislation
 - NAECI
 - Management of site activities and the workforce.
- As best practice, have the aim that a Supervisor should join a Project as a dedicated Supervisor and remain so throughout the duration of their assignment
- Ensure a clear and uncomplicated reporting structure in place for Supervisors.

Supervision:

- Understand the importance of their role as coach, mentor and advocate for the Company
- Understand and comply with Health, Safety, Environmental and Quality requirements
- Understand their responsibilities for:
 - Performance assessment, including monitoring and assessing productivity
 - Optimising installation and delivery methods
 - Planning and allocation of work activities
 - Monitoring compliance and quality of work
 - Delivering briefings and Toolbox Talks.
- Demonstrate ability to manage and resolve low level issues/conflict.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Selection of Supervisors

- Where possible, deploy a person with known skills and experience
- Assess on leadership qualities, ability to function under pressure and capability to manage and co-ordinate change
- Develop a Person Spec, against which the qualities of the candidate can be measured
- List key personal qualities and character traits and prioritise them
- Establish selection criteria according to experience and qualifications
- Confirm abilities and experience with relation to the duties and responsibilities of the role
- Recruit in a manner aligned to a defined procedure.

Induction and deployment

- Plan upfront a formal induction and deployment programme for Supervisors, with a detailed timetable
- Ensure that there are defined outcomes for the induction process, e.g. familiarity with Project objectives, knowing where to go for advice and having a clear view of personal future development
- Introduce general Company expectations, policies and procedures
- Explain Health, Safety and Environmental policies and emphasise the importance of on-going compliance
- Include an overview of Employment Law, including policies for handling and managing disciplinary matters
- Ensure understanding of site IR principles, policies and procedures, including the ability to work with the Trades Unions
- Explain responsibilities for planning work activities, encouraging productive working and ensuring quality through regular assessment
- Explain importance of Method Statements and Risk Assessments
- Explain responsibilities for achieving good communications, team building and motivation, including daily briefings.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Implementing duties in the field**Management:**

- Create an environment in which Supervisors can perform
- Define roles and responsibilities for all Supervision
- Ensure early mobilisation and post completion debriefing of Supervision
- Define mutual targets, practices and actions to maximise productivity
- Employ a sensible, effective ratio of Supervisors to employees
- Define the role of Supervision in resource planning.

Supervision:

- Consider how to motivate employees and develop constructive relationships with them
- Encourage on-going dialogue and communication
- Support Employer-led productivity initiatives
- Carry out individual performance assessments
- Achieve and manage harmonious Industrial Relations
- Promote an engaged workforce.

Career and skills development

- Ensure there is a training structure in place to encourage and finance Supervisors to develop knowledge and skills
- Discuss with Supervisors a potential development path, linked to accreditation through recognised training bodies
- Consider training in people management skills
- Follow recommendations in Gibson and ECF and refer to ECITB list of competencies to encourage professional development
- Ensure retention of Supervision
- Recognise and remunerate Supervision appropriately
- Provide appropriate development and career opportunities.

A. Checklists for Supervision

A.1. Introduction – Supervision and Productivity

- ☐ Is there confidence in an equal opportunities environment?
- ☐ Is there clear demarcation between the duties, obligations, expectations and responsibilities of Management and Supervision?
- ☐ Is there commitment to, and implementation of, comprehensive Management support for Supervision?
- ☐ Is the appropriate framework in place to ensure efficiency and productivity?
- ☐ Do Supervisors understand their role and are they being encouraged to develop their skills?
- ☐ Is Supervision deployed in such a way as to ensure visibility at the workplace?
- ☐ Are the correct enablers for productivity in place, such as possession of the correct skill set by the Supervisor and appropriate information and equipment made available?
- ☐ Are there correct methodologies identified and implemented to maximise productivity?
- ☐ Is there a good planning strategy, which prioritises Health and Safety?
- ☐ Are potential barriers to productivity understood by the Supervisor, along with the necessary measures to overcome/remove them?

A.2. Identifying the Role and Defining Responsibilities

- ☐ Has dedicated Supervision been assigned for the duration of the Project?
- ☐ Are there clear boundaries of responsibility for the role of Supervision?
- ☐ Is there a clear and uncomplicated reporting structure in place?
- ☐ Is there clear understanding of Health, Safety, Environmental and Quality requirements?
- ☐ Is there ability to plan activities and optimise installation and delivery methods?
- ☐ Is there commitment to maintaining strict compliance with site rules/regulations?
- ☐ Is there commitment to quality and continuous improvement?
- ☐ Has the Supervisor the qualities and experience to act as coach, mentor and advocate for the Company and Employee?
- ☐ Has the Supervisor the ability to give good briefings and Toolbox Talks and so influence performance and improve productivity?

A.3. Selection of Supervisors

- ☐ Is there a defined procedure for selection and recruitment?
- ☐ Does the candidate have leadership qualities, with the ability/experience to function under pressure and the capability to manage change effectively?
- ☐ Do they have a good understanding of the role, including the necessary dedication and appropriate personal qualities?
- ☐ Do they display a 'best fit' according to a previously defined Person Spec?
- ☐ Have they relevant experience, trade skills and qualifications?
- ☐ Do they need testing for their technical understanding?
- ☐ Do they have a working understanding of NAECI?
- ☐ Do they have an interest in and commitment to implementing best practice?

A.4. Induction and Deployment

- ☐ Is there a comprehensive formal induction and deployment process in place?
- ☐ Have Company policies and procedures been explained and understood?
- ☐ Has a future development/career path been discussed?
- ☐ Has Supervision been satisfactorily integrated into the Company in terms of: Health and Safety and ability to handle disciplinary matters and promote good IR?
- ☐ Does the Supervisor understand statutory and Company rules and regulations?
- ☐ Is Supervision familiar with RAMS?
- ☐ Does Supervision understand quality assurance/quality control requirements?
- ☐ Has project-specific training been developed for Supervision?

A.5. Implementing Duties in the Field

- ☐ Have roles and responsibilities for Management and Supervision been defined by Employers?
- ☐ Has the Employer clearly defined a Resource Plan and identified responsibilities?
- ☐ Are the respective roles and duties of Supervisor and Senior Supervisor clearly defined?
- ☐ Has early mobilisation been carried out to facilitate training and familiarisation with Project scope, site rules and regulations?
- ☐ Has the Supervisor the right abilities to be able to motivate and encourage their team and ensure a safe and healthy workplace?
- ☐ Have Supervisors been on the joint Supervisor/Steward NAECI Awareness course?
- ☐ Has appropriate training been provided in Industrial Relations and NAECI?
- ☐ Are appropriate and effective channels of communication in place to enable dialogue between all involved parties (Employers, Trades Unions and the workforce)?
- ☐ Is there planned debriefing for Supervision at the end of the Project?

A.6. Career and Skills Development

- ☐ Have potential career paths been discussed with Supervision?
- ☐ Is there an appropriate structure in place to assist Supervisors to develop?
- ☐ Is relevant, suitable and interesting training available?
- ☐ Are key competencies covered, as defined by the ECITB?
- ☐ Does training cover Health and Safety policies, Industrial Relations, Disciplinary and Grievance procedures and the provisions of NAECI?
- ☐ Have performance assessments been planned for regular intervals?
- ☐ Are there provisions to enable retention of Supervisors in their roles?
- ☐ Is there a policy in place for recognising and rewarding Supervision?

B. Findings from Supervisor Forums

1. There should be early engagement with all stakeholders to allow proper, detailed planning and the proper packaging and preparation of work.
2. Appropriate time must be allowed between contract award and mobilisation to properly consider the work about to be undertaken and plan it accordingly.
3. Widespread acceptance that the needs of the Project must take priority over individual targets; commercial arrangements should support this.
4. Mobilisation should include a period of induction (familiarisation), preferably a week, to learn about the Project and link up with other stakeholders, gaining mutual understanding and sharing best practice.
5. Efforts should be made to ensure that the Supervision and Safety functions are complementary and mutually supportive, engaging with each other to move the Project forward.
6. Consideration should be given to the implications of change and the associated effect the amount of change has on productivity, particularly on fast track work. Cumulative changes cause cumulative impacts which create more admin, rework, re-sequencing, revisiting and associated paperwork. These events impair productivity and diminish the culture of 'right first time every time'.
7. Co-ordination meetings should be held regularly; they should be blame free and look at least one week, preferably two, ahead (whilst things may change, the value is in sharing the vision and the current objectives).
8. Consideration should be given to how Supervision can perform all the roles their job encompasses, either by increasing the size of the Supervisory Team (including the use of Chargehands) or possibly splitting the various roles of the Supervisor across two or more people; the paperwork and management aspects could be separated from the field leadership activities, if that suits the personalities in the team.
9. Supervisors should have the technical competence to comment authoritatively on work done under their supervision. Supervisors must be able to speak to the cabin; training in communication and people skills (particularly the importance of consistent treatment and 'felt fair' assessments) is critical.
10. There should be greater access to formal IR and NAEI training; this knowledge/experience should be uniform and widespread rather than picked up 'as you go'.

C. Abbreviations and Acronyms

Abbreviation	Description
CV	Curriculum Vitae
ECF	Engineering Construction Forum
ECI	Engineering Construction Industry
ECIA	Engineering Construction Industry Association
ECITB	Engineering Construction Industry Training Board
EPIC	ECIA Productivity Improvement Committee
HR	Human Resources
HS&E	Health, Safety & Environment
IR	Industrial Relations
IT	Information Technology
NAECI	National Agreement for the Engineering Construction Industry
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
PPR	Progress & Productivity Reporting
QA	Quality Assurance
QC	Quality Control
R&M	Repair & Maintenance
RAMS	Risk Assessment, Method Statement
SPA	Supplementary Project Agreement
TBT	Tool Box Talk

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Acknowledgements

References to and quotations from relevant sources are included in this document. All quotations are shown in italics and within quotation marks.

Disclaimer

Please be aware that nothing contained with this Best Practice Guide should be considered as superseding the National Agreement for the Engineering Construction Industry (NAECI).

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