



# **ecmk Ltd Energy Assessor Accreditation Schemes**

## **Annual Report 2013**

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## Foreword

**ecmk Limited** has been providing software, training and consultancy services on energy performance ratings and housing stock asset management since 1990. The company operates Government-approved Accreditation Schemes for Energy Assessors of existing dwellings (since 2007); newly-built dwellings; non-dwellings; public buildings; and air conditioning systems (all since 2008), under the approval of the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.

**ecmk Limited** remains fully committed to ensuring that it provides its members with the tools, training, support and oversight to enable them to produce EPCs, DEC's and Inspection Reports of the highest quality. Our principle focus is on support for energy assessors by providing them with:

- The best possible IT tools and environment – enabling them to focus on their primary task
- Responsive support on the telephone and by email for queries on assessment methodologies and IT issues
- Proactive support in the form of CPD, training, technical updates and seminars across the UK
- A Quality Assurance program which works with our members to identify areas of weakness – and to focus our support to strengthen them

We at **ecmk** will continue to develop our support for members to ensure that they are fully equipped and able to take the opportunities presented by the evolving energy performance market.

Vic Harrison  
Chairman  
ecmk ltd

## Review of the Period – 1 October 2012 to 30 September 2013

Our active membership for Existing Dwelling EPCs has increased dramatically during the reporting period. This is due to the uptake of the Green Deal and also ECO funding being sought by many home owners.

There has been a small decrease in membership for all other strands although it is hoped that new initiatives such as ESOS will help with low compliance levels and inject a renewed enthusiasm into these markets.

The key focus was on providing improved levels of support for members in all strands and, in particular, extending the high quality of telephone support and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) offerings and supporting our members through the changes to QA requirements. These initiatives continue beyond the reporting period.

Our APEL application route has been less active than in previous years despite opening the door for APEL transfers in all strands.

### Membership

The total membership in each scheme at the start and end of the period is shown in Table 1:

<b>Scheme</b>	<b>Qualification (start – end)</b>	<b>APEL (start – end)</b>	<b>Total (start – end)</b>
Domestic	453-911	0 – 1	<b>454-912</b>
On-Construction	13-10	1-1	<b>14-11</b>
Non-Dwellings L3	63-61	7-7	<b>70-68</b>
Non-Dwellings L4	33-30	5-5	<b>38-35</b>
Public Buildings	26-22	4-4	<b>30-26</b>
Air Conditioning	43-21	14-10	<b>57-31</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>855-631</b>	<b>33-32</b>	<b>888-663</b>

**Table 1 – Scheme Membership**

## Applications

Accreditation for DEAs is available only to those holding the DipDEA award, the CertDEA award, the DipDGDA award or to those transferring from another approved scheme where they have been accepted under via an APEL route by that scheme. For the on-construction and non-dwellings schemes, accreditation is available to those with an appropriate award (DipNDEA, DipNDGDA, DipOCEA, DipDEC, DipACEA, CertACEA, DipACEA or Certificate equivalents), to those with relevant prior experience of the role (APEL) or to those transferring from another approved scheme where they have been accepted under via an APEL route by that scheme. Awards from different awarding bodies, training bodies or assessment centres were regarded as entirely equivalent.

## Lodgements

Lodgements for all strands, except Air Conditioning Reports, dipped during the reporting period, reflecting the state of the market.

The figures for mean and median lodgements shown in Table 2 are calculated for the whole reporting period.

Scheme	Total	Current Mean/EA/ Month	Previous Mean/EA/ Month	Current Median/EA/ Month	Previous Median/EA/ Month
Domestic	81,110	11.22	12.8	3.95	2.67
On-Con	533	3.29	5.58	4.86	3.58
Non-Dwellings	1168	0.92	1.67	1.0	0.5
Public Buildings	832	2.46	2.89	1.7	2.17
ACR	81	0.16	0.25	0.5	0.42
<b>Total</b>	<b>83,724</b>				

**Table 2 – EPC Lodgements**

### Quality Assurance

From October 2012 to September 2013, all first level desktop quality assurance audits were carried out by our own internal audit team.

The total number of EPCs submitted, the totals called for audit and the numbers found to be within the accepted tolerance for the type of report; points are summarised in Table 3.

	<b>Lodged</b>	<b>Audited</b>	<b>Within Tolerance</b>
Existing Dwellings	81110	2087 (2.6%)	1987 (95.2%)
New Dwellings	533	15 (2.8%)	15 (100.0%)
Public Buildings	832	25 (3.0%)	25 (100.0%)
Non-Dwellings	1168	90 (7.7%)	70 (77.7%)
Air-Conditioning	81	22 (27.2%)	19 (86.4%)

**Table 3 – Quality Audits**

Although there has been a marked improvement in the % of reports that fall within the accepted tolerance, from the figures reported in 2012, failure rates for Non-Dwellings remain lower than target. There has been a slight fall in the ‘pass’ rate for AC reports but due to the low lodgement numbers this figure is extremely sensitive to small changes.

**ecmk** are working with their assessors to establish any training or CPD needs and will be adding new courses to our ‘Knowledge-net’ training hub.

We will also be running CPD courses ‘in house’ as well as focusing on convention and regulation updates at our road-shows.

## **Complaints**

All formal complaints are accepted in any form and members are required by their Code of Conduct to inform **ecmk** of any complaints, or potential complaints, made directly to them by their clients.

A total of 38 formal complaints were recorded and processed to resolution during the reporting period, following our complaints procedure. An analysis of these shows the following:

- **1** Complaint involved an assessor from another scheme, regarding the data entered on a certificate. This was resolved with collaboration between the two schemes
- **15** complaints from clients relating to the application of RdSAP to their particular properties. All were based on misunderstandings of the RdSAP conventions which the DEA was unable to resolve to the satisfaction of the client. All were resolved with a written explanation from **ecmk** management
- **1** complaint was in regard to the service from **ecmk**. This related to an administrative error and was resolved
- **8** complaints were received from clients relating to the conduct of a member. Remedial action taken with the members where necessary
- **3** complaints from clients deemed, on investigation, to be justified due to errors on the part of the member. The certificates were re-issued and remedial action taken with the member where necessary
- **7** Complaints received regarding other areas of the business including Green-Deal and Training

## ***Continuing Professional Development (CPD)***

During this reporting period we have continued our CPD policy which reflects the current Scheme Operating Requirements, so each member has to gain 10 hours per strand with an additional 5 hours for each subsequent strand.

**ecmk** delivers a programme of short CPD sessions as well as a number of other CPD events. We will accept CPD gained from training courses and events run by other Accreditation Schemes. For other sources of CPD, we ask that the member submit them to **ecmk** for approval before attending – our main criteria being that the training must relate to the National Occupational Standard for the relevant strand. Members are required to keep a personal record of their CPD during the year, for submission to **ecmk** at annual renewal.

We work with all members to implement a CPD plan which must be submitted at renewal, this allows us to ensure the members are gaining relevant CPD for their own needs.

Energy Assessors can record their CPD activities on the portal, making it simply to keep a check on what hours they have completed. We can also view this record on renewal to ensure that the appropriate number of hours have been completed.

In 1<sup>st</sup> November 2011 we launched our own online learning HUB [www.knowledge-net.co.uk](http://www.knowledge-net.co.uk) this will allow our members and those who are members of other schemes to gain quality relevant CPD. **ecmk** will be adding to the CDP courses offered on the HUB to cover all strands of EPBD.

More than 5% of the CPD records for all members were inspected at annual renewal and were found to be satisfactory.





## ***Finance***

The latest published summary accounts for **ecmk ltd** have been provided to DCLG.

## The Future

Whilst the housing market continues to be depressed, the number of domestic and commercial EPCs being produced remains low, but with imminent launch of the 'Green Deal', we believe that the next few years will see a significant increase in awareness of energy efficiency and carbon reduction measures. This puts Energy Assessors in a key position to deliver on these initiatives, and be part of this ambitious programme.

**ecmk** will continue to develop its support for all Energy Assessors. Our aim is to provide:

- The best software available for DEAs – our solutions are continually being improved in line with feedback from our users and Subject Matter Experts.
- A simple, quality audit process which minimises the administration required from members and which provides rapid, supportive feedback.
- New CPD courses and events, including online training courses, classroom training, seminars and workshops around the UK.
- To ensure the content and quality of our innovative on-line support system, available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.
- To develop software for other strands e.g. Occupancy Assessment, to enable assessors to gather information and produce reports in an optimal, timely manner.
- To extend our software range to multiple platforms in keeping with consumer trends.

We look forward to a successful year.

Neil Griffiths  
General Manager

## **Who's Who at ecmk**

### **Vic Harrison – Chairman**

Vic founded **ecmk** in 1990, providing software and consultancy in energy rating and asset management to the social housing sector. He is the majority shareholder in **ecmk**.

### **Paul McNally – Commercial Director**

In his role as Commercial Director, Paul has management and budgetary responsibility for all departments within the company, providing leadership for Sales & Marketing, Software Development and Client Support teams.

### **Garry Wolfe – Scheme Manager**

Garry manages the Accreditation Schemes for all strands of the EPBD. He is responsible for membership administration, technical support and quality auditing.

### **Paul Harrison – Auditor**

Paul coordinates the quality audits for EPCs, liaising with our external auditors, carrying out desktop and site audits on domestic EPCs and moderating the audit team.

### **Leona O'Neill – Auditor and Technical Support**

Leona provides front-line support for DEAs, specialising in RdSAP and assessment techniques. She is also a member of the domestic audit team.

### **Mike Hartney – Technical Support**

Mike provides RdSAP, SBEM, ORCalc and TM44 support and IT support for members. Mike also represents **ecmk** at the RdSAP and DEC Convention meetings.

### **Alex Cale – Technical Support**

Alex provides a key link between software support to our members and our in house development team.

### **Emma Baines-Holding – Audit Support**

Emma is principally responsible for administration of the quality audits.

### **Cherry Jeavons-White – Accreditation Support**

Cherry processes all applications for the Accreditation Scheme. She also looks after all renewal applications including insurance, CRB Checks and also CPD.

## **Contacts**

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