

BRIDGE INSPECTOR CERTIFICATION

Interview with Mr. Peter Hemsley; Aecom



October 2016

Peter has recently qualified as the first senior bridge inspector under the new Bridge Inspector Scheme, read all about Peter's experience from registering to achieving certification....

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- Peter Hemsley

Good morning can you please tell us a bit about yourself?

I have worked in civil engineering all my working life, starting as an apprentice technician in the Midland Road Construction Unit. I have worked at AECOM and a number of its legacy companies for 42 years. During this time, I gained drafting, CAD, design and site R.E. experience, prior to joining the Area 14 mac bridge inspection team in 1998. This was where I learned and developed my skills as a bridge inspector. In 2002 we won the contract for the new revised Area 7 MAC and I became Inspection Manager in charge of the inspection programme and team. Since then, I have continued in my Inspection Manager role for the team and carry out inspections for many various clients, including The Midlands Highway Alliance, Network Rail and the Mersey Gateway Project, as well as various local authorities and private clients.

How did you get into Bridge Inspections?

The A50 Derby Southern Bypass site I was working on was coming to a close, just as we won the Area 14 MAC tender. As they were looking for staff with bridges and CAD experience I was offered a position. My first role was to assist with developing maintenance schemes, along with carrying out some general inspections. I then progressed to full time inspections, through the mentoring system. It has just progressed from then onwards.

As part of the New Bridge Inspector Certification Scheme you have been asked to complete an online e-portfolio. Can you share your experience?

The e-portfolio is very comprehensive and certainly covers all the aspects of the inspection / asset management process. As I completed the e-portfolio from an experience point of view, without any of the training courses, I was surprised how much knowledge I had actually gained over the years.



How does the requirement demonstrate your knowledge and experience within the seven core competencies benefit yourself and your company?

Having the seven core modules helps define the certain aspects of the competencies. It can highlight the areas where, because of the part of the industry you might be working in, may require some more research and training than others.



Having now successfully gone through the process, it helps pinpoint the CPD I need to maintain the accreditation.

For AECOM, having its inspectors accredited to national standards shows that it is committed to achieving and maintaining standards, for both its employees and standing in the civil engineering community.

And how would this benefit Bridge Inspectors as a whole?

It means that by holding this certification, inspectors do not just have to rely on word of mouth and CV to show competency. A standard has been set which gives the industry as a whole a bench mark to work to.

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- Peter Hemsley

I understand that you worked independently on meeting the core competencies within the portfolio, can you explain how you approached this and how did you find the process?

It helped me having a varied range of experience over the years. I found that I have drawn on that to solve problems and develop inspections. Using the same method of approach helped me develop answers for the competency questions. My only problem was pulling together certain evidence, especially of older aspects of my experience. I would certainly recommend that candidates save the evidence into their e-portfolios as they do it.

Would you have found a mentor useful and is this something you would to develop within the company?

My line manager and sector managers are very good and are always willing to assist in any training and mentoring as and when required. As I have the most inspection experience in the team, I thought it would be a test of our systems and processes: which I helped develop.

Can you explain how you approached this and how did you find the process overall?

We have had discussion's about the bridge inspector training issues over the year's and were trying to come up with a method of proving competency. So when this system was made available it was an opportunity to see if we were providing the right training for our inspectors, by me attempting it first. By answering all the questions, it acted as a refresher for me on all the different criteria.

And just to sum up Peter how does it feel to be the first certified Bridge Inspector in the UK and Ireland?

Lonely 😊

Obviously I'm proud to have reached the standard. It means a lot to know that I have been doing things correctly over the years. Now the process is up and running I dare say I will not be on my own for long.



I think we can all agree the perfect statement to end our interview with the Bridge Inspectors Certification Schemes first official Inspector.

Congratulations Peter!

