The Civil Engineering Sector of the Scottish Construction Industry;
briefing for the Education & Culture Committee: Educational Attainment - April 2015

Introduction
The Civil Engineering Contractors Association (CECA) Scotland represents around 100 contractors across Scotland ranging from large multinational companies engaged in flagship infrastructure projects to rural SMEs carrying out civil engineering works in their communities. Our members currently deliver around 80% of Scotland’s annual civil engineering outturn of £2.4bn p.a. and employ over 20,000 PAYE people with many more in the supply chain.

Background to Current Skills Issue
Employment in the construction sector counts for around 6.9% of total Scottish employment, with about 178,400 employed in the sector in 2013, a decline of 16% from the 2008 figure (when it was 212,500 and 8.4%).
  o The decline was focused on the central belt - (Glasgow; Edinburgh; South Lanarkshire)
  o The largest sub sector decline (27%) was in both civil engineering and manufacture of construction related goods.
  o In terms of occupations, the largest declines in employment over the last 5 years were in ‘process, plant and machine operatives’ jobs accounting for around 40% of all job losses.

However;

The civil engineering sector in Scotland has seen a significant amount of activity coming through major public infrastructure projects such as the Glasgow Southern General Hospital development, the Queensferry Crossing, the Edinburgh to Glasgow rail Improvement Programme (EGIP), M73/M74/M8 refurbishment and AWPR.

In the coming years Scotland will see further infrastructure developments such as the dualling of the A9, a new hospital for Dumfries and Galloway, the upgrading of the
Aberdeen to Inverness rail link, a new campus for City of Glasgow College and a new Bio Quarter for the University of Edinburgh.

The Civil Engineering Sector’s Response to their Skills Requirements

The Board of CECA Scotland has identified three skills and development priorities for the sector;

1. Attract new entrants to Civil Engineering
2. Upskill front line supervisors
3. Provide certificated Leadership & Management training for senior staff

Attract New Entrants to Civil Engineering

The CECA Scotland Board has a goal of developing new foundation and higher level technical/professional Modern Apprenticeships to reflect the changing nature of the sector and to stimulate demand to support future ambition.

CECA Scotland and CITB are some way down the line in running two pilots of a Foundation Course in Civil Engineering involving West Lothian College and Carluke High School and Inverness College and two local secondary schools.

Support and funding is being provided to the Institution of Civil Engineers’ (ICE) education programme in Scotland by CECA members. This is to assist their work with P6 & P7 youngsters and S1 & S2 students to achieve a more positive image of the sector.

Upskill Front Line Supervisors

Civil Engineering employers acknowledge the need to develop their own workforce and to offer lifelong learning opportunities for the benefit of both the individual and the company. A recognised area of need is to provide foremen and gangers with additional “soft” skills to complement their technical/craft skills.

The sector is working with CITB Training Groups, FE colleges and independent training providers to develop a range of courses and qualifications around VQ level 3 to meet the particular requirements of the sector.
Provide Certificated Leadership & Management Training for Senior Staff

Over the past 6 years the industry has faced turbulent times, with many SME companies facing liquidation, bankruptcy or ceasing to trade. In many cases this is due to lack of management and leadership within the company or poor management of resource. Over the past 12 months, there has been a significant increase in business opportunities and therefore a leadership and management programme focused on the individual requirements of the business will aid companies to focus on key improvement areas to support their growth and development.

CECA Scotland, along with four other Scottish construction trade bodies, have secured funding from the CITB to provide access to the NVQ level 6 Diploma in Construction Site Management to individuals at a vastly reduced price. This is in addition to the programme of continuous professional development seminars and events that are provided by CECA Scotland to its membership on an ongoing basis.

For further information please contact Grahame Barn, Head of Membership Services of CECA Scotland on 01786 430007 - email grahame@cecascotland.co.uk