



# By your side

How we're working on Members'  
behalf to improve the industry

---

# Contents

03  
Introduction

04  
Campaigning  
for regulation

06  
Pressing for  
payment  
change

08  
Leading the  
way in political  
lobbying

10  
Building better  
relationships

12  
Serving on  
respected  
bodies

14  
Raising  
industry  
standards

16  
Striving  
for skills  
development

18  
Improving  
working  
conditions



# Working hard behind the scenes

As Scotland's largest construction trade association, we pride ourselves on delivering the best possible service to our Members.

We do this in many ways, including our outstanding range of services, unrivalled choice of benefits and ever-popular face-to-face events.

We're also committed to representing our Members at the highest level and helping to make their lives easier and fairer by improving the electrical industry in Scotland.

To do this, our experts promote our Members' interests in a variety of ways, from advising on essential technical and employment matters to conducting political lobbying.

This dedication often happens unnoticed behind the scenes – so this guide explains exactly how we're always working on our Members' behalf.

SELECT gives Members a strong collective voice in Scotland's business environment, speaking up for what's important and shining a spotlight on what matters to them most.

Whether it's protection of payments or protection of title, we're working hard to make it happen, putting our Members' needs first and creating a brighter future for us all.

---

# Campaigning for regulation

At present, anyone can claim to be an electrician and carry out electrical work in Scotland, putting people at risk through poor electrical installation and maintenance work.

Such partially or unqualified ‘electricians’ undermine legitimate electricians who invest in apprentice and staff training and innovation.

That’s why SELECT has been pressing the Scottish Government to introduce protection of title for the profession of electrician. Such a move would mean that only those who hold industry-recognised qualifications would be able to call themselves an electrician.

We’ve taken this campaign for regulation of electricians to Holyrood itself, hosting exhibitions and meeting politicians face-to-face to get our message across.

We’ve also raised its profile through national press and radio interviews and introduced an innovative online Wall of Support, where the results of our work can be seen in an impressive list of cross-party backing from MSPs and MPs and other important industry groups.

Working with the full support of the Scottish Joint Industry Board (SJIB), Unite the Union and the Scottish Electrical Charitable Training Trust (SECTT), we will continue to work hard for regulation of electricians.

As well as speaking to MSPs at Holyrood, we also speak regularly to representatives of local authorities across Scotland to stress the importance of regulation.

By applying this continued pressure, we are confident of a positive outcome for the industry, the Scottish public and, most importantly, our Members.

Visit the  
SELECT Wall of  
Support here:





# £9.6m

estimated property damage  
from fires caused by faulty  
electrical installation\*

---

# Pressing for payment change

We know that Members continue to suffer from poor payment practices, with late and withheld funds impacting on vital cash flow.

We also know that such practices put our Members' livelihoods in jeopardy and can lead to stress and mental health issues.

That's why, working alongside industry partners, SELECT has spent years pressing the Scottish Government to improve how, and when, payments are made.

One such measure is asking government to ensure that they support the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act, which requires public bodies to make payment down the contractual chain within 30 days.

Another measure that we believe could help our Members is **project bank accounts** (PBAs), in which monies are protected in a separate 'pot'.

The threshold at which PBAs are used for building works was reduced from £4.1 million to £2 million early in 2019, but we still believe more can be done to protect Members' hard-earned money. Therefore, we will continue to lobby to ensure all firms are paid simultaneously out of this 'pot'.

The ongoing blight of **contract retentions** is another area in which we are heavily involved. Once again, we have joined forces with others to fight for a solution, maximising political support for a change in legislation and pressing hard for the introduction of some form of deposit.

Progress has been made but we're still not satisfied – which is why we'll keep working on Members' behalf behind the scenes, fighting for a fairer payment landscape for all.

# 85%

of Scottish electrical  
business leaders have  
suffered stress due to late  
or unfair payments\*



\*Payment and Mental Health in  
Construction Survey, ECA, BESA and  
Prompt Payment Directory, 2019

---

# Leading the way in political lobbying

Campaigning for improved payments and regulation of electricians is only the tip of the iceberg when it comes to our important political connections.

Our interactions with government are many and varied, but our main focus is on building and nurturing contacts at the Scottish Parliament, making ourselves recognised as the industry authority in Scotland.

In addition to individual briefings for politicians – including ministers – we’re also active members of the Scottish Parliament’s Cross-Party Groups on Construction, Skills, Safety and Consumer Affairs.

Throughout this hard work, emphasis has always been placed on non-reserved matters, i.e. the issues decided by the Scottish Government rather than Westminster, which most closely affect SELECT and its Members.

As well as speaking to MSPs, we also work behind the scenes away from Holyrood, briefing MPs with frontbench spokesperson roles, members of relevant committees and others with an active industry or constituency interest.

Wherever we are, and whoever we’re speaking to, communications with parliaments and government are always targeted, concise and considered.

Like everything we do, our objective is to always be available to provide expert advice – but never inappropriately pushy or demanding.



---

# Building better relationships

Away from the political arena, we're equally busy representing Members' views by networking and building relationships in a wide variety of arenas.

As well as playing a key role on many high-profile industry bodies (see Page 12), we also organise our own regular professional events, building relationships with specifiers through our **Local Authority and Client Forum** and regularly interacting with architects, surveyors, landlords and housing associations. As part of this, we launched a Professionals' Day in 2022 to share our electrical insight with industry decision-makers.

We also continue to spearhead the **Construction Industry Collective Voice (CICV)**, a unique high-profile alliance of more than 25 leading construction trade and professional bodies who gather intelligence, share advice and speak directly with the Scottish Government on issues affecting the industry.

Senior staff also fly the flag for SELECT at major events and conferences across Europe, meeting innovators and business leaders, learning about the latest important developments and fostering strong working relationships with construction professionals from every country.

In everything we do, we aim to represent the views of Scotland's electrotechnical sector, building strong relationship networks and promoting understanding of our industry.

By doing so, we help shape the market and create industry conditions that enable Members to operate more efficiently and profitably.





# Serving on respected bodies

As you would expect from the UK's first electrical trade association, our unrivalled experience and expertise are always in great demand.

With more than a century of technical, employment and business knowledge under our collective belts, our experts serve on a variety of important industry bodies.

On the technical side, we help with the development of the industry Codes of Practice BS 7671 (IET Wiring Regulations) through participation in the joint BSI IET committee JP/EL/64 and its sub-committees. This enables us to advise Members and keep them up to date on future amendments.

Among the many other groups we're involved with, we enjoy a close relationship with **Construction Scotland**, providing in-depth knowledge on topics such as procurement, skills, quality and standards. We also work with **Built Environment – Smarter Transformation (BE-ST)**, the industry innovation centre.

In addition, we are regular and valued contributors to the world of **EuropeOn**, ensuring a Scottish voice is heard in the European electrical industry and that we're represented among its 1.8 million professionals and 300,000+ businesses.

SELECT also helps with the development of a wide range of other industry-related guidance, including that produced by the **Health & Safety Executive**, which helps keep our Members and the wider industry free from harm.

Working closely with the **Scottish Joint Industry Board (SJIB)** and the **Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA)**, our invaluable input helps to create and develop internationally recognised qualifications and services.

And our close ties with **Skills Development Scotland** mean we play a vital role in helping people achieve career success and supporting businesses with their goals and growth.



BE-ST

EuropeOn  
ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION





---

# Raising industry standards

At SELECT, excellence is at the heart of everything we do, which is why we're committed to raising standards elsewhere across the industry too.

To do this, we work behind the scenes in a number of different ways, liaising and advising with a large number of industry bodies.

Among them is the **Building Standards Division** (BSD), part of the Scottish Government's Directorate of the Built Environment, our main point of contact for all building standards matters.

We are in regular and close contact with the BSD on all issues relating to our position as a Scheme Provider for Certification of Construction and the manner in which it is discharged by Scotland's 32 local authorities.

We also work together with other industry bodies including the **Institution of Engineering and Technology** (IET) and **Electrical Safety First** (ESF) to provide an important input into the IET series of Guidance Note documents and the ESF range of Best Practice Guides, which help to influence the shape of industry opinion.

SELECT also has a long-established relationship with the **British Standards Institution** (BSI) and regularly participates in the development and maintenance of a number of important industry standards, including those that provide the recommendations for fire detection and fire alarms and emergency lighting in premises. This helps to ensure standards are kept up to date and relevant for the electrotechnical industry.





---

# Striving for skills development

The future is electric – so it's crucial that we equip Scotland's electrical businesses with the correct skills to work safely and successfully on the road ahead.

At SELECT, we are committed to skills development, to help Members and the wider industry develop and adapt to an ever-changing electrical landscape.

As an SQA-approved training centre, all our courses are regularly updated to take account of recent developments and any changes in regulations. The majority of our courses are also credited and levelled against the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF).

To help SELECT Members broaden and enhance their skill base, we also respond to market trends to offer training that reflects the skills required in the future.

These include new courses in a number of energy efficiency areas, including the installation of electrical vehicle charging points.

As well as our experienced in-house training team, we are continually building strong partnerships with other training providers and market-leaders, creating a huge platform of potential skills.

To help Members further, we offer a special reduced rate on training costs and also deliver effective learning methods, including internet-based programmes.

We are also a key partner in BSE Skills Ltd, which helps to ensure that vocational qualifications are modern and fit for purpose across the building services engineering sector.





---

# Improving working conditions

A crucial part of SELECT's work is carried out by the Scottish Joint Industry Board (SJIB), which helps create more harmonious working conditions for us all.

Founded in 1969 by SELECT and Unite the Union, the SJIB's principal objectives are to:

- regulate relations between employers and employees
- provide benefits for people working in the industry
- stimulate and further the progress of the industry
- regulate and control employment, and
- control the level of skill and proficiency across Scotland.

To do this, the SJIB carries out maintenance of the National Working Rules and oversees the grading and registration of employees. It also plays a major role in the resolution of disputes.

Crucially, it also oversees the registration and licensing of apprentices, keeping a keen eye on training to ensure the next generation of electricians earn the correct qualifications.

In addition, it also monitors and maintains other vital industry issues that affect us all every day, including health, safety and environmental competence, wage levels and the provision of welfare benefits.

SELECT and the SJIB also work with a wide range of other industry bodies outside Scotland, including the JIB and ECA, to ensure standards, parity and equality are maintained.







Founded in 1900, SELECT is Scotland's largest construction trade association.

We represent more than 1,250 Member businesses, who between them have an annual turnover of around £1billion and employ over 15,000 people and 3,500 apprentices.

SELECT also delivers training courses to more than 3,500 electricians each year and is committed to regulation of the industry for a safer Scotland.

The Walled Garden  
Bush Estate  
Midlothian EH26 0SB  
Tel: 0131 445 5577

**[www.select.org.uk](http://www.select.org.uk)**

February 2023