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# In Brief

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## Welcome to i-FM in Brief

The theme of this edition of i-FM In Brief, and of the complementary FM Briefing now available on our website, is health & safety.

This is a function that many organisations seem to simply approach as a part of 'business as usual'. And there is no doubt that sound H&S practice makes good business sense, as well as being responsible social behaviour.

But it is also a topic that has generated a good deal of criticism in recent years, much of it focused on accusations of 'meddling', 'red-tape' and 'bureaucratic burden'. As a result, various reviews have been and are underway, as the Coalition Government looks for the 'right' balance between responsible business practice and regulation.

Consequently, though policies, systems and procedures - and legislation - are well defined, this is a time of uncertainty and potential change. A very good time to be well informed.

i-FM In Brief is designed to keep you up-to-date on some of the many things that have been happening on our website over the past few months, to ensure you have the information you need to succeed in your role as a facilities manager.

Established over a decade ago to serve as the 'FM industry's intranet', we're quite different to the traditional trade press. Our orientation is the market, primarily from a strategic point of view. We're not interested in products - there are plenty of places where you can find out about those. But if you are involved in FM as a key business-oriented discipline, we're here to help you understand the industry and thrive in it and with it - whether you are a service provider, buyer or advisor.

David Emanuel  
MD i-FM.net

## News round-up: H1 2011

As we approach the close of the second quarter of 2011, UK FM seems an uncertain place. Service buyers continue to push hard on the 'more for less' agenda, and in the public sector what that means for outsourcing, specifically, is still far from clear. Service providers are having to work hard for new business across the board and, despite brave faces all round, some are coping with tough conditions better than others. And all this comes against a backdrop of possible change in health & safety, security and energy legislation.

2011 opened with the Security Industry Authority planning a conference to consider a future without the SIA. Last year, the government decided it would soon be time to move on to a 'new regulatory regime'. The Authority and the industry are working together on a transition that won't undo the good that has been done.

From elsewhere in the security industry came the news that Swedish group Securitas had made its second major UK acquisition in just a few months, this time buying Chubb Security Personnel. This followed the earlier buy of a large part of the Reliance business. Securitas is now the Number 2 player in the UK market, behind G4S.

On the H&S front, a survey of 500 companies published in the first quarter of the year by law firm Norton Rose found nearly 60% describing the current weight of legislation as 'about right'. Only a third described it as 'onerous'. More than three-quarters reported that current legislation has no negative impact on their business beyond taking up management time.

In February, the ISS group said it was 'contemplating' a £1.5bn sale of new shares on the Copenhagen stock exchange in support of its growth strategy. The business had undergone 'a remarkable transformation' since going private in 2005, said CEO Jeff Gravenhorst, and it was time to move forward again. But timing is a difficult thing to get right, and the company's planned IPO was soon postponed.

Later an interesting angle emerged on public sector plans for change and development. Shared services is one strategy that central government has been advocating, especially for local government in its efforts to cut costs and increase efficiency. But research from the NLGN think-tank concluded that limited focus initiatives in the back office will not deliver the kind of savings needed. Much bolder thinking will be required, with the emphasis more on strategy than tactics.

Strangely, that report seems to have been overlooked by Whitehall policy makers. But the Cabinet Office was keen to talk about its own successes. As spring approached, Minister Francis Maude declared that central government had cut its property-related costs by £48m as a result of a lease moratorium introduced last year. An excellent example of driving down back office costs, Maude called it.

At the same time, the pressure was being felt in other places - for example, at the Health & Safety Executive, which confirmed that workplace safety inspections would be cut by a third. Work and Pensions Minister Chris Grayling said that 'Britain's health and safety culture is stifling business and holding back economic growth'. He also announced a review of all existing H&S law with a view to scrapping measures that are not needed.

Meanwhile, there are also likely to be changes in energy legislation. The UK Green Building Council called for the mandatory extension of Display Energy Certificates to all non-residential buildings, a move that quickly found backing from CIBSE and HVCA. As the Energy Bill was discussed by MPs, even the property industry weighed in behind the move. It seems this will only be a matter of time.

And finally, as if to add weight to the argument, business advisors KPMG released a study demonstrating that corporate sustainability strategies deliver a broad range of tangible benefits for the companies that implement them. In addition to ensuring compliance and enhancing brand reputation, these companies also benefitted from increased profitability, new and better quality products and services, and improved employee morale. So green pays.

## Audit of the UK FM Sector 2011



We have been running our Market Audit survey for nearly 10 years now. Consistently drawing some of the highest levels of participation seen in this industry, it has become a performance benchmark for both service buyers and service providers.

The basic content has remained consistent over the years, but each time we add a new focus on key topical issues. This year's research looks in particular at how buyers and providers perceive each other, what their expectations are now and where the industry is headed in the future.

We want your views on all these issues - and we'll report back on the results in June. All reporting will use only aggregate data to draw conclusions about UK FMs, the current state of the industry and future trends.

Past Audit research has been invaluable for client organisations, helping them to compare their approaches to securing critical support services to the wider market experience. For suppliers, the opportunity to hear how buyers think and what they expect has provided crucial insight into how to shape an effective service offering.

This survey is entirely anonymous and only takes about 10 minutes to complete. It also comes with a fantastic incentive!

We really do appreciate the time and effort it takes to complete surveys – and it's a tradition at i-FM that this one comes with the opportunity to win something really very good. So, this year we are offering:

- 1st Prize – A Brand New Apple iPad2
- 2nd Prize - £150 of John Lewis Vouchers
- 3rd Prize - £50 of John Lewis Vouchers

Winners may, if they prefer, waive the prize and instead we will donate twice its value to charity. Thank you for participating.

[www.i-fm.net/audit2011](http://www.i-fm.net/audit2011)



### 2011 e-business award: time to get your entries in.

Now in its 10th year, the i-FM e-business Award is a unique feature in the facilities management year.

Presented in conjunction with the annual PFM Partnership Awards, every year the e-business Award competition draws intense interest - as well as remarkable evidence of fresh thinking and creative application, with a focus on the full range of e-initiatives within FM.

Past winners include Condeco, GSH, OCS and Eurest Services.

Now is the time to be thinking about joining this illustrious group. Entries are due by 20 June (it's a simple process, really), judging is held in September and the Award is presented in November at the PFM Awards Dinner in the City of London.

This year there is also a great sponsorship opportunity to promote your brand and be associated with both i-FM and PFM.

Please contact David Emanuel if you like to discuss sponsoring the e-business Award.



For a round-up of all industry award winners since 1999, visit: <http://www.i-fm.net/awards/>

## Today's Health & Safety Landscape

The reputation of health and safety has taken a bit of a battering lately with perceptions of an over-zealous 'elf n safety' culture even permeating the enquiry into the 7/7 London bombings.

Metropolitan Police Commissioner Sir Paul Stephenson's recent suggestion that existing health and safety laws were 'not appropriate' for the emergency services prompted Paul McKeever, Chairman of the Police Federation of England and Wales, to retort: "It is extremely disappointing to note Sir Paul Stephenson's apparent disregard of health and safety laws that are designed to protect everyone and in no way hinder operational policing or the actions of police officers."

This latest controversy reflects a much wider reconsideration of health and safety in this country by a Government that has stated its intention to tackle what it describes as the 'burden of red tape'.

Shortly after coming into power last May, David Cameron commissioned a review of health and safety, the results of which, 'Common Sense, Common Safety', were published last October by Lord Young. The review contained a list of recommendations on changing the way low risk offices and non-industrial commercial premises manage H&S.

These included:

- Easing the regulatory burden for low hazard workplaces by simplifying the risk assessment procedure
- Exempting employers from risk assessments for employees working from home in a low hazard environment

- Requiring all health and safety consultants to be accredited by a professional body
- Combining food safety and health and safety inspections
- Ensuring police officers and fire-fighters are not at risk of investigation or prosecution under health and safety legislation when engaged in the course of their duties if they have put themselves at risk as a result of committing a heroic act
- Amending the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 1995 by extending to seven days the period before an injury or accident needs to be reported, and
- Consolidating current health and safety legislation into a single set of regulations.

### Risk assessments

One of the very first recommendations to be implemented in the wake of the report was the launch by the Health and Safety Executive of a 20-minute risk assessment tool, designed to help users weigh up the hazards in their offices. Employers with staff who work from home on a regular basis are also advised to devise a checklist for homeworkers to ensure their working methods are safe.

The checklist has been available to download since last October and, according to Judith Hackitt, Chair of the HSE: "We've heard from a lot of businesses that they welcome the simplified approach.

"The key thing is for people to use their common sense and their judgement; and the way those risk assessments are structured, they



Sara Bean, Workplace Law

do flag up the ways to see if things are applicable to you or not."

### Health and safety inspections

In March this year, Work and Pensions Minister Chris Grayling (who took over the brief from Lord Young) announced a package of changes to Britain's health and safety system, based on the review, which included a huge cut in health and safety inspections.

In practice, this means that employers in low risk environments no longer face automatic visits from H&S inspectors, cutting the number of inspections carried out in the UK by at least a third. Instead, health and safety inspectors will be instructed to concentrate their efforts on high risk locations, like major energy facilities and rogue employers who put the safety of their staff and the public at risk. Rogue employers who endanger public and employee safety will also have to pay for the costs of the investigation into their activities.

Grayling described the changes as designed to support the Government's growth agenda and

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to ease the regulatory burdens on business, adding that although it was right to protect employees in the workplace: "Britain's health and safety culture is also stifling business and holding back economic growth.

"The purpose of health and safety regulation is to protect people at work and rightly so. But we need common sense at the heart of the system, and these measures will help root out the needless burden of bureaucracy.

"This will help us make Britain a more growth focused, entrepreneurial nation. By reducing unnecessary red tape we can encourage businesses to come and invest in the UK, creating jobs and opportunities when we need them most."

## Consultants' register

Another result of the review was the launch of the Occupational Safety and Health Consultants Register (OSHCR) - an online database of consultants who can offer general advice to UK businesses that want extra support to help them manage health and safety risks.

Businesses can search the database for consultants according to keyword(s), county, industry or topic, free of charge. More than 1,600 consultants in the UK have signed up to the online register. Before they can join, each must prove he or she can meet strict eligibility criteria.

Each must belong to a professional body, have a degree-level qualification, at least two years' experience and have demonstrated a commitment to continuing their professional development.

## Role of fire-fighters

In April, the HSE confirmed that it fully endorsed the

recommendation in 'Common Sense, Common Safety' that individual fire-fighters should not be at risk of investigation or prosecution, under health and safety law, if they have put themselves at risk as a result of a heroic act.

It said: "The statement makes it clear that fire and rescue services need to manage all foreseeable risk effectively and to review their operational procedures in the light of experience."

The guidance says the HSE's policy is that it will view the actions of individual fire-fighters as 'heroic' when:

- It is clear that they have decided to act entirely of their own volition
- They have put themselves at risk to protect the public or colleagues, and
- The individual's actions were not likely to have put other officers or members of the public at serious risk.

## RIDDOR consultation and changes

The results of a three-month consultation on proposed changes to RIDDOR to increase the threshold for reporting workplace injuries to seven days has just closed, but the HSE did announce at the beginning of May that although employers will no longer be able to report incidents by email, post or fax, they can still notify fatal and major incidents and injuries by phone.

From 12 September 2011, all other reportable work-related injuries and incidents under RIDDOR (the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995) will move to a predominantly online system, through a suite of seven forms available on the HSE website.

## Legislation review

Possibly the most far-reaching reform to health and safety will come as a result of the review of existing health and safety law, as recommended in 'Common Sense, Common Safety'.

This is being chaired by a leading risk management specialist, Professor Ragnar E Lofstedt, of King's College London, supported by an advisory panel, which will include John Armit, Chair of the Olympic Delivery Authority, Sarah Veale of the TUC and Dr Adam Marshall of the British Chambers of Commerce, as well as legislature representatives of the three main parties.

This will focus on the (approximately 200) statutory instruments owned and enforced by the HSE / local authorities, and their associated Approved Codes of Practice (ACoP) which provide advice, with special legal status, on compliance with health and safety law. However, it's important to note that it will not focus on the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act or the other 16 Acts owned and enforced by the HSE.

While the CBI has welcomed the proposals and the HSE has promised that it will remain 'focused on preventing death, serious injury and ill health to those at work', it remains to be seen just how practicable it may be to change existing health and safety law.

We'll have to wait until the autumn for the results of the consultation, but judging by how speedily the Government has already implemented much of last year's review, expect further great shifts in the health and safety landscape.

**Sara Bean is Managing Editor at Workplace Law**

## Editor's choice - recent features on i-FM

These extracts highlight some of the big H&S challenges FM's face today - everything from germ-packed keyboards to fundamental questioning of the legislative regime.

Planning a way ahead is difficult, but i-FM's latest FM Briefing on H&S will help.



### Putting the Case for the Health and Safety?

*Greg Davies, Head of Service Development at Elementus, outlines the regulatory review process and wonders where all this will lead us.*

Health and safety has, over the last two years, become heavily scrutinised from a governmental perspective. Its links with the growth in a blame/compensation culture haven't helped, but neither has the increasing amount of regulation organisations now need to deal with.

Of the 200 plus statutory instruments owned and enforced by the Health and Safety Executive and local authorities close to 50% of them have come into force or been amended in the last 20 years.

## Features...

In the each case, the full article is available on [www.i-FM.net](http://www.i-FM.net)

The added burden these requirements put on businesses is another common complaint, particularly by senior management who, at best, have levelled such comment from a 'subject remote' position. At a time when, as far as workplace fatalities go things have never been better, is this close scrutiny really needed or just an attempt to pander to perception?

And as a result, what messages are being sent to organisations about their health and safety management that for many, particularly in FM, had no doubt caused loss of sleep over how to comply and do the right thing?

### Review and review again

Even in opposition, David Cameron had already appointed Lord Young of Graffham to consider our national health and safety provision. Young's recommendations were wholly accepted, and that is now to

be followed with an additional independent review of H&S legislation to be undertaken by Professor Ragnar Löfstedt of King's College, London.

It is mere conjecture and speculation to try and second-guess what the conclusions of this review will ultimately be. For the many organisations that believe in the importance of good, well managed health and safety, the status quo will more than likely remain.

The shift towards a more enforcement-based compliance regime is unlikely to change in the interim. Shorn budgets, tight resources at each end and a recession where service provision has been cut or compromised will see to that. The desire to get things right will also tempt some to re-appraise, re-evaluate and start developing their management systems once again.



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### **Clean up and Keep Staff Healthy.**

*James Clark, Managing Director of PHS Direct, looks at workplace hygiene issues and solutions - and the impact of both on staff sickness and absence.*

A news release issued by the Department of Work and Pensions on 17th February 2011 reported that working-age ill health costs the UK economy a staggering 150 million lost working days and £100bn every year.

While much of this is attributable to long-term sickness and the cost of Government-funded supports including Incapacity Benefit, the contribution of short-term illness to such statistics should not be overlooked. Neither should the contribution of workplace hygiene (or lack of it) to the 1,500 reported cases of work-related infection every year.

It's not that we, as facilities managers, haven't understood the connection, though we may not always act on it quite as we should. In 2008 the PHS Group surveyed 200 FMs to investigate

hygiene practice in the workplace, given its potential impact on cross-infection, illness and staff absence.

While 65% of respondents considered hygiene an important contributory factor in the spread of germs and staff sickness, and 61% said their organisations were very concerned about maintaining standards, office cleaning and hygiene practice appeared to fall short of requirements, given the increase in germ risk factors like eating meals at desks and hotdesking.

### **Putting things right**

Sometimes our modern work practices seem almost designed to increase the risk of work-related infection and (avoidable) days off sick. But there's plenty we can do about it and a multi-faceted approach probably works best.

It's essential that washrooms are equipped with plentiful and regularly checked supplies of soap, water and hand drying equipment.

A clean desk policy, where desks are emptied of clutter every evening, allows cleaners to give desks a thorough daily clean, reducing the amount of germ residue accumulating.

Washroom equipment, food and drink vending machines and kitchen worktops are also available that have been treated with anti-bacterial surface agents, to reduce the growth of harmful organisms on their surfaces.

Finally, a sickness policy that encourages ailing staff to stay at home and keep their germs to themselves, will be much better at preventing your staff going down like nine-pins during seasonal influenza outbreaks than asking them to soldier on regardless.

Awareness of hygiene risk factors in the workplace, and how these change over time, is the first step in controlling cross-infection and minimising illness and staff absence. The next is doing something about it, and the tactics outlined should reap dividends when it comes to keeping staff happily, healthily and productively at work.

## Research: understanding FM and FMs

Research is critical at i-FM. We have been running our own programme of market studies for the past 10 years - and, of course, publishing the results of key investigations carried out by commercial firms, academia and government as they are available.

Summarised below are the major findings of two recent i-FM surveys, *Contract Trends* and *Demographic Trends*.

### Hard Measures Dominate as Clients Push More for Less

'More for less' is the buyer's mantra in today's facilities management market, and that's having an impact on contract values and terms as well as on contractors themselves.

Value for money, cost-effectiveness and similar considerations are always a part of the buying process, but in recent years they have become even more dominant. That's the clear conclusion emerging from i-FM's *Contract Trends* survey.

The results show a trend amongst a substantial minority of buyers towards shorter contracts. There is also a surprisingly high incidence of single-service buying. Typical explanations for this approach include increased leverage, better performance management and avoiding the danger of putting all one's eggs in a single basket. The recession has clearly had an impact on decision-making.

And when it comes to supplier selection and satisfaction criteria, hard measures are at the top of the list for every client: costs, people and performance factors predominate. Happily, suppliers have no illusions about the situation and generally rank these criteria in the same way.

The good news is that, though caution prevails, there is at least moderate expectation that contract lengths and values will increase over the next two years. In addition, there is some belief that both contractors and clients will come out of this experience with knowledge gained and in a better position to implement 'intelligent' facilities management.

### Who Says FMs are Interested in Qualifications?

Of course some are, and it could be argued that industry organisations are right in working to grow the number; but they have a big challenge on their hands, according to our latest survey of frontline practitioners.

Our respondent group, drawn from across the private and public sectors up and down the country, shows only a minority with a higher education degree - and of those, less than 20% are relevant to the holder's current career.

The vast majority of our respondents, more than nine out of ten, claim membership of the BIFM; but a tiny 5% of the group said they had completed the old Part I, with just 4% having gone on to complete the Part II. Commitment to the new 'levels' offer seems even more limited: the numbers saying they are interested in pursuing 3, 4, 5 or 6 are counted in the single figures in each case.

The somewhat older age profile of the group taking part in this survey may have some influence on reported interest in qualifications, but it is clear that the emphasis in career development in this industry has been overwhelmingly on experience.



Providers and backers of qualifications, whatever form they take, have yet to make a convincing case for the value of what's on offer. It is also clear that making that case is not a simple job; nor is it a do-once situation. Our survey uncovered both confusion and lack of information amongst practitioners in this area, and addressing that will require a targeted and ongoing communication campaign.

The survey results can help with that. They identify FMs' preferred magazines (interestingly, the majority favour the traditional product as opposed to the e-books that most publishers also now produce), as well as their most valued websites (yes, i-FM is the leader) and their level of involvement with social media (LinkedIn is the platform with greatest reach in this market by far).



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## FMs want a common sense approach to H&S results from the i-FM 30-second survey

*Health & safety is in the spotlight again, as the Government turns its sights on the 'right' balance of legislation and regulation.*

Whatever the eventual decision, this will always be a basic FM issue. What priority does it get at the sharp end of service delivery? Are facilities managers spending more, or less, time on implementation these days? How do they source the necessary expertise? And what do they think about the current legislative regime?

These questions were the subject of the latest i-FM 30-second survey.

As the starting point, we asked FMs how they rate the importance of H&S for their team. The great majority of respondents - 61% - described health & safety as a top priority. Another 30% labelled it one of many important activities for the team.

An important follow-up question, of course, is how do your organisation's Directors rate the importance of H&S? Here the balance shifts a bit. Just over half of our respondents (51%) said their Directors see health & safety as a top priority. For 44%, the view in the boardroom is 'a routine business activity'. Just a handful (5%) told us they thought the subject was 'off the radar' for their Directors - it's encouraging that figure is so low (but perhaps worrying for those involved).

So how do FMs deliver the H&S expertise they need in their organisations?

This appears to be a service area where delivery is overwhelmingly in-house. More than three-quarters (76%) work this way. 19% call in specialist consultants as and when they need them, with a small proportion - 5% - relying on their FM providers to deliver the necessary expertise.

As a follow-on, we asked if the time and money devoted to health & safety has changed over the past two years.

The majority of our respondents reported spending more time now: 59% say the commitment is up at their organisation. More than a quarter (28%) say there has been no change; and, perhaps surprisingly, more than one in ten (13%) have reduced the time and money they spend on H&S.

What's the expectation over the coming two years? The group is split on this, with 46% expecting no change in the resources they devote to H&S and the same proportion anticipating an increase. That leaves just 8% anticipating a cut in the resources that go into this activity.

To get an idea for the context of that thinking, we asked respondents how they view the current health & safety legislative structure in the UK. Contrary to the headline-

grabbing messages that have become common in recent years, well over half (56%) believe that today's legislative structure is 'about right'. Still, just under two-fifths (38%) see it as 'too strict'. At the other end of the spectrum, 6% of our group regard the current regime as too lax.

If FMs could propose a change in H&S law and practice, what would it be?

There is quite a bit of consistency on this point. The most frequent theme emerging from the responses can be summed up as 'focus on a common sense approach'. Many FMs want to be left more to use their own training and experience to interpret and implement good H&S practice.

In a complementary theme, a significant number of survey respondents called for a reduction in bureaucracy and the streamlining of procedures, including reporting.

Such changes seem entirely consistent with the majority view that the current legislative regime is about right. FMs appear to be happy with the intent of the law. But they would like to see the way it is implemented improved. In particular, from their vantage point of on-the-ground practitioners, they would like to see better, more easily accessible training, more straightforward application, and more efficient and meaningful enforcement.



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## i-FM - your online resource

i-FM is the only online resource an FM ever needs. If you haven't spent some time on the site recently, plan to come back soon. There's a lot there, and much of it is freely available to everyone.

Our award-winning content includes daily news updates, feature articles and commentary - all with a keen focus on the FM marketplace. It's a quality you won't find anywhere else...we're flattered to be imitated, but we've never been equalled! Just as unique on i-FM is our premium content, including market analysis, research and bespoke reports. The ideal blend tailored to business needs, whether you are client or provider.

- News - we update our news pages five days a week. If you want to know what's happening in FM, i-FM is the place to find out
- Features - written by our team, or commissioned by us, plus important articles sourced from other leading publications
- Comment - regular insights, views and opinions from experienced practitioners and market observers
- FM Briefings - an ongoing series, each targeting a specific service area to ensure practising FMs have the information and knowledge they need to make efficient and effective decisions
- i-FM Jobs - listings of the current opportunities, plus advice and support for jobseekers
- The Top 50 - our pioneering benchmark tracking the top players in UK FM

The screenshot shows the i-FM website interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links for News, Features, Comment, Resources, Top 50, Research, FM Briefings, FM Jobs, and FM Pages. Below this is a secondary navigation bar with links for Home, About i-FM, 10 Years of i-FM, Awards, FM Training, Events, e-business Award, Surveys, In Brief, Contact us, Search, and My i-FM. The main content area features a 'OUR SPONSORS' section with logos for ATKINS, ISS, macro, Reliance, and SERVICE MANAGEMENT INTERNATIONAL. There are sections for 'TODAY'S HEADLINES' with links to news items, a 'TOP STORY' section with a featured article titled 'Recession fatigue drags industry down', and a 'YOUR VIEWS' section with a link to a LinkedIn group. A large banner at the bottom of the screenshot promotes i-FM with the slogan 'If you're in FM you need to be on i-FM' and lists the benefits of a licence.

- Research - current and archived studies tailored to major issues in the UK market
- And much more - including background on the FM market, our unique 12-year news and feature archive plus insights into how FM has grown and developed over the past decade, links to training providers, our industry events calendar, a round-up of awards and winners, links to relevant organisations and information sources.

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'About Us' page or talk to any i-FM licence holder.

What does a licence cost? We offer a range of options according to the size of your organisation:

- Sole Practitioner: (1 user licence) £545 + vat)
- Small Enterprise: (< 25 staff) 5-user licence £1,350 + vat
- Corporate: 15-user licence £2,500 + vat.

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Elliott Chase - Editor  
elliott@i-fm.net 07973 171 440

Helpdesk -  
helpdesk@i-fm.net 0208 922 7491

David Emanuel - Sponsorship  
david@i-fm.net 07768 765 967

Laurence Allen - Sales  
laurence@i-fm.net 07715 177 085