

# Report to SOLAS on the strategic options for the CSCS/QSCS and Safe Pass national programmes

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# 1.0 Executive summary

# 1. Executive summary

## 1.1 Introduction & overview

In April 2015, Deloitte were engaged by SOLAS to provide professional services advising on the transfer of the Construction Skills Certificate Scheme (CSCS), Quarry Skills Certificate Scheme (QSCS) and Safe Pass programmes from SOLAS as per the engagement letter issued on 9 of April 2015. This report represents the output from this engagement under the terms of our engagement letter and the request from SOLAS, from 24 August 2015.

CSCS and QSCS provide for the training, assessment, certification and registration of non-craft operatives within the construction sector and are covered under the provisions of Schedule 5 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2013 and Schedule 1 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Quarries) Regulations 2008.

The Safe Pass programme involves the delivery of a one-day safety awareness training programme aimed at all workers in the construction industry. The programme is legislated for under the provisions of Schedule 4 of the Safety, Health, and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2013.

Prior to the establishment of SOLAS, the programmes were administered within the construction division of FÁS. At present, SOLAS is responsible for the operation of the three programmes and Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI), formerly FETAC, currently makes awards in respect of the CSCS programmes. Programmes require renewal on a regular basis, every four years in the case of Safe Pass and every five years in the case of CSCS/QSCS programmes.

# 1. Executive summary

## 1.2 Deloitte report from 2012

In 2012, Deloitte was commissioned by the training and employment agency FÁS to examine and consider whether the Safe Pass, CSCS and QSCS national programmes were compatible with the strategic remit of the forthcoming further education and training authority SOLAS. The primary conclusion of the Deloitte assessment was that the programmes did not fit with the strategic remit of SOLAS.

The 2012 Deloitte report outlined SOLAS’s role to plan, co-ordinate and fund further education and training for the further education and training sector; similar to that exercised by the Higher Education Authority for higher education institutions. Delivery was planned to principally be carried out through the emerging Education & Training Boards. In considering the fit, Deloitte considered the main activities associated with each of the programmes across the following areas and determined the level of alignment:

Programme activities	Outcome from Deloitte’s 2012 assessment
Programme Governance	Somewhat aligned
Programme Development	Non-alignment
Tutor trainer Development	Non-alignment
Programme Management	Non-alignment
Programme Control & Certification / Qualification	Non-alignment

The overall conclusion of the Deloitte 2012 report was that *“The delivery of Safe Pass, CSCS and QSCS does not fit with the strategic remit of SOLAS and this presents a number of challenges for the organisation in terms of continuing to deliver these programmes”*.

The report also concluded a significant amount of work was required to prepare the CSCS and QSCS programmes for transfer.

## 1. Executive summary

### 1.3 Context

We believe that the background to the proposed transfer of the programmes should be viewed through the lens of the construction industry as a whole, with the CSCS, QSCS and Safe Pass programmes being of significance to the delivery of employment and economic recovery within the construction sector whilst underpinning the safety of construction sector employees.

#### **Objectives of card schemes**

The card schemes have been developed to raise standards of safety in the construction industry. Through legislation, the schemes provide a mechanism for employees to receive basic training on health and safety, through the Safe Pass programme, and certified skills training through the CSCS and QSCS programmes. Legislation also provides for the maintenance of a register of those who have received training, and issuance of cards through which training and certification can be validated by employers.

The necessity for such schemes arose due the rate of construction related accidents and fatalities in Ireland during the 1990s. Industry stakeholders, including the State, found the rates to be unacceptable and commenced a number of initiatives to reduce this number, including the development of the Safe Pass and CSCS / QSCS schemes.

Stakeholders consulted during this review were unanimous in their view that the card schemes had positively contributed to improved safety awareness amongst construction workers since the introductions of the schemes.

#### **Function in safety awareness and skills development**

The Safe Pass scheme provides legislative based parameters in which construction workers are trained in basic construction safety and are registered as having completed the training, which is a minimum legal requirement for all construction workers. The CSCS / QSCS schemes provide for the training, assessment, certification and registration of non-craft operatives in the construction sector. Certification is required by law for workers performing certain occupational categories as set-out in legislation.

The schemes promote safety awareness and skills development across the construction sector, with registration required to be renewed every five years in the case of CSCS / QSCS and every four years in the case of Safe Pass. For Safe Pass, applicants are required to re-sit the one day training course to successfully renew; CSCS / QSCS applicants must, in general, complete at least 300 hours of tasks applicable to each skill / category, over the five years since the card was last issued, to successfully renew the card.

## 1. Executive summary - continued

### 1.3 Context - continued

#### Legislative background

The legislative basis for each of the Safe Pass, CSCS and QSCS schemes are set-out below:

- The **Safe Pass programme** arose from an initiative of the Construction Industry Training Committee. The initiative was incorporated into the Construction Industry Partnership Plan which was launched by the Government in 2000, following consultation between FÁS, expert working groups, the social partners, including the Construction Industry Federation and ICTU, with support from the Construction Industry Training Committee. Training provided under the Safe Pass Programme, which has its legislative basis in the Safety, Health, and Welfare at Work Act 2005, is not intended to relieve employers of their statutory duty to provide adequate health and safety training to employees.
- The **CSCS scheme** was developed following consultation with the social partners and a number of specialist working groups. The consultation focussed on identifying the training needs and occupational standards required for each in-scope occupation. Schedule 5 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2013 is the legislative basis for the CSCS scheme.
- The **QSCS scheme** was developed to introduce a system for training and assessing quarry workers in certain occupations and provide them with a QSCS card and registration. The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Quarry) Regulations 2013 set-out the legislative basis for the QSCS scheme.



## 1. Executive summary - continued

### 1.3 Context - continued

#### Partnership

Since commencement, FÁS, and subsequently SOLAS, have played a significant role in the development and delivery of the Safe Pass, CSCS and QSCS programmes, however, a broad range of stakeholders are reliant on the success of the programmes to meet their individual objectives. Reliance is interlinked where stakeholder participation and support is necessary to meet programme objectives. The programmes are central to the success of a number of prominent initiatives across employment, education and training, housing development and health and safety. We set-out below a number of key stakeholders and initiatives which are reliant on the success of the programmes:

- **The Government** has initiated a number of initiatives to stimulate growth in the construction industry. Initiatives include; housing, capital and infrastructural developments, wider economic recovery, the promotion of the health and safety of workers and the general public. To support these initiatives, the State has developed a number of plans including:
  - **Construction 2020 – A Strategy for a Renewed Construction Sector**, which has a key objective of “getting people back to work”. Employment in the construction sector is heavily reliant on CSCS / QSCS certified and Safe Pass trained workers.
  - **Capital Investment Plan – 2016-2021**; The plan aims to develop a number of capital infrastructure projects, estimated at €27bn to 2021 across transport, education, enterprise, healthcare, housing, climate change, justice, culture, heritage and sports and other areas. Meaning all Government departments have an interest in such developments which again are contingent on the availability of a workforce which holds valid cards.
- **FÁS / SOLAS / Department of Education and Skills**, The Department of Education and Skills, through FÁS and subsequently SOLAS, has been responsible for overseeing the training, certification, quality assurance and policy development for each programme which support initiatives across Government departments. As concluded in the 2012 Deloitte report, these programmes do not fit within the strategic remit of SOLAS, however, while the programmes are a key factor in delivering national strategies across Government departments and industry they will require a suitable mechanism in which programmes are developed and fulfil objectives.
- Stakeholders have agreed that there is scope for developing the cards further, however, resource constraints and loss of corporate knowledge within SOLAS have had an impact on effective programme development and delivery.
- Examples of initiatives which could be developed along with the existing card schemes include the *Qualibuild programme*, which is currently being developed by Limerick Institute of Technology (LIT) and aims to train and register up to 60,000 workers with foundation energy skills competencies. Qualibuild is similar to CSCS / QSCS in that it is intended to be a certified programme, with an associated card and renewal requirement and will include a register of certified workers.

## 1. Executive summary - continued

### 1.3 Context - continued

- **Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (DJEI);** The 2008 economic crash had a significant effect on employment in the construction industry and, aligned to Construction 2020, the re-generation of jobs in that sector is a key initiative of the DJEI. In this regard the DJEI have a keen interest in the delivery of the CSCS/ QSCS and Safe Programmes, which underpin jobs in the construction industry and promote health and safety amongst workers.
- **Health & Safety Authority (HSA);** As we have outlined, the cards have a central role in health and safety promotion and awareness in the construction industry. The HSA, as the national statutory body with responsibility for ensuring all workers, and those affected by work activity, are protected from work related injury and ill-health and are reliant on the success of the Safe Pass, CSCS and QSCS programmes in promotion and awareness of health and safety in the construction sector.
- **Industry:** Employers and their representative groups play a vital role in supporting the programmes, including financial support for training, time-off for training and card registration fees. In order to employ workers in the sector, employers need to satisfy themselves of the validity of CSCS/ QSCS and Safe Pass cards held by those workers. These provide a minimum basis on which workers can be employed on construction projects and, where increased activity occurs in the sector, there will be a greater need for a fit-for-purpose organisation to oversee training, certification, card registration and renewal.
- **Employees:** All employees working on Irish construction sites are required by legislation to have Safe Pass and may also require CSCS or QSCS cards in order to gain employment. There is a significant emphasis on the necessity for a fit-for-purpose structure to oversee the delivery, development and governance arrangements for programme training, certification, quality assurance and policy development. Any changes to the programmes will need to fulfil health and safety, training, employment and accessibility objectives of the workforce.

We understand that a process has commenced between SOLAS and the two main Government departments, the Department of Education and Skills and the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, to set-out the future of the card schemes and to ensure they operate and evolve in a way that is fit for purpose for the construction industry.

# 1. Executive summary

## 1.4 Assignment scope and approach

The scope of the assignment focussed on an assessment of the options available for the transfer of the CSCS, QSCS and Safe Pass programmes away from SOLAS. As part of the SOLAS request, options 1 and 2 below were initially identified by SOLAS. Options 3 to 6 were subsequently identified and considered by Deloitte.

While not every option identified is reflected in this report, those deemed to be viable options are **set-out in the table below** and are assessed in detail in section 3.

Option	Description of option identified
1	<p><b>Transfer to Laois Offaly ETB</b> Transfer the responsibility for policy, operations, administration and management of the programmes to LOETB and locate in the Mount Lucas training facility. The transfer will also incorporate the conversion of the Mount Lucas facility from a national training facility to a national assessment centre and an amendment of the CSCS new entrant programme.</p>
2	<p><b>Transfer to Laois Offaly ETB with existing CMU remaining within a Dublin based ETB</b> Transfer the responsibility for policy, operations, administration and management of the programmes to LOETB and locate in the Mount Lucas training facility. However, the existing CSCS / QSCS and Safe Pass Card Management Unit (CMU) would be located in a Dublin based ETB, for example, Tallaght or Ballyfermot. The transfer will also incorporate the conversion of the Mount Lucas facility from a national training facility to a national assessment centre and an amendment of the CSCS new entrant programme.</p>
3	<p><b>Educational Training Boards Ireland (ETBI) with operations transferring to LOETB under service level agreement (SLA)</b> Transfer the responsibility for the programmes to the Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI), with delivery of certain management and operations outsourced to LOETB, and potentially other parties, under SLA.</p>
4	<p><b>Construction Industry Register Ireland (CIRI)</b> Transfer the responsibility for the policy, governance, operations and management of the programmes to CIRI.</p>
5	<p><b>New Specific Purpose Statutory Entity (to be established)</b> Transfer the responsibility for the policy, governance, operations and management of the programmes to a new statutory body with a dedicated remit to develop and deliver construction industry safety and skills.</p>
6	<p><b>Health and Safety Authority (HSA)</b> Transfer the responsibility for the policy, governance, operations and management of the HSA which would require an amendment to their remit to include development and delivery of construction industry safety and skills.</p>

## 1. Executive summary - continued

### 1.4 Assignment scope and approach - continued

The analysis considered the following primary factors, which form the basis of our assessment methodology (please refer to section 2.7):

- Organisational alignment
- Physical, IT and human resource requirements and costs
- Required training and certification capacity
- Implementation framework, and
- Possible associated risks

#### **Consideration of a range of miscellaneous matters**

Deloitte were also requested to consider the following on-going national programme management issues during the consultation process:

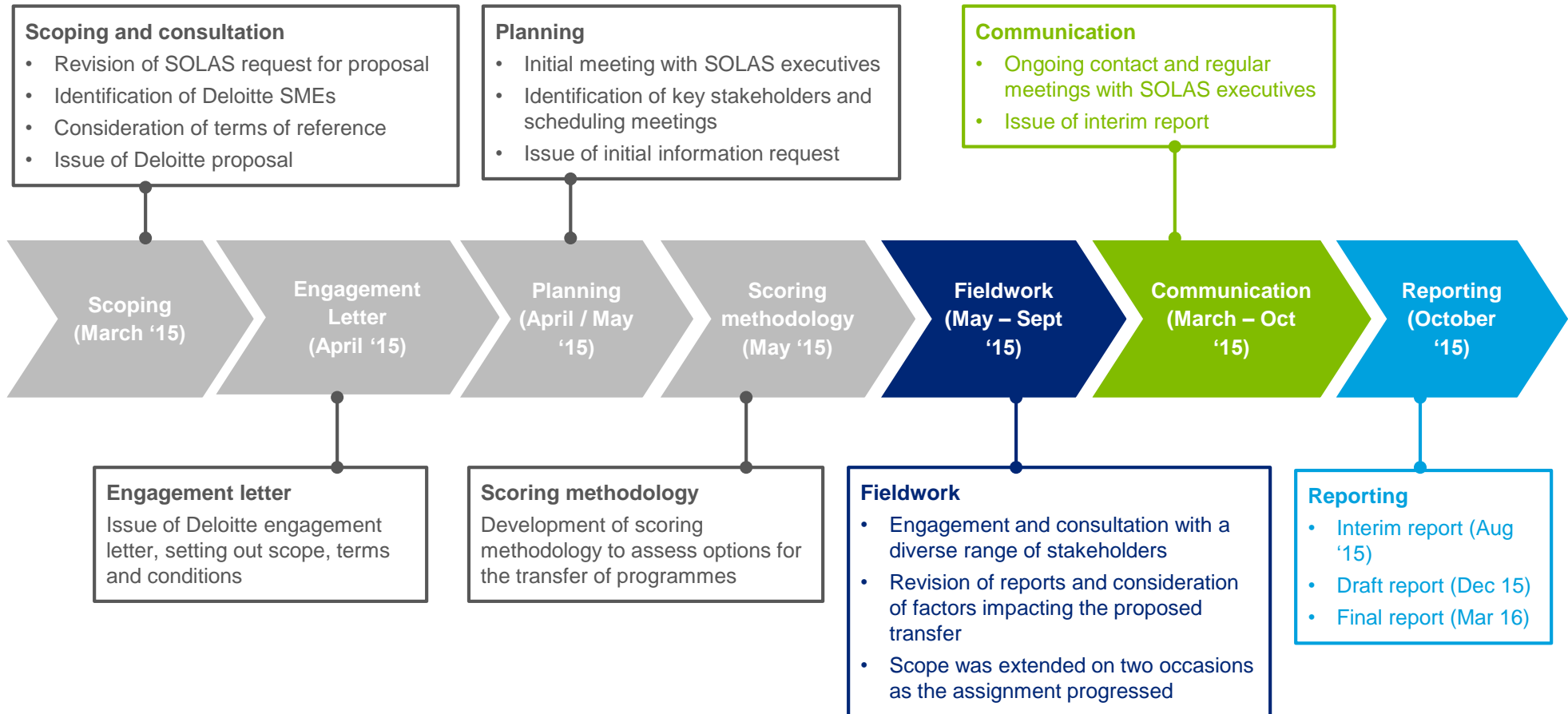
- CSCS / QSCS assessment
- National training standards unit
- UK recognition and harmonisation
- Northern Ireland recognition and harmonisation
- Approved assessment centres
- Customer support

Our assessment of these matters is set-out in section 3 of this report.

## 1. Executive summary - continued

### 1.4 Assignment scope and approach - continued

We set-out in the table below our approach to this engagement, which has been tailored based on SOLAS requirements.



# 1. Executive summary - continued

## 1.5 Summarised outcome

In the table below we present the outcome from our analysis of the seven options identified for the transfer of the three programmes

Option	Score	Ranking
<p><b>ETBI with operations transferring to LOETB under service level agreement (SLA)</b> Transfer the responsibility for policy and governance of the programmes to the Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI).</p> <p>Outsource certain operations and administration to LOETB, who will have ownership of the Mount Lucas facility, with the potential for outsourcing by competitive tender to parties other than LOETB. The transfer will also incorporate the conversion of the Mount Lucas facility to a national assessment centre and an amendment of the CSCS new entrant programme.</p>	27	1 <sup>st</sup>
<p><b>New Specific Purpose Statutory Entity (to be established)</b> Transfer the responsibility for the policy, governance, operations and management of the programmes to a new statutory body with a dedicated remit to develop and deliver construction industry safety and skills training.</p> <p>The board of the new body, which would include a balance of industry stakeholders, would have full responsibility for policy and governance of the programmes. The management and operations may be sub-contracted by competitive process. This would include competitive selection of approved national assessment centre(s) to facilitate standardisation of national assessments.</p>	25	2 <sup>nd</sup>
<p><b>Laois /Offaly ETB (LOETB)</b> Transfer responsibility for policy, operations, administration and management of the programmes to the Laois/Offaly ETB, located in the Mount Lucas training facility. The transfer will incorporate the conversion of the Mount Lucas facility to a national assessment centre and an amendment of the CSCS new entrant programme.</p>	20	3 <sup>rd</sup> (joint)
<p><b>LOETB with card management unit (CMU) remaining within Dublin based ETB</b> Transfer responsibility for policy, operations, administration and management of the programmes to the Laois/Offaly ETB. The existing CMU would be located in a Dublin based ETB. The transfer will also incorporate the conversion of the Mount Lucas facility to a national assessment centre and an amendment of the CSCS new entrant programme.</p>	20	3 <sup>rd</sup> (joint)

# 1. Executive summary - continued

## 1.5 Summarised outcome

In the table below we present the outcome from our analysis of the seven options identified for the transfer of the three programmes

Option	Score	Ranking
<p><b>Construction Industry Register Ireland (CIRI)</b> Transfer the responsibility for the policy, governance, operations and management of the programmes to CIRI.</p> <p>CIRI would have full responsibility for policy and governance. The management and operations of training, assessment, certification, monitoring and card management may be sub-contracted by competitive process, including competitive selection of approved national assessment centre(s) which would facilitate standardisation of national assessments.</p>	16	5 <sup>th</sup>
<p><b>Health and Safety Authority (HSA)</b> Transfer the responsibility for the policy, governance, operations and management of the HSA which would require an amendment to their remit to include development and delivery of construction industry safety and skills.</p> <p>HSA would have full responsibility for policy and governance of the programmes. The management and operations may be sub-contracted by competitive process. This would include competitive selection of approved national assessment centre(s) to facilitate standardisation of national assessments.</p>	15	6 <sup>th</sup>

### Assessment of advantages and dis-advantages (section 1.6)

On the basis of the assessment of options under criteria, options 3 and 5 were taken forward for a more detailed assessment of advantages and dis-advantages which is set-out in section 1.6.

## 1. Executive summary - continued

### 1.6 Conclusion

Based on the work completed, we find that the basis for transitioning the three programmes away from SOLAS remains valid, where the development and delivery of the programmes does not sit within the strategic remit of SOLAS. The programmes are of national importance to the construction industry and, arising from our consultation with stakeholders, we find that the programmes require renewed focus on development and improvement. At present SOLAS does not have the capacity, due to resource constraints and loss of corporate knowledge, to deliver meaningful programme development and improvement.

We have considered and assessed six options based on agreed criteria and find that, while no one option completely fulfils all criteria, the highest scoring and preferred option is, option 3 *“ETBI with operations transferring to LOETB under SLA”*, with a score of 27. In arriving at the preferred option, we have specifically considered the advantages and dis-advantage of the top two scoring options, please refer to section 1.6.

The second placed is option 5, *“New Specific Purpose, Statutory Entity”*, with a score of 25. This option has a number of positive attributes and, in order to provide more depth to our recommendation, the analysis in section 1.6 compares key advantages and dis-advantages of both options. Arising from this comparison, we find that the following key advantages augment the selection of option 3 as preferred option:

- **Implementation timeline** – ETBI and LOETB are existing entities which would allow for a shorter implementation timeframe. The implementation timeframe is a key component of the proposed transfer due to the significance of the programmes in the construction industry and the current management constraints within SOLAS. The timeline for constituting and transitioning to a new statutory entity are less controllable.
- **Appetite to participate in the transfer** – both ETBI and LOETB have been consulted during this process and both have indicated a willingness to engage in the transfer process. At present, we believe that the appetite at political level to constitute a new entity may be limited.

In our conclusion Deloitte acknowledge the prominence of the programmes in the construction industry, in the national strategy for jobs and in the Government’s Construction 2020 strategy. We believe that the programmes should be transferred from SOLAS and, to support national strategies in the construction industry, should be transferred in a short timeframe to existing entities, ETBI and LOETB.

Please refer to appendix 4 for a high level implementation plan.











## 1.7 Assessment of key advantages and dis-advantages of two highest scoring options

For the following two options, which have scored the highest based on criteria identified in section 2.7, we have completed further analysis of the key advantages and dis-advantages:

- Option 3 – ETBI with operations transferring to LOETB under SLA (27 points)
- Option 5 – A New Specific Purpose, Statutory Entity (25 points)

Option 3 – ETBI with operations transferring to LOETB under SLA			
Advantages		Dis-advantages	
<p><b>Implementation timeline</b> – ETBI and LOETB are existing entities which should allow for a shorter implementation timeframe. The implementation timeframe is a key component of the proposed transfer due to the significance of the programmes in the construction industry and the current management constraints within SOLAS (Principle 1).</p>		<p><b>Policy and Governance</b> – ETBI board is representative of each ETB, meaning there is a risk that those with ultimate responsibility within ETBI may not prioritise the programmes (Principles 5 &amp; 6).</p>	
<p><b>Appetite to participate in the transfer</b> – both ETBI and LOETB have been consulted during this process and both have indicated a willingness to engage in the transfer process (Principle 5).</p>		<p><b>Strategic remit</b> – Both ETBI and LOETB would require their strategic remit to be revised to include the development and delivery of the programmes (Principle 6).</p>	
<p><b>Assessment &amp; cross-border harmonisation</b> – LOETB is experienced in delivering programmes certified by QQI, including quality assurance (QA) mechanisms, and will have an awareness of conditions attached to cross-border harmonisation (Principles 8 &amp; 10).</p>		<p><b>Financial viability</b> – ability to achieve financial sustainability through competitive tendering for the provision of all services may be limited. For example, those which may be fulfilled by LOETB (Principle 3).</p>	
<p><b>Assessment Centres &amp; National Training Standards Unit</b> –The Mount Lucas centre is transferring to the ownership of LOETB, making development of a National Assessment Centre, supported by satellite assessment centres and a National Training Standards Unit more attainable in the shorter-term (Principles 8 &amp; 10).</p>		<p><b>State Oversight</b> – where the programmes are transferred to ETBI, the programmes will continue to reside within the Department of Education and Skills, while the programmes contain a priority to deliver certified training and awareness to construction industry employees. Therefore, there is a case that the programmes may be disadvantaged without significant input from the Department of Jobs Enterprise and Innovation, which may not be achieved where transferred to ETBI.</p>	

## 1.7 Assessment of advantages and dis-advantages of two highest scoring options

Option 5 – New Entity			
Advantages		Dis-advantages	
<b>Strategic remit</b> – The proposed new entity would have a defined construction focussed remit to develop and deliver health and safety training to the construction sector (Principle 6).		<b>Implementation timeline</b> –The timeline for constituting and transitioning to a new statutory entity is less controllable, which would impact the achievability of this option (Principle 1).	
<b>Oversight and governance</b> – the board of the newly constituted entity could be structured to include stakeholder representatives, which would allow stakeholder input to policy and governance as subject matter experts (SMEs) (Principle 4).		<b>Appetite to constitute a New Entity</b> – We believe that there is little political appetite to constitute a new statutory entity, meaning the option may never be delivered (Principles 2 & 5).	
<b>Existing SOLAS staff</b> – The new entity may allow for transfer of existing SOLAS staff and expertise; location depending. This would reduce risk to SOLAS arising from potential for excessive staff and facilitate transfer of knowledge (Principle 7).		<b>Assessment &amp; cross-border harmonisation</b> – The new entity would need to acquire or develop competencies in delivering programmes, certified by QQI, and delivering requirements surrounding cross-border harmonisation, including QA mechanisms, which may inhibit the timeline for successfully implementing transition and lead to disquiet in the construction industry (Principles 8 & 10).	
<b>Financial viability</b> – the new entity would be in a position to make decisions surrounding competitive tendering for all services including; CMU, National Assessment Centres including satellites, QA system which may lead more opportunity for financial sustainability (Principle 3).		<b>National Assessment Centre</b> - The Mount Lucas centre is transferring to the ownership of LOETB. It is unclear how a new entity would fund, develop or acquire a similar centre which would act as the standard for delivering consistent assessments, meeting harmonisation requirements for UK and EU regulators on construction health and safety (Principles 8 & 10).	

# 2.0 Background, options & assessment criteria

## 2. Background, options & assessment criteria

### 2.1 Programmes proposed for transfer

The scope of this assignment included the identification and assessment of options for the transfer of the following programmes, which are currently overseen, managed and operated by SOLAS:

- Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS)
- Quarries Skills Certification Scheme (QSCS)
- Safe Pass

A summary of the governance structure, activity and legislative basis for these programmes is set-out below:

#### **Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) and Quarries Skills Certification Schemes (QSCS)**

CSCS and QSCS provide for the training, assessment, certification and registration of non-craft operatives in the construction and quarry sectors. Training and assessment, leading to certification, is primarily provided by Approved Training Organisations (ATOs) with some CSCS training and assessment provided by the Local Government Management Agency (LGMA), where it is delivered directly to local authority employees. Please refer to appendix 3, which outlines the occupations and categories under which CSCS and QSCS certification is required.

CSCS / QSCS training and assessment programmes must be delivered by SOLAS approved trainers and assessors through an ATO (refer to section 2.3). Certification under the CSCS and QSCS programmes are awarded by Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) and the cards require renewal every five years. The programmes are legislated for under:

- Schedule 5 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2013
- Schedule 1 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Quarries) regulations 2008

Candidates are required to apply to a CSCS or QSCS ATO and, complete the adequate period of practical experience, ranging from six months to three years, and then complete a CSCS / QSCS training and assessment programme through the ATO.

## 2. Background, options & assessment criteria

### 2.1 Programmes proposed for transfer

#### CSCS/QSCS card issue and income (2006 – 2014(July))

Figures provided by SOLAS identify the number of CSCS/QSCS cards issued and the associated income in the following table. We also highlight the cost associated with QQI certification, of €40 per card, plus the overall cost to the card holder of €23.

Year	CSCS Cards	@ €23 (SOLAS)	@ €40 (QQI)	@ €63 (Total)	QSCS Cards	@ €23	@ €40 (QQI)	@ €63 (Total)	Renewals	@ €23	@ €40 (QQI)	@ €63 (Total)
2006	16,111	€370,553	€644,440	€1,014,993	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2007	18,875	€434,125	€755,000	€1,189,925	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2008	10,714	€246,422	€428,560	€674,982	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2009	14,343	€329,889	€573,720	€903,609	1,188	€27,324	€47,520	€74,844	-	-	-	-
2010	8,362	€192,326	€334,480	€526,806	931	€21,413	€37,240	€58,653	-	-	-	-
2011	8,559	€196,857	€342,360	€539,217	294	€6,762	€11,760	€18,522	3,947	€90,781	€157,880	€248,661
2012	8,368	€192,464	€334,720	€527,184	261	€6,003	€10,440	€16,443	5,902	€135,746	€236,080	€371,826
2013	8,697	€200,031	€347,880	€547,911	248	€5,704	€9,920	€15,624	10,961	€252,103	€438,440	€690,543
2014 (July)	3,393	€78,039	€135,720	€213,759	71	€1,633	€2,840	€4,473	6,494	€149,362	€259,760	€409,122

SOLAS income figures are based on figures published by SOLAS. QQI income is estimated based on the €40 fee per card issue and the number of cards issued in the year, as estimated by SOLAS.

## 2. Background, options & assessment criteria

### 2.1 Programmes proposed for transfer

#### Projected demand (2015 – 2018)

Figures provided by SOLAS identify the number of projected QSCS and CSCS certifications to be undertaken to be as set-out in the table below. We have also included projected costs to include fees payable to QQI of €40 per card.

Year	Projected CSCS card issuance	Project QSCS card issuance	Project renewals (N1)	Combined projected income @ €23	Combined @ €40 QQI fee	Combined @ €63 (QQI & SOLAS)
2015	9,142	261	3,500	€296,769	€516,120	€812,889
2016	9,599	274	5,000	€342,079	€594,920	€936,999
2017	10,028	287	5,000	€352,245	€612,600	€964,845
2018	10,500	301	5,000	€363,423	€632,040	€995,463

#### Notes:

1. Estimates of renewals are combined for CSCS and QSCS and are based on figures provided by SOLAS.
2. Card issue fees have remained static at €23 since 2006.

## 2. Background, options & assessment criteria

### 2.1 Programmes proposed for transfer - continued

#### **Safe Pass programme**

Safe Pass is a one day, health and safety awareness programme, which aims to provide those that work in construction environments with a level of basic knowledge of health and safety. Construction workers are bound by law to have a valid Safe Pass Card, which is provided by SOLAS, on completion of a one-day course and associated assessment.

Safe Pass programmes are primarily provided by private trainers and tutors, the LGMA and certain employers. Trainers and tutors are required to hold accreditation by SOLAS to deliver the approved training programme. Safe Pass cards require renewal on a four-yearly basis. To be entitled to a card renewal the applicant is required to re-sit the Safe Pass programme. The Safe Pass programme has had some revisions to its content, and version 7 is currently being delivered, with version 8 under development.

The Construction Skills Register (CSR Northern Ireland), a one day health and safety course is the only course recognised as equivalent to the SOLAS Safe Pass programme. Workers seeking to avail of this exemption are required to hold a valid CSR Health and Safety card.

A fee of €23 per card, or card renewal, is payable to SOLAS by the applicant or their sponsor. Separate fees may be payable to private trainers or tutors, accredited by SOLAS, who provide training services on a commercial basis.

## 2. Background, options & assessment criteria

### 2.1 Programmes proposed for transfer - continued

#### Safe Pass card issue and income (2006 – 2014(July))

Figures provided by SOLAS identify the number of Safe Pass cards issued and the associated income as follows:

Year	Safe Pass Cards	Income at @ €23
2006	207,748	€4,778,204
2007	151,399	€3,482,177
2008	78,264	€1,800,072
2009	48,159	€1,107,657
2010	87,302	€2,007,946
2011	72,603	€1,669,869
2012	54,302	€1,248,946
2013	60,647	€1,394,881
2014	93,000	€2,139,000
2015	89,029	€2,047,667

#### Projected demand (2015 – 2018)

Figures provided by SOLAS identify projected Safe Pass activity and projected income as follows:

Year	Projected Safe Pass cards	Projected income @ €23
2016	77,175	€1,775,025
2017	81,004	€1,863,092
2018	85,000	€1,955,000

#### Note:

1. Card issue fees have remained static at €23 since 2006.



## 2. Background, options & assessment criteria

### 2.2 Facility at Mount Lucas

#### Background

In July 2005, an implementation group, established to examine the role of FÁS in the delivery of CSCS programmes, recommended the development of a national construction facility for the delivery of the full range of CSCS programmes. On this basis SOLAS engaged in a lease for a site at the townland of Mount Lucas, between Edenderry and Daingean, Co Offaly. The site has since been developed and, while further investment may be required, has seen significant capital investment in facilities, plant and machinery.

At the time of our review, the facility was under the operational opuses of Longford/ Westmeath ETB, who were the registered owner of the facility. Ownership of the facility is in the process of transferring to Laois/ Offaly ETB, who will take responsibility for the operation of the facility.

#### Facilities, services and location

The Mount Lucas facility holds a wide range of large-scale plant and machinery which is available to deliver training and assessments, including; tower crane, mobile crane, 360 excavator, site dumper, scaffolding and roofing platforms. The facility also provides a number other courses (non-CSCS / QSCS). For example, it currently offers a wind turbine maintenance programme. Mount Lucas has the capability and facilities to deliver further practical and classroom based training and assessments to candidates in a controlled environment. The facility has a large carpark, reception, canteen, office space and training rooms. Availability of services within the facility, and wider locality, are limited and the facility is located 72 km from Dublin, equidistant to the M6 and M7.

#### Current use

At the time of our visit, the facility was under-utilised, with a limited number of programmes being delivered. Programmes were primarily delivered to unemployed persons and those seeking to return to employment in the construction sector. Due to practical considerations, arising from the nature of certain programmes delivered, for example on heavy plant, lower tutor / applicant ratios are necessary, impacting the number of persons to whom training may be delivered at the facility at any one time.

## 2. Background, options & assessment criteria

### 2.2 Facility at Mount Lucas

Please refer to section 3.3 which sets-out further detail on training and assessment and how it may impact harmonisation with Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) UK.

#### **The need for a National Construction Skills Assessment Centre (Mount Lucas)**

A key component of any certified programme, such as CSCS or QSCS, is the validity of the assessment mechanism in place to independently determine the capability of the individual to adequately perform tasks on which they are to be accredited. It is current practice that training and assessments are primarily provided by ATOs, provided certain conditions are met. One of those conditions is that training and assessments are carried out by separate, independent persons, operating on behalf of ATOs. This is a condition required for mutual recognition by certain international bodies, such as, Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) in the UK.

Presently, SOLAS has identified a number of challenges in the delivery, and in its own capacity to monitor the delivery, of consistent, reliable assessments based on agreed standards and criteria, throughout the sector. These challenges may be exacerbated due to the large range of independent ATOs. These challenges include the consistency of environments in which assessments are performed, risks associated with lack of investment in assessment facilities and inadequate oversight by SOLAS, which may result in variable and inadequate assessment. Therefore the establishment of a National Construction Skills Assessment Centre, where standards of assessment could be centrally monitored and controlled, would help to significantly reduce risks associated with consistency of assessments, as part of the proposal to transfer the three programmes. It is proposed that Mount Lucas would be designated as a National Construction Skills Assessment Centre.

Another benefit of the facility at Mount Lucas, is that it has scope to deliver training and assessments on larger, and potentially dangerous, plant equipment in a controlled, purpose built environment.

## 2. Background, options & assessment criteria

### 2.2 Facility at Mount Lucas - continued

#### **Satellite facilities**

Mount Lucas is a suitable facility to deliver a wide range of assessments, and perhaps a significant majority of certain types of assessment, for example, on a tower crane. However, to ensure there is sufficient capacity to meet assessment demand it may be necessary to establish satellite assessment facilities across the country, under the auspices of Mount Lucas. This would provide an opportunity to streamline and monitor assessment events, in real-time, across all approved assessment locations.

The identification and selection of locations for satellite facilities may be by competitive process or strategic investment by the State.

## 2. Background, options & assessment criteria

### 2.3 Approved Training Organisations (ATOs)

#### Background

The delivery of CSCS and QSCS training and assessment is primarily provided by a network of ATOs and approved registered trainers across the country. ATOs are required to use the services of nationally approved registered trainers in the delivery of training. There are approximately 60 ATOs and 117 registered trainers nationally. ATOs provide a valuable service to the sector and must meet minimum criteria and quality assurance guidelines set-out by SOLAS.

ATOs operate on a commercial basis and are responsible for the delivery of the CSCS / QSCS programmes in their entirety. ATOs charge candidates or their sponsors / employers rates for the provisions of training and assessment. ATOs normally manage the registration of candidate CSCS/ QSCS cards.

#### ATO responsibilities

Once approved by SOLAS, ATOs will be listed on the CSCS / QSCS Trainer Registration System (TRS), and must meet SOLAS requirements around planning, organisation and administration of the delivery and assessment of training programmes. As ATOs also complete assessments leading to a certification which is validated by QQI, and is recognised in other jurisdictions, they are required to meet a range of assessment requirements set-out by SOLAS. These requirements include reliability of equipment, the assessment environment, compliance with health and safety requirements, documentation and records, compliance with SOLAS policies and procedures and quality assurance requirements.

SOLAS has a mechanism in place where they monitor compliance of ATOs with training and assessment criteria. Monitoring is undertaken on a sample basis and those found not to be in compliance may be liable to sanction by SOLAS.

## 2. Background, options & assessment criteria

### 2.3 Approved Training Organisations (ATOs) - continued

#### Future for ATOs

The proposed transfer of the programmes away from SOLAS may create some uncertainty for ATOs, including where certain assessments may be centralised in a national assessment centre at Mount Lucas.

However, there will continue to be opportunities where CSCS training will be required and where SOLAS proposes mandatory new entrant programmes for CSCS / QSCS new entrants , which will require further structured training programmes to be delivered.

## 2. Background, options & assessment criteria

### 2.4 Stakeholders

#### Stakeholders consulted

As part of our review a wide range of stakeholders have been consulted, which are outlined in the table below. Appendix 2 outlines the dates of key meetings. The purpose of the stakeholder consultation was to seek insight and obtain views of stakeholders into the options for the transfer of the three programmes.

Construction Industry Federation (CIF)	Construction Safety Partnership (CSP)	Services Industrial Professional Technical Union (SIPTU)
Laois / Offaly ETB	Local Government Management Agency (LGMA)	City of Dublin ETB
Safety Solutions Ltd (Approved Training Organisation)	Health and Safety Authority (HSA)	Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI)
Department of Jobs Enterprise and Innovation	Construction Industry Training (CIT) Ltd	SOLAS

## 2. Background, options & assessment criteria

### 2.4 Stakeholders - continued

The outcome from our consultation with stakeholders highlighted the following matters which should be considered by SOLAS as part of its wider consideration of all factors affecting the transfer of the CSCS/ QSCS and Safe Pass programmes:

#### 1. Customer service:

A number of stakeholders commented that customer service in relation to their interaction with the programmes was not satisfactory in some cases, examples included:

- Responsiveness of the CMU
- Overall communication and interaction with SOLAS
- Approach to monitoring quality assurance of stakeholders

However, it was also commented, by one stakeholder, that the skillset of the CMU should be protected and transferred to the new entity, as part of transfer arrangements.

#### 2. Mount Lucas

Stakeholders were in agreement that the facility at Mount Lucas should be developed and expanded to deliver on existing investment for the benefit of the sector. While the location and availability of services was not ideal, such factors could be overcome through development of satellite centres and investment in the existing facility.

## 2. Background, options & assessment criteria

### 2.4 Stakeholders - continued

#### 3. Responsiveness to skills and industry needs

Stakeholders commented that the existing arrangements for developing skills programmes, and being responsive to industry needs in terms of reviewing and revising the CSCS/ QSCS and Safe Pass programmes, was not adequate.

Linked to point 4, stakeholders were of the view that an increased partnership approach would lead to more focussed programmes and more effective delivery of those programmes.

#### 4. Stakeholder involvement in development of strategy and policy for the programmes

A number of stakeholders commented that the construction industry committee, which is advisory in nature, and sits within SOLAS, consisting of a range of stakeholders including social partners, does not have adequate strength to make a meaningful contribution to the development of the programmes.

Deloitte believes that the transfer of the programmes away from SOLAS to a new entity should harness the skills and experience of stakeholders to deliver strategic direction, policy and governance capabilities to the new entity.

In the absence of meaningful stakeholder input to the new arrangement for the delivery of the programmes, there is a risk that buy-in will be reduced and the ability for the new structures for delivering the programmes to succeed will be diminished.

Please refer to principle 4 in section 2.5.



## 2. Background, options & assessment criteria

### 2.5 Principles underpinning the transfer of programmes

A number of fundamental principles underpin the strategic direction, identification and assessment of transfer options. These principles are set-out in the table below and have been agreed with SOLAS as part of this engagement.

	Description		Description
1	The programmes must be transferred away from SOLAS.	2	The three programmes must be transferred together.
3	<p>The transfer of programmes will be to one entity who will take responsibility for all aspects of governance, policy, management and operations.</p> <p>There is no obstacle to that entity entering a procurement process to identify third parties who, on a commercial basis and under an agreed SLA, deliver training, assessment, certifications, monitoring and manage the Card Management Unit (CMU).</p>	4	<p>The following stakeholders need to be appropriately represented in the entity to which the transfer is made – this may also require new legislation or amendments to existing legislation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HSA</li> <li>• CIF</li> <li>• SIPTU</li> <li>• LGMA</li> <li>• Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation</li> </ul>
5	The entity to whom the transfer is made must have the willingness, competence and resources to oversee the delivery of programmes which are of strategic national importance.	6	The entity to whom the transfer is made must have a statutory remit to be an effective governor and policy developer, which may require new legislation or amendments to existing legislation.
7	The transfer will require a period of significant knowledge transfer and parallel operations which will require the co-operation of existing SOLAS staff.	8	There would need to be a clear willingness on the part of the entity to whom the transfer is made, to develop and improve the programmes, ensure high levels of customer service, ensure mutual recognition with the UK and European agencies and facilitate wide stakeholder input into the development of the programmes.
9	The proposed transfer will require transfer of all intellectual property (IP) associated with existing systems and process.	10	The transfer arrangement would need to ensure continued certification through QQI. Harmonisation with UK, NI and European equivalent training and certification standards should be prioritised.

## 2. Background, options & assessment criteria

### 2.6 Options for the transfer of programmes

#### Identification of options for the transfer of programmes

On commencement of the engagement, SOLAS identified two options for the transfer of the programmes. In addition SOLAS allowed Deloitte the scope to identify and consider further options for the transfer of the programmes. Two options provided by SOLAS specified arrangements to be assessed for appropriateness of transfer. Please refer to section 1.2 of this report.

Deloitte identified an additional four options which were found to be viable for assessment. The six options identified and assessed are set-out in the table below:

Option for transfer	Description
Laois / Offaly ETB	Transfer the responsibility for policy, operations, administration and management of the CSCS/QSCS and Safe Pass Programmes to the Laois/Offaly Education and Training Board located in the Mount Lucas training facility. The transfer will also incorporate the conversion of the Mount Lucas facility from a national training facility to a national assessment centre and the introduction of mandatory CSCS/QSCS new entrant programmes.
LOETB with Card Management Unit (CMU) remaining within a Dublin based ETB	Transfer the responsibility for policy, operations, administration and management of the CSCS/QSCS and Safe Pass Programmes to the Laois/Offaly Education and Training Board. However, the existing CSCS/QSCS and Safe Pass Card Management Unit would be located in a Dublin based Education and Training Board. The transfer will also incorporate the conversion of the Mount Lucas facility from a national training facility to a national assessment centre and the introduction of mandatory CSCS/QSCS new entrant programmes.
ETBI with operations transferring to LOETB under service level agreement (SLA)	Transfer the responsibility for the policy and governance of the CSCS/QSCS and Safe Pass programmes to the Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI).  Outsource certain operations and administration to LOETB, who will have ownership of the Mount Lucas facility, with the potential for outsourcing by competitive tender to parties other than LOETB. The transfer will also incorporate the conversion of the Mount Lucas facility to a national assessment centre and an amendment of the CSCS new entrant programme.
Construction Industry Register Ireland (CIRI)	Transfer the responsibility for the policy, governance, operations and management of the CSCS/QSCS and Safe Pass programmes to the (CIRI).  While CIRI would have full responsibility for policy and governance, the management and operations of training, assessment, certification, monitoring and card management would be sub-contracted by competitive process. This may include competitive selection of approved national assessment centre(s) which would facilitate standardisation of national assessments.

## 2. Background, options & assessment criteria

### 2.6 Options for the transfer of programmes - continued

#### Identification of options for the transfer of programmes - continued

Option for transfer	Description
<p>A New Specific Purpose Statutory Entity</p>	<p>Transfer the responsibility for the policy, governance, operations and management of the CSCS/QSCS and Safe Pass programmes to a new statutory body with a dedicated remit for the develop, and deliver, construction industry safety and skills.</p> <p>The board of the new body, which would include a balance of industry stakeholders, would have full responsibility for policy and governance of the programmes. The management and operations of training, assessment, certification, monitoring and card management may be sub-contracted by competitive process. This would include competitive selection of approved national assessment centre(s) to facilitate standardisation of national assessments.</p> <p>We note that this option would require new legislation which may delay the ability to deliver the transfer within a reasonable timescale.</p>
<p>Health and Safety Authority (HSA)</p>	<p>Transfer the responsibility for the policy, governance, operations and management of the CSCS/QSCS and Safe Pass programmes to the Health and Safety Authority which would require an amendment to their remit to include development and delivery of construction industry safety and skills.</p> <p>HSA would have full responsibility for policy and governance of the programmes. The management and operations of training, assessment, certification, monitoring and card management may be sub-contracted by competitive process. This would include competitive selection of approved national assessment centre(s) to facilitate standardisation of national assessments.</p>

## 2. Background, options & assessment criteria

### 2.7 Assessment criteria

#### Introduction

In the table below, we present the scoring approach for options identified for the transfer of the programmes. These are based on the criteria identified in section 3 of the SOLAS request for proposal, which Deloitte has reviewed and expanded to identify eight criteria on which Deloitte have assessed transfer options.

For the two highest scoring options, we have also completed a detailed assessment of the advantages and dis-advantages of each option to determine to determine the most favourable option for the transfer of the programmes. Please refer to section 1.6

#### Proposed scoring approach

Each transfer option is rated based on the eight criteria identified in the table below. The maximum score available is 40 (8 \* 5), with 5 being the maximum available for each criteria. Scores for each option have been determined by Deloitte based on the outcome from our assessment.

Ref:	Criteria	Description of the types of attributes which would attract a high score for each option
1.	<b>Organisational alignment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing governance and management structures in place to facilitate transfer or existing structure would require little or no re-organisation</li> <li>Has a remit to oversee the delivery, assessment and certification of national programmes</li> <li>Leadership has a willingness to take ownership and develop programmes</li> <li>Has demonstrated the competence to deliver these or similar types of programmes previously</li> </ul>
2.	<b>Related physical, IT and human resource requirements and costs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Would require little or no State investment or resources to facilitate transfer of programmes</li> <li>Physical space in place, can leverage from existing IT framework and / or has some human resources which can be leveraged to deliver and develop the programmes</li> <li>Has capacity, or has access to capacity, to meet potential growth in demand for programmes from candidates</li> </ul>

## 2. Background, options & assessment criteria

### 2.7 Assessment criteria - continued

Ref:	Criteria	Description of the types of attributes which would attract a high score
3.	Ability to deliver training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has demonstrated a track record of delivering training programmes of this nature</li> <li>• Has demonstrated an understanding of the quality assurance requirements for the delivery of certified training</li> <li>• Has capacity, or has access to capacity, to meet potential growth in demand for programmes from candidates</li> </ul>
4.	Capacity and qualifications to perform assessments and award certifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has demonstrated the capacity and qualifications to perform assessments and award certifications in line with the guidelines of awarding bodies, such as, QQI</li> <li>• Has capacity to oversee the performance of assessments nationally, in line with guidelines and standards of awarding bodies</li> <li>• Has capability to make awards in a timely fashion, in line with customer (candidate) expectations</li> <li>• Has capacity, or has access to capacity, to meet potential growth in demand for assessments and certifications from candidates</li> </ul>
5.	Financial viability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has opportunity to grow revenue and generate a surplus from the programmes for re-investment in facilities, plant and programme development</li> <li>• Would be independent of State-aid</li> <li>• Would not require significant increase in staffing numbers</li> </ul>
6.	Implementation framework (Stakeholder buy in; legislation changes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would not require any, or only minimal, changes to legislation</li> <li>• Would not require any, or only minimal, changes to strategic remit</li> <li>• Stakeholders would largely be in favour of the option</li> <li>• Stakeholders would be involved in the development of policy and developing a strategy for the future development of the programmes</li> </ul>
7.	Possible associated risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• While risks would be evident for all options, these are known and could be mitigated, with a low residual threat to the successful transfer of the programmes</li> </ul>
8.	Independence & objectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has a transparent organisation and governance structure</li> <li>• Has a remit to develop and deliver safety awareness training and certification</li> <li>• Is governed by a broad and balanced range of stakeholders</li> <li>• The entity would be viewed as an “honest broker”</li> </ul>

# 3.0 Assessment of options for transfer of programmes

## 3 Assessment of options for transfer of programmes

In addition to the two initial options for assessment as identified by SOLAS, Deloitte identified a further four options which were deemed to be feasible and are assessed as par of this assignment.

Detailed assessment of each option are outlined over subsequent pages based on criteria identified:

Option 1 – Laois / Offaly ETB

Option 2 - LOETB with Card Management Unit (CMU) remaining within a Dublin based ETB

Option 3 - ETBI with operations transferring to LOETB under service level agreement (SLA)

Option 4 - Construction Industry Register Ireland (CIRI)

Option 5 - A new, yet to be established, entity

Option 6 - Health and Safety Authority (HSA)

## Summarised assessment of each option

Criteria	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5	Option 6
Description	LOETB	LOETB – Dublin ETB (CMU)	ETBI / LOETB	CIRI	New Entity	HSA
Organisational alignment	2	2	3	3	5	2
Physical, IT, and HR requirements and costs	3	3	3	2	2	2
Ability to deliver training	4	4	4	2	2	2
Capacity and qualifications to perform assessments and award certifications	4	4	4	2	2	2
Financial viability	2	2	3	3	3	3
Implementation framework (stakeholder buy-in; legislative changes)	1	1	3	1	3	1
Possible associated risks	2	2	3	2	3	2
Independence and objectivity	2	2	4	1	5	1
<b>Total (max 40)</b>	<b><u>20</u></b>	<b><u>20</u></b>	<b><u>27</u></b>	<b><u>16</u></b>	<b><u>25</u></b>	<b><u>15</u></b>



## 3.1 Option 1 - Laois / Offaly ETB

### Description of this option

Transfer the responsibility for policy, operations, administration and management of the CSCS/QSCS and Safe Pass Programmes to the Laois/Offaly Education and Training Board and located in the Mount Lucas training facility. The transfer will also incorporate the conversion of the Mount Lucas facility from a national training facility to a national assessment centre and the introduction of mandatory CSCS/QSCS new entrant programmes.

### How this would work

- LOETB would become solely responsible for policy, operations, administration and management.
- New legislation would be required to transfer the programmes.
- Mount Lucas would be at the centre of the assessment and administration of the programmes, with satellite hubs in place to facilitate candidate access for certain assessments. Selection of satellite hubs would be by commercial arrangement and may include LGMA, ETB or facilities of private operators
- This option is assessed based on CMU staff not transferring, requiring human capital to service the CMU.
- The CMU would also transfer to LOETB, requiring IT, IP, capital and human resources to be transferred. Existing CMU staff would remain with SOLAS and be redeployed within SOLAS.
- While Training Standards Officers (TSOs) would report to LOETB. There is a need to centralise the results approval process.
- The transfer would require assistance from SOLAS programme management for at least one year; the CMU should be run in parallel across both organisations at the outset.
- Approach to continuing the existing arrangements with Approved Training Organisations (ATOs) to be considered.
- Existing certification arrangements with QQI to be maintained and developed. The transfer arrangement would need to ensure continued certification with QQI.
- Harmonisation with UK, NI and European equivalent training and certification standards to be prioritised as part of the transfer. Schedule 1 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Quarries) Regulations 2008 and Schedule 4 and Schedule 5 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2013.

### 3.1.1 Detailed assessment – option 1

Criteria	Score	Rationale
Organisational alignment	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has demonstrated a willingness at leadership level to accept the transfer of the programmes</li> <li>Has experience in delivering further education programmes</li> <li>Would require some re-organisation to oversee the delivery of national programmes</li> <li>Does not have any national remit or experience in delivering national programmes</li> </ul>
Physical, IT, and HR requirements and costs	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ownership of Mount Lucas facility is to transfer to the ownership of LOETB</li> <li>Would require some investment in facilities at Mount Lucas</li> <li>Would require additional staffing, IT infrastructure and IP transfer from SOLAS</li> </ul>
Ability to deliver training	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has experience in the delivery of training and assessment</li> <li>Has demonstrated understanding of educational quality assurance requirements</li> </ul>
Capacity and qualifications to perform assessments and award certifications	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experience in the performance of assessments and in awarding certifications</li> <li>Demonstrated understanding of educational quality assurance requirements related to assessment and certification</li> <li>Some capacity for growth and development which may require some funding or investment</li> </ul>
Financial viability	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Would be somewhat reliant on State funding for initial investment and future development, including in relation to staffing and IT infrastructure</li> <li>Investment in Mount Lucas would be required</li> </ul>
Implementation framework (stakeholder buy-in; legislative changes)	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Would require some legislative changes</li> <li>Stakeholder buy-in would be minimal due to localised remit of LOETB, who would be responsible for developing policy and implementing governance for national programmes</li> </ul>
Possible associated risks	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of stake-holder buy-in</li> <li>Risk that localised remit of LOETB may inhibit the development of national programmes</li> </ul>
Independence and objectivity	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>While LOETB does not have any clear input from, or dependence on, stakeholders, the localised remit may impact the view of the organisation as independent or objective in overseeing the delivery of national programmes.</li> </ul>
<b>Total (max 40)</b>	<b><u>20</u></b>	

## 3.2 Option 2 - LOETB with Card Management Unit (CMU) remaining within a Dublin based ETB

### Description of this option

Transfer the responsibility for policy, operations, administration and management of the CSCS/QSCS and Safe Pass Programmes to the Laois/Offaly Education and Training Board. However, the existing CSCS/QSCS and Safe Pass Card Management Unit would be located in a Dublin based Education and Training Board. The transfer will also incorporate the conversion of the Mount Lucas facility from a national training facility to a national assessment centre and the introduction of mandatory CSCS/QSCS new entrant programmes.

### How this would work

- LOETB would become solely responsible for developing and delivering the programmes.
- Mount Lucas would provide a Dublin based ETB to facilitate the housing of the CMU. However, based on Deloitte's discussions, there was no clear willingness for a Dublin based ETB to facilitate the housing of the CMU at this juncture. Nevertheless the proposal may be open for further discussion in the future.
- New legislation would be required to transfer the programmes.
- Mount Lucas would be at the centre of the assessment and administration of the programmes, with satellite hubs in place to facilitate candidate access for certain assessments. Identification of satellite hubs would be by commercial arrangement and may include LGMA, ETB or facilities of private operators
- While Training Standards Officers (TSOs) would report to LOETB. There is a need to centralise the results approval process.
- The transfer would require assistance from SOLAS programme management, however the CMU will report to LOETB. Assistance from SOLAS programme management would be for approximately one year; the CMU should be run in parallel across both organisations during this time.
- Approach to continuing the existing arrangements with Approved Training Organisations (ATOs) to be considered.
- Existing certification arrangements with QQI to be maintained and developed. The transfer arrangement would need to ensure continued certification with QQI.
- Harmonisation with UK, NI and European equivalent training and certification standards to be prioritised as part of the transfer. Schedule 1 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Quarries) Regulations 2008 and Schedule 4 and Schedule 5 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2013.

**Note 1: At the time of reporting a suitable Dublin based ETB, willing to facilitate housing the CMU, was not identified. This may require further consideration by SOLAS.**

### 3.2.1 Detailed assessment – option 2

Criteria	Score	Rationale
Organisational alignment	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has demonstrated a willingness at leadership level to accept the transfer of the programmes</li> <li>Has experience in delivering further education programmes</li> <li>Would require some re-organisation to oversee the delivery of national programmes</li> <li>Does not have any national remit or experience in delivering national programmes</li> </ul>
Physical, IT, and HR requirements and costs	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ownership of Mount Lucas facility is to transfer to the ownership of LOETB</li> <li>Would require some investment in facilities at Mount Lucas</li> <li>LOETB would require additional staffing, IT infrastructure and IP transfer from SOLAS. However, CMU moving to a Dublin based ETB would allow for staff numbers at SOLAS to be reduced</li> </ul>
Ability to deliver training	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has experience in the delivery of training and assessment</li> <li>Has demonstrated understanding of educational quality assurance requirements</li> </ul>
Capacity and qualifications to perform assessments and award certifications	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experience in the delivery in performing assessments and awarding certifications</li> <li>Demonstrated understanding of educational quality assurance requirements related to assessment and certification</li> <li>Some capacity for growth and development which may require some funding or investment</li> </ul>
Financial viability	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LOETB would be somewhat reliant on State funding for initial investment and future development, including in relation to staffing and IT infrastructure</li> <li>Investment in Mount Lucas would be required</li> <li>Cost reduction at SOLAS where staff may be transferred to a Dublin based ETB</li> </ul>
Implementation framework (stakeholder buy-in; legislative changes)	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Would require some legislative changes</li> <li>Stakeholder buy-in would be minimal due to localised remit of LOETB, who would be responsible for developing policy and implementing governance for national programmes</li> </ul>
Possible associated risks	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of stake-holder buy-in</li> <li>Risk that localised remit of LOETB may inhibit the development of national programmes</li> <li>Risk that synergies may be lost where the CMU is housed within a separate ETB, whilst reporting to LOETB</li> </ul>
Independence and objectivity	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>While LOETB does not have any clear input from, or dependence on, stakeholders, the localised remit may impact the view of the organisation as independent or objective in overseeing the delivery of programmes.</li> </ul>
<b>Total (max 40)</b>	<b><u>20</u></b>	

## 3.3 Option 3 - ETBI with operations transferring to LOETB under service level agreement (SLA)

### Description of this option

Transfer the responsibility for the policy and governance of the CSCS/QSCS and Safe Pass programmes to the Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI).

Outsource certain operations and administration to LOETB, who will have ownership of the Mount Lucas facility, with the potential for outsourcing by competitive tender to parties other than LOETB. The transfer will also incorporate the conversion of the Mount Lucas facility to a national assessment centre and an amendment of the CSCS new entrant programme.

### How this would work

- ETBI would be responsible for the policy, governance, management and operations of the programmes.
- Management and operations, including the CMU, would be outsourced by competitive tender. Laois / Offaly ETB who will have ownership of the Mount Lucas facility will have a key role in the delivery of certain outsourced services.
- New legislation would be required to transfer the programmes.
- Mount Lucas would be at the centre of the assessment and administration of the programmes, with satellite hubs in place to facilitate candidate access for certain assessments.
- Selection of satellite hubs would be by commercial arrangement and may include LGMA, ETB or facilities of private operators
- Existing CMU staff are expected to remain with SOLAS and would be re-deployed internally.
- While Training Standards Officers (TSOs) would report to Laois Offaly ETB at the Mount Lucas facility, there is a need to centralise the results approval process.
- The transfer would require assistance from SOLAS programme management for at least one year; the CMU should be run in parallel across both organisations at the outset.
- Approach to continuing the existing arrangements with Approved Training Organisations (ATOs) to be considered.
- Existing certification arrangements with QQI to be maintained and developed. The transfer arrangement would need to ensure continued certification with QQI.
- Harmonisation with UK, NI and European equivalent training and certification standards to be prioritised as part of the transfer. Schedule 1 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Quarries) Regulations 2008 and Schedule 4 and Schedule 5 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2013.

### 3.3.1 Detailed assessment – option 3

Criteria	Score	Rationale
Organisational alignment	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Both LOETB and ETBI have demonstrated a willingness at leadership level to accept the transfer of the programmes</li> <li>LOETB has experience in delivering further education programmes</li> <li>Option would require some re-organisation to oversee the delivery of national programmes</li> <li>ETBI has a national remit and experience in developing policy for ETBs</li> </ul>
Physical, IT, and HR requirements and costs	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ownership of Mount Lucas facility is to transfer to the ownership of LOETB</li> <li>Would require some investment in facilities at Mount Lucas</li> <li>Would require additional staffing, IT infrastructure and IP transfer from SOLAS</li> </ul>
Ability to deliver training	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LOETB has experience in the delivery of training and assessment</li> <li>LOETB has demonstrated understanding of educational quality assurance requirements</li> <li>ETBI has experience in developing policy on behalf of ETBs nationally</li> </ul>
Capacity and qualifications to perform assessments and award certifications	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LOETB has experience in the delivery in performing assessments and awarding certifications</li> <li>LOETB has demonstrated understanding of educational quality assurance requirements related to assessment and certification</li> <li>ETBI has experience in developing policy on behalf of ETBs nationally</li> <li>Some capacity for growth and development which may require some funding or investment</li> </ul>
Financial viability	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Would be somewhat reliant on State funding for initial investment and future development, including in relation to staffing and IT infrastructure</li> <li>Investment in Mount Lucas would be required</li> </ul>
Implementation framework (stakeholder buy-in; legislative changes)	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Would require some legislative changes</li> <li>Stakeholder buy-in would be moderate with ETBI having responsibility for developing policy and implementing governance for nationally, with management and operations remaining with LOETB</li> </ul>
Possible associated risks	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Additional layer of complexity where more than one organisation is involved in the transfer</li> <li>Remit of ETBI focuses on ETBs only, this would require an amendment.</li> </ul>
Independence and objectivity	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Neither organisation has any clear input from, or dependence on, stakeholders.</li> <li>ETBI has a national remit.</li> </ul>
<b>Total (max 40)</b>	<b><u>27</u></b>	

## 3.4 Option 4 - Construction Industry Register Ireland (CIRI)

### Description of this option

Transfer the responsibility for the policy, governance, operations and management of the CSCS/QSCS and Safe Pass programmes to the Construction Industry Register Ireland (CIRI).

While CIRI would have full responsibility for policy and governance, the management and operations of training, assessment, certification, monitoring and card management would be sub-contracted by competitive process. This may include competitive selection of approved national assessment centre(s) which would facilitate standardisation of national assessments.

### How this would work

- CIRI would be responsible for governance, policy, operations and management of governance of the programmes.
- Management and operations of training, assessment, certification, monitoring and card management would be sub-contracted by competitive process.
- Identification and selection of approved national assessment centre(s), as part of a competitive process, to facilitate standardisation of national assessments. These may be ETB, LGMA or facilities of private operators.
- New legislation would be required to transfer the programmes.
- Existing CMU staff would remain with SOLAS and would be re-deployed internally.
- Training Standards Officers (TSOs) would report to CIRI, however, there is a need to centralise the results approval process.
- The transfer would require assistance from SOLAS programme management for at least one year; the CMU should be run in parallel across both organisations at the outset.
- Approach to continuing the existing arrangements with Approved Training Organisations (ATOs) to be considered.
- Existing certification arrangements with QQI to be maintained and developed. The transfer arrangement would need to ensure continued certification with QQI.
- Harmonisation with UK, NI and European equivalent training and certification standards to be prioritised as part of the transfer. Schedule 1 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Quarries) Regulations 2008 and Schedule 4 and Schedule 5 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2013.

### 3.4.1 Detailed assessment – option 4

Criteria	Score	Rationale
Organisational alignment	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CIRI has a construction related national remit, having been developed by CIF in conjunction with the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government</li> <li>While the proposal is that CIRI would primarily be charged with policy development and governance, would need to implement processes to oversee the governance of outsourced training, assessment, certification, monitoring and card management</li> </ul>
Physical, IT, and HR requirements and costs	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not currently have access to Mount Lucas, this may be by commercial arrangement as part of a competitive process</li> <li>Required investment in facilities, IT and human capital would largely be incurred by the successful tenderer but would ultimately be borne by the programme participant and / or card holder</li> </ul>
Ability to deliver training	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proposed that delivery of training would be sub-contracted by competitive process to experienced provider(s)</li> <li>CIRI does not have experience in the development of policy for education programmes or their governance</li> </ul>
Capacity and qualifications to perform assessments and award certifications	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proposed that management and operations of assessment, certification, monitoring and card management would be sub-contracted by competitive process</li> <li>CIRI does not have experience in the development of policy for education programmes or their governance</li> </ul>
Financial viability	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commercial arrangement with tenderers should allow for competitive rates for the delivery of training, conduct of assessments and financing of access to facilities, for example , Mount Lucas.</li> <li>These costs would eventually be borne by the programme participant and / or card holder.</li> </ul>
Implementation framework (stakeholder buy-in; legislative changes)	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Due to the nature of the organisational structure for CIRI, which is driven by CIF, risk that certain stakeholders may resist a transfer to CIRI</li> <li>A change to the CIRI legislation would be required</li> </ul>
Possible associated risks	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Risk that stakeholder buy-in would be low due to reliance on construction industry aligned entity</li> <li>Additional complexity where more than one stakeholder would be involved in delivering the programmes</li> <li>Risk that control over quality may be lost where training, assessment, certification, monitoring and card management are outsourced</li> </ul>
Independence and objectivity	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Risk, or perceived risk, to independence and objectivity by stakeholders where CIRI is largely a construction industry driven entity (CIF).</li> </ul>
<b>Total (max 40)</b>	<b>16</b>	



## 3.5 Option 5 - A New Specific Purpose Statutory Entity

### Description of this option

Transfer the responsibility for the policy, governance, operations and management of the CSCS/QSCS and Safe Pass programmes to a new statutory body with a dedicated remit for the develop and deliver construction industry safety and skills.

The board of the new body, which would include a balance of industry stakeholders, would have full responsibility for policy and governance of the programmes. The management and operations of training, assessment, certification, monitoring and card management may be sub-contracted by competitive process. This would include competitive selection of approved national assessment centre(s) to facilitate standardisation of national assessments.

### How this would work

- The new statutory entity would be responsible for governance, policy, operations and management of governance of the programmes.
- Management and operations of training, assessment, certification, monitoring and card management would be sub-contracted by competitive process.
- Identification and selection of approved national assessment centre(s), as part of a competitive process, to facilitate standardisation of national assessments. These may be ETB, LGMA or facilities of private operators.
- New legislation would be required to transfer the programmes and to commence the new statutory entity.
- A balanced board, to include stakeholders from the sector.
- Existing CMU staff would remain with SOLAS and would be re-deployed internally.
- Training Standards Officers (TSOs) would report to CIRI, however, there is a need to centralise the results approval process.
- The transfer would require assistance from SOLAS programme management for at least one year; the CMU should be run in parallel across both organisations at the outset.
- Approach to continuing the existing arrangements with Approved Training Organisations (ATOs) to be considered.
- Existing certification arrangements with QQI to be maintained and developed. The transfer arrangement would need to ensure continued certification with QQI.
- Harmonisation with UK, NI and European equivalent training and certification standards to be prioritised as part of the transfer. Schedule 1 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Quarries) Regulations 2008 and Schedule 4 and Schedule 5 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2013.

### 3.5.1 Detailed assessment – option 5

Criteria	Score	Rationale
Organisational alignment	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A newly formed, purposefully designed entity would allow for a bespoke organisation structure, designed to effectively manage the delivery of programmes</li> <li>Balanced industry stakeholder input in policy and governance</li> </ul>
Physical, IT, and HR requirements and costs	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Required investment in facilities, IT and human capital would largely be incurred by the successful tenderer but would ultimately be borne by the programme participant and / or card holder</li> <li>Would require an amount of State funding for commencement</li> <li>Access to Mount Lucas, may be by commercial arrangement as part of a competitive process</li> </ul>
Ability to deliver training	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proposed that delivery of training would be sub-contracted by competitive process to experienced provider(s)</li> <li>New entity would not have experience in the development of policy for education programmes or their governance; would need to acquire the experience or transfer it from SOLAS</li> </ul>
Capacity and qualifications to perform assessments and award certifications	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proposed that management and operations of assessment, certification, monitoring and card management would be sub-contracted by competitive process</li> <li>New entity would not have experience in the development of policy for education programmes or their governance; would need to acquire the experience or transfer it from SOLAS</li> </ul>
Financial viability	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some initial State funding would be required to commence the new statutory entity</li> <li>Commercial arrangement with tenderers should allow for competitive rates for the delivery of training, conduct of assessments and financing of access to facilities, for example , Mount Lucas.</li> <li>These costs would eventually be borne by the programme participant and / or card holder.</li> </ul>
Implementation framework (stakeholder buy-in; legislative changes)	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>While we would accept that stakeholder would be agreeable, political appetite to commence a new statutory agency, which would incur additional costs, is not known</li> <li>It is anticipated that such an entity would require new legislation to be developed and passed</li> </ul>
Possibly associated risks	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Risk of reduced political appetite to implement a new statutory body which may limit achievability of this option</li> <li>Risk that control over quality may be lost where training, assessment, certification, monitoring and card management are outsourced</li> </ul>
Independence and objectivity	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposed organisation structure would be driven by a focus on independence and objectivity</li> <li>The board of the new body would include a balance of industry stakeholders to give a balanced view</li> </ul>
<b>Total (max 40)</b>	<b>25</b>	

## 3.6 Option 6 - Health and Safety Authority (HSA)

### Description of this option

Transfer the responsibility for the policy, governance, operations and management of the CSCS/QSCS and Safe Pass programmes to the Health and Safety Authority which would require an amendment to their remit to include development and delivery of construction industry safety and skills.

HSA would have full responsibility for policy and governance of the programmes. The management and operations of training, assessment, certification, monitoring and card management may be sub-contracted by competitive process. This may include competitive selection of approved national assessment centre(s) to facilitate standardisation of national assessments.

### How this would work

- HSA would be responsible for governance, policy, operations and management of governance of the programmes.
- Management and operations of training, assessment, certification, monitoring and card management would be sub-contracted by competitive process.
- Identification and selection of approved national assessment centre(s), as part of a competitive process, to facilitate standardisation of national assessments. These may be ETB, LGMA or facilities of private operators.
- New legislation would be required to transfer the programmes to the HAS.
- A board sub-committee of sector stakeholders would be commenced to advise the HSA board on construction safety and certification matters.
- Existing CMU staff would remain with SOLAS and would be re-deployed internally.
- Training Standards Officers (TSOs) would report to HSA through the programme management organisation, however, there is a need to centralise the results approval process.
- The transfer would require assistance from SOLAS programme management for at least one year; the CMU should be run in parallel across both organisations at the outset.
- Approach to continuing the existing arrangements with Approved Training Organisations (ATOs) to be considered.
- Existing certification arrangements with QQI to be maintained and developed. The transfer arrangement would need to ensure continued certification through QQI.
- Harmonisation with UK, NI and European equivalent training and certification standards to be prioritised as part of the transfer. Schedule 1 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Quarries) Regulations 2008 and Schedule 4 and Schedule 5 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2013.

Criteria	Score	Rationale
Organisational alignment	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Structure in place, however, has a role in the oversight of health &amp; safety in the construction industry</li> <li>Has already engaged in a process in which first-aid training is outsourced</li> </ul>
Physical, IT, and HR requirements and costs	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Required investment in facilities, IT and human capital would largely be incurred by the successful tenderer but would ultimately be borne by the programme participant and / or card holder</li> <li>Would require an amount of State funding for commencement</li> <li>Access to Mount Lucas, may be by commercial arrangement as part of a competitive process</li> </ul>
Ability to deliver training	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proposed that delivery of training would be sub-contracted by competitive process to experienced provider(s)</li> <li>HSA does not have experience in the development of policy for education programmes or their governance</li> </ul>
Capacity and qualifications to perform assessments and award certifications	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proposed that management and operations would be sub-contracted by competitive process</li> <li>HSA has limited experience in the development of policy for education programmes, including certified education programmes, or their governance</li> </ul>
Financial viability	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some initial State funding would be required to commence the new statutory entity</li> <li>Commercial arrangement with tenderers should allow for competitive rates for the delivery of training, conduct of assessments and financing of access to facilities, for example , Mount Lucas.</li> <li>These costs would eventually be borne by the programme participant and / or card holder.</li> </ul>
Implementation framework (stakeholder buy-in; legislative changes)	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is anticipated that such a move would require new legislation</li> <li>We anticipate a moderate level of stakeholder buy-in</li> </ul>
Possible associated risks	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Risk to independence where the HSA is involved in the oversight of health and safety in the construction industry</li> <li>Risk that control over quality may be lost where training, assessment, certification, monitoring and card management are outsourced</li> </ul>
Independence and objectivity	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Due to the role of the HAS, in investigating construction industry compliance with health and safety requirements, there is a risk, or perceived risk, to independence and objectivity which would be difficult to mitigate</li> </ul>
<b>Total (max 40)</b>	<b><u>15</u></b>	

# 4.0 Miscellaneous matters

## 4 Consideration of miscellaneous matters

The SOLAS request for proposal identified a number of on-going national programme management issues which needed to be considered during our consultation with stakeholders and analytical processes, these include:

- CSCS / QSCS Assessment
- National Training Standards Unit
- UK Recognition and Harmonisation
- Northern Ireland Recognition and Harmonisation
- Approved Assessment Centres
- Customer Support

We have considered the current status of these issues and potential impact of the change of strategic direction in the transfer of the CSCS, QSCS and Safe Pass programmes arising from the conclusion in section 1.4 of this report.

### 4.1 CSCS / QSCS Assessment

#### Current status

CSCS / QSCS programmes provide for training, assessment, certification and registration of persons in specific employment categories in the construction and quarrying sectors. A consistent and transparent approach to assessing suitability of candidates for certification under these schemes is of significant importance to the credibility of programmes, nationally and internationally where the certification is recognised.

Currently assessments are primarily completed by the Local Government Management Agency (LGMA) and Approved Training Organisations (ATOs) with some assessments completed at the Mount Lucas facility.

The LGMA provides training and assessment of local authority employees for relevant programmes, on behalf of local authorities. ATOs provide training and assessment for CSCS / QSCS programmes, on a commercial basis, to individuals and employers. All organisations, including ATOs and the LGMA, must meet minimum criteria set-out by SOLAS in the CSCS / QSCS Operations Procedure Manual and other supporting documentation in order to be allowed provide training and conduct assessments leading to certification.

All CSCS and QSCS certifications are recognised as a level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) of Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI)

#### Considerations for CSCS / QSCS assessment following transfer of the programmes

The transfer of the CSCS / QSCS programmes will need to safeguard and develop the integrity and quality of the assessment process. Continued recognition of the CSCS / QSCS programmes in the UK and Northern Ireland, and potentially across EU countries, will require a robust assessment process built on firm foundations. The following factors should be considered as part of the transfer:

- An assessment process that is comparable, and meet minimum quality standards, of those in the UK, NI and EU, allowing for continued mutual recognition of certifications.
- Assessment that lead to a certification recognised by QQI.
- Continued oversight and governance by the identified transitional partner, with KPIs and metrics agreed and implemented.
- Focus on undertaking assessments under standard conditions which are comparable and not subject to differing environmental conditions. For example, increased use of the Mount Lucas facility for certain types of assessment.

### 4.2 National Training Standards Unit

#### Current status

Our review has highlighted the importance of consistency in standards across each element of the programmes considered. Consistency in standards are of significance in delivering a fair and transparent programme to candidates and in setting standards on which comparative programmes in the UK, Northern Ireland and across the EU may be assessed for mutual recognition of qualifications.

The delivery of training across the three programmes, using a national network of ATOs and private providers, inhibits the ability to ensure standardisation of training. We understand that steps have previously been taken to develop a unit responsible for developing and overseeing a consistent approach to training nationally, but these have not been successful.

#### Considerations for National Training Standards Unit following transfer of the programmes

- Aligned to the development of the National Assessment Centre at Mount Lucas and transfer of programmes away from SOLAS, the opportunity to develop a National Training Standards Unit arises
- The objective of such a unit would be to promote and oversee a consistent approach to the delivery of training nationally and set minimum standards and subject those standards to quality checks



### 4.3 European, UK and Northern Ireland Recognition and Harmonisation

#### Current status

Approaches to mutual recognition have been commenced by SOLAS, including as set-out in legislation and agreements. Existing arrangements are set-out below.

#### European

To comply with S.1.No.139 of 2008 – Recognition of Professional Qualifications (Directive 2005/36/EC) Regulations, 2008 - SOLAS has a process in place for the recognition of qualifications of citizens of EU Member States wishing to operate in the Republic of Ireland. The recognition process only applies to the regulated occupations contained in:

- Schedule 5 of S.I.No.504 of 2013 – Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2013 and
- Schedule 1 of S.I.No.28 of 2008 – Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Quarries) Regulations 2008.

#### UK

Recognition of plant certifications (CSCS) in the UK are set-out in a 2013 agreement on mutual recognition of certificates of competency in the plant sector, agreed with the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) UK. Deloitte understand that this agreement was challenged by the CITB due to concerns over the CSCS assessment process and which has since been resolved.

The recognition allows holders of CSCS cards to apply for a Construction Plant Competence Scheme (CPCS) Competent Operator (blue) Card, and vice versa. In order to meet national legislation and initiatives, transfers to each scheme need to be supported by additional requirements. In principle, this means CPCS blue cardholders need to hold the relevant National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) or Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ) and undertake the Safe Pass programme, whilst CSCS cardholders need to undertake the CITB Health, safety and environment test, plus a skills and experience interview and CPCS theory test for each category of plant.

#### Northern Ireland

The Safety Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2013 provides for the recognition of equivalent safety awareness schemes approved by SOLAS. The Construction Skills Register (CSR Northern Ireland) is the only course recognised as equivalent to the SOLAS Safe Pass course. To avail of recognition a person must be in possession of a current CSR Health and Safety card.

We are not aware of any further arrangements for mutual recognition of CSCS, QSCS or Safe Pass certifications.

## 4 Consideration of miscellaneous matters

### 4.3 European, UK and Northern Ireland Recognition and Harmonisation

#### Considerations for European, UK and Northern Ireland recognition and harmonisation following transfer of the programmes

Proposed future arrangements for the development of policies for CSCS, QSCS and Safe Pass programmes should be cognisant of the cross-border and inter-European nature of the construction sector. Which includes transfer of workers amongst EU states and more of a willingness of construction contractors to make proposals for project in the UK, NI and the EU. Therefore, stakeholders have an expectation that certifications be recognised in those jurisdictions.

In reaching agreements with other states for mutual recognition of certifications, policy makers should be cognisant of ongoing:

- Comparability of certifications
- Quality of assessment processes
- Competitiveness of certifications
- Mutual benefits of the arrangements

### 4.4 Approved Assessment Centres

#### Current status

Across the three programmes there are differing criteria and expectations for assessment centres. For Safe Pass, minimum criteria are in place for holding courses, however, as this is an awareness rather than a competency based certification programme, designated assessment centres are not a requirement.

For QSCS, assessments are generally carried out on-site in a functioning quarry. Due to the lower number of candidates taking the assessment it is not currently feasible to have a structured, environmentally controlled, assessment centre and a functioning quarry is the closest to a suitable location for assessment. However in the future there is nothing precluding the allocation of a quarry as an approved designated assessment location.

For CSCS, the importance of assessment centres is of more significance where stakeholders require standards of assessment to be fair and consistent, completed in line with SOLAS minimum standards on quality. This is also impacted by the move towards more harmonisation with certifications in other States and the need for assessment criteria and conditions to meet international standards and benchmarks.

Currently, for a number of CSCS certifications, certain assessments may be completed on-site where it is difficult to ensure the consistency of environmental conditions. As set-out in section 2.3 there is a growing need for a National Construction Skills Assessment Centre, with potential for satellite assessment centres to be located in selected areas nationally. This approach would lead to more control for SOLAS over assessment methodology, consistency and would allow for a more effective approach to monitoring assessment approaches.

#### Considerations for approved assessment centres following transfer of the programmes

- The National Construction Skills Assessment Centre, located at the Mount Lucas facility, should be progressed
- The development of this centre should be supported by satellite centres in select locations nationally
- The development of satellite centres should facilitate consistent approaches to assessment of training standards as developed by the National Training Standards Unit, as set-out in section 3.2

## 4 Consideration of miscellaneous matters

### 4.5 Customer Support

#### Current status

Customer support as it relates to CSCS, QSCS and Safe Pass programmes primarily relate to the following areas:

- Training and assessment (including for ATOs)
- Generation and issue of cards

#### Training and assessment

Customer support for training and assessment is primarily the responsibility of those delivering programmes, ATOs and registered trainers. SOLAS retains a role in the oversight of training and assessment where it is the body responsible for authorising and registering ATOs and registered trainers and in developing standards of quality in which training and assessment is delivered.

#### Generation and issue of cards

SOLAS is responsible for the development and issue of the cards which support each of the programmes, CSCS/ QSCS and Safe Pass. While a significant amount of knowledge is retained within the CMU surrounding card issue, a number of stakeholders have raised concerns regarding the ability to deliver cards on a timely basis.

As referred to in section 2.4, a number of stakeholders raised concerns regarding their interaction with the programmes, including in relation to:

- Responsiveness of the CMU
- Overall communication and interaction with SOLAS

However, it was also commented, by one stakeholder, that the skillset of the CMU should be protected and transferred to the new entity, as part of transfer arrangements.

#### Considerations for programme customer support following the transfer of the programmes

- The transfer of the programmes provides an opportunity to revise the delivery model for the issuance of programme cards and customer service to candidates, ATOs and other stakeholders.
- The transfer of the programmes away from SOLAS and future development of policy and strategy for the delivery of programmes should include customer service objectives, supported by KPIs which would allow for the monitoring of customer responsiveness.

# Appendices

## Appendix 1 Statement of Responsibility

WE HEREBY TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THIS REPORT WHICH IS PREPARED ON THE BASIS OF THE LIMITATIONS SET OUT BELOW.



Deloitte

Date: 16 March 2016

Contact persons	
Eileen Healy, Partner	086 1643082
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The matters raised in this report are only those which came to our attention during our review and are not necessarily a comprehensive statement of all matters arising, or of all improvements that might be made. Findings and conclusions are based on interview, consultation and review of relevant document. Matters have not been validated by Deloitte and this report does not constitute an audit. Recommendations and conclusions should be assessed by SOLAS for their full implications before they are implemented. This report has been prepared solely for SOLAS and should not be quoted or referred to in whole or part without prior written consent. No responsibility to any third party is accepted as the report has not been prepared and is not intended, for any other purpose.

## Appendix 2 – Schedule of Meetings

Deloitte are grateful for the manner in which stakeholders facilitated this review, for the time made available and for the high level of assistance and cooperation afforded at all times during the assignment.

Organisation	Date(s)
SOLAS	April – November 2015
Laois Offaly ETB (LOETB)	5 May 2015
Construction Industry Federation (CIF)	15 May 2015
SIPTU	18 May 2015
Health & Safety Authority (HSA)	18 May 2015
Local Government Management Agency (LGMA)	26 May 2015
Construction Safety Partnership (CSP)	3 June 2015
City of Dublin ETB (CDET)	15 July 2015
Construction Industry Training	15 July 2015
Safety Solutions (ATO)	24 July 2015
Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation	24 July 2015
Educational Training Boards Ireland (ETBI)	27 August 2015

1. The date provided represents the initial meeting dates; additional meetings were held and additional dialogue was also entered into with a number of participants including via email and telephone.

Below we provide an outline of the categories of skill requiring CSCS or QSCS cards

Plant operators	Scaffolding	Roofer operators	Other	Quarrying
180 Excavator	Basic Scaffolding	Roof and wall cladding / sheeting	Mobile Tower Scaffold Operations	Quarrying Explosives Supervisor
360 Excavator (inc mini-excavator)	Advanced Scaffolding	Built-up Roof Felting	Location of Ground Services	Quarrying 180 Excavator operations
Mini Excavator	-	-	Signing, lighting and guarding at roads	Quarrying 360 Excavator operations
Articulated Dumper	-	-	Health & Safety at road works	Quarrying front end loader operations
Crawler Crane	-	-	-	Quarrying mini-digger operations
Site Dumper	-	-	-	Quarrying Mobile Crane operations
Mobile Crane	-	-	-	Quarrying rigid dump truck operations
Slinger / signaller	-	-	-	Quarrying shot firing
Telescopic handler	-	-	-	Quarrying site dumper operations
Tower Crane (also covers self-erect tower crane)	-	-	-	Quarrying slinger / signaller
Tractor / Dozer	-	-	-	Quarrying telescopic handler
Self-Erect Tower Crane	-	-	-	Quarrying tractor dozer operations
Shotfiring	-	-	-	Quarrying articulated dumper



## Appendix 4 – High level implementation plan

Implementation timeline to be agreed between SOLAS, recipient entity, stakeholders and Government departments

Stage 1

Stage 2

Stage 3

Stage 4

Stage 5

Parallel operation of CSCS, QSCS and Safe Pass systems (i.e. CMU) in partnership with SOLAS subject matter experts

Key activities

1. Board approval for transfer

2. Consultation with stakeholders

3. Transfer party agreement

4. Develop detailed transfer plan

5. Implement detailed transfer plan

Timelines contingent on legislation implementation, stakeholder acceptance and agreement of contractual terms

Detailed activities

**1. Board approval for transfer**

- Circulation of report within SOLAS
- Presentation to SOLAS board for approval of transfer option
- Appointment of Project Manager and Transfer Oversight Committee

**2. Consultation with stakeholders and transfer party**

- Commence formal communications with proposed transfer recipient
- Determine and propose legislative changes, as required, to facilitate transfer (timeline to be determined)
- Consult social partners, DJEI, HAS, QQI and other stakeholders as required

**3. Transfer party agreement**

- Drafting and agreement of detailed contractual terms with the selected transfer party.
- Key terms will include; financial and other support, roles and responsibilities, reporting and governance arrangements, legal factors, as required, and other relevant matters

**4. Develop detailed transfer plan**

- Plan developed by SOLAS Transfer Oversight Committee in agreement with transfer party
- Plan to include agreed approach for transfer of systems, staff, resources, development and operational funding, CMU and responsibility for policy, governance and other relevant matters.
- Key milestones and persons responsible to be identified

**4. Implement detailed transfer plan**

- Governed by Transfer Oversight Committee
- Managed by the Project Manager
- Partnered by SOLAS SMEs
- Key systems (i.e. CMU) run in parallel until transfer systems reliability has been determined

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