



# 2020 Hudson Contract Customer CITB Questionnaire

Survey conducted January/February 2020

# Purpose:

To establish what small & medium sized construction firms think about Levy and Grant and the CITB's performance in administering.

# Q1. Are you registered as 'an employer' with CITB?

Total responses 1,513

**YES 67%**



**NO 33%**



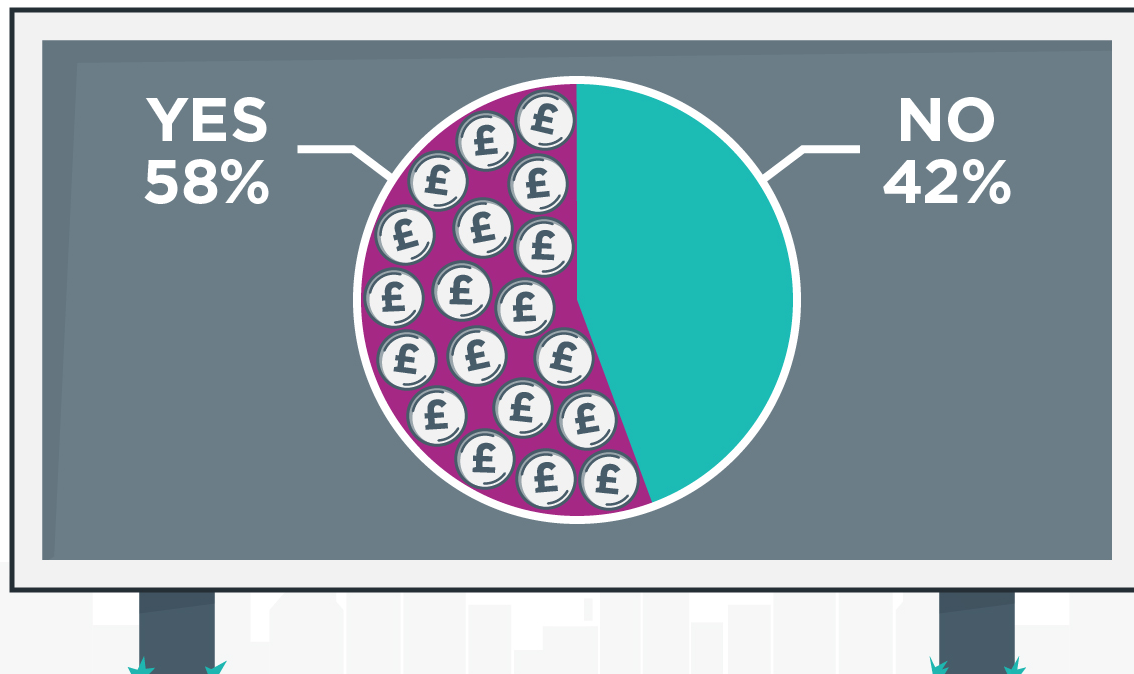
**Q2: Do you pay a CITB Levy? (Have you completed the levy form and been advised that you are due to pay a levy or have you paid a levy in the last two years)**

**Total responses 812**



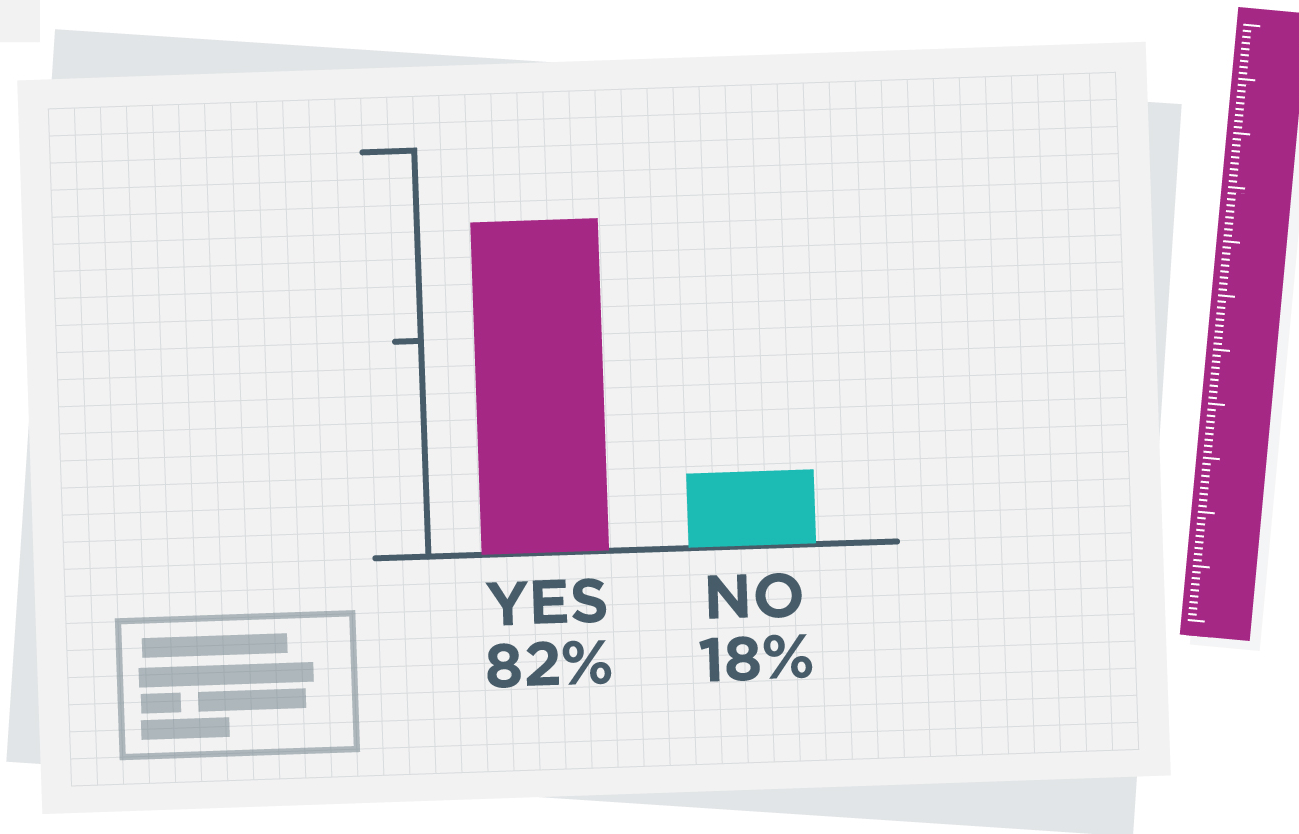
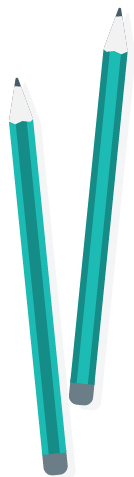
### Q3: Do you claim training grants or support funding from CITB?

Total responses 813



## Q4: Do you arrange and pay for training for which you receive no CITB funding or support?

Total responses 810



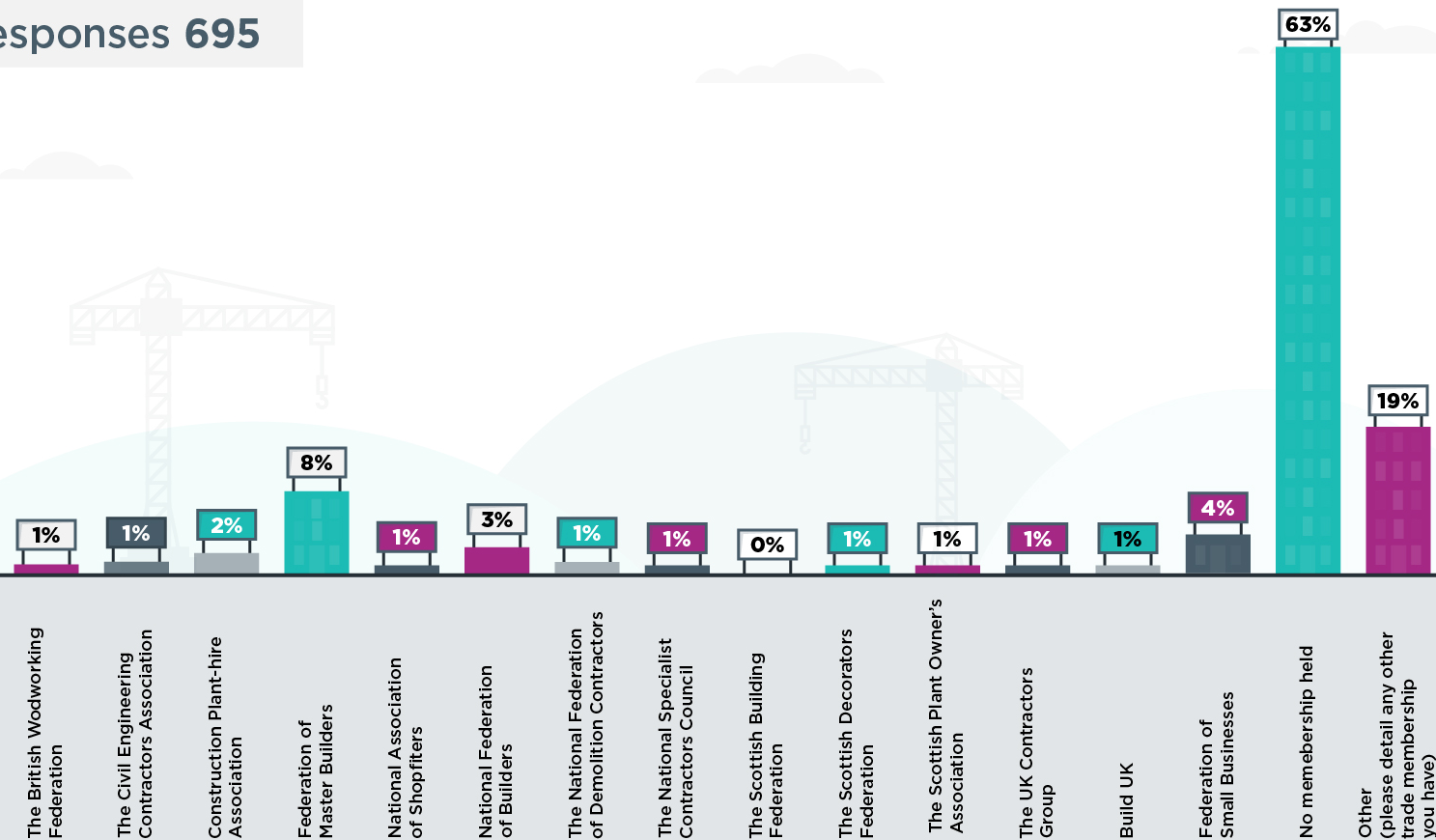
Q5: This year government will decide whether or not the CITB grant and levy scheme should continue for another 3 years. Would you like them to keep the levy?

Total responses 813



Q6: If a member, a Consensus Federation will vote to keep or scrap the levy on your behalf, please tick if you are a member (you can select more than one):

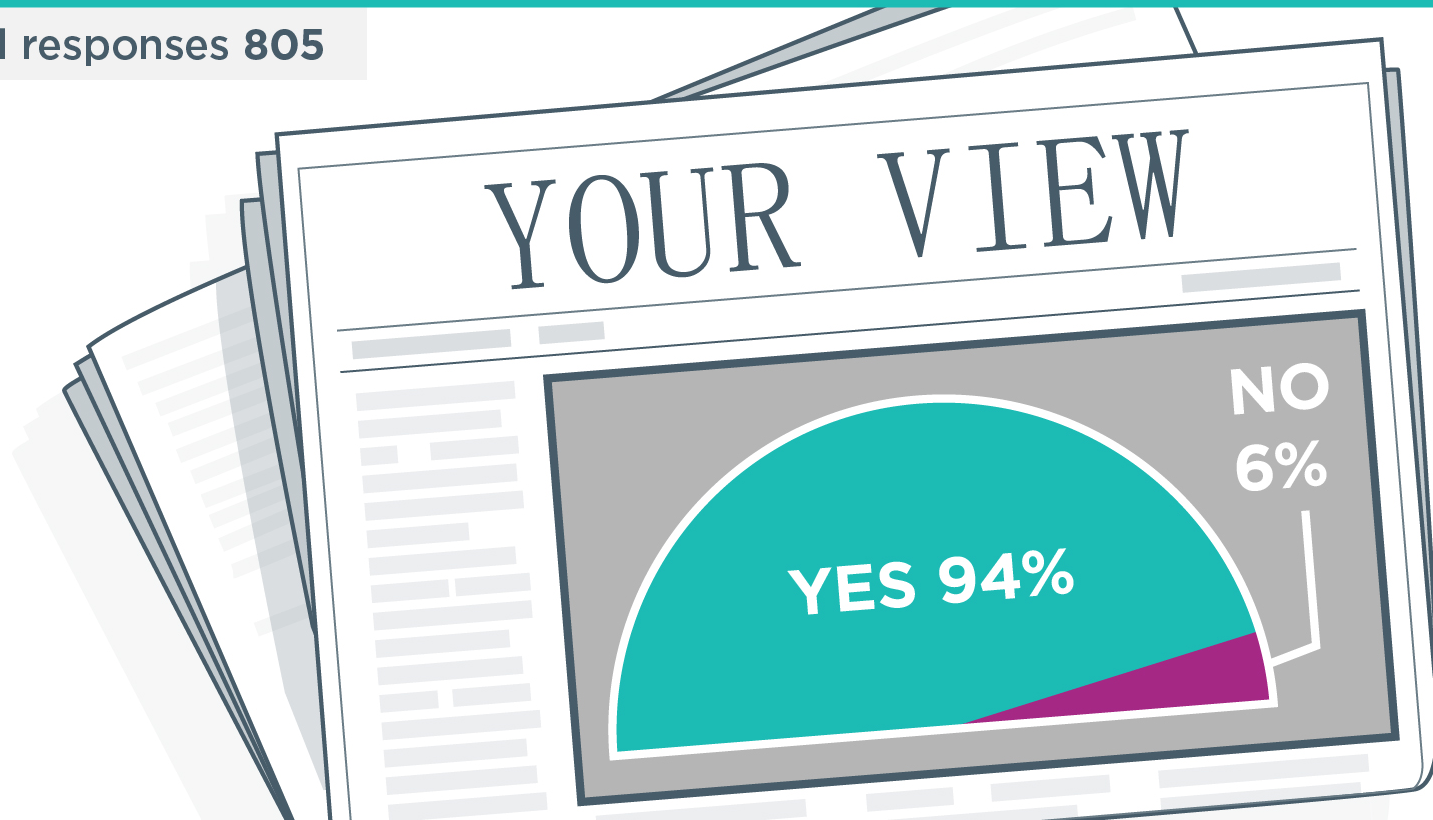
Total responses 695





Q7: Hudson believes the grant and levy scheme requires such a huge reform and overhaul that in effect the current system and the CITB should be scrapped. If necessary a new body would be set up with a much narrower set of objectives, at a much lower cost with greater accountability. If you share this view, would you rather Hudson Contract represent your company's view in dialogue with the Secretary of State, Department for Education throughout the levy consultation rather than another trade body or a CITB questionnaire?

Total responses **805**



**Recorded comments by participants,  
our SME construction clients.**

## Summary of Comments

- We pay £1842/month. It's money for old rope. Think we should have a choice with the companies they use for training. They always change the rules and can't claim for toolbox talks.
- We think they should scrap the levy.
- I don't see the value in it.
- Hard to claim anything back. Not enough skilled lads.
- Get nowhere near the same back
- Hate the CITB. Geared towards the big boys.
- Fed up with it.
- As a smaller company we find the levy to be high and feel we do not receive a beneficial return.
- Get rid of the CITB, daylight robbery.
- Why is it only the construction industry that has to pay a levy why doesn't other industries it is a bit unfair?
- CITB works very well for us.
- They are taking forever to settle our apprenticeship grant of £2500 and the lad hasn't got his NVQ yet after completing in June.
- We pay for loads of training each year but as it is not with a registered trainer can not claim any money back even though we are the best company around. Paid £600 for training and only get £120 back.
- Waste of money.
- Just another tax.
- Its just a con.
- Don't get out as much as put in.
- Think its the worst thing ever.
- Quite happy for it to stay in place.

## Summary of Comments

- They make the whole thing so complicated. Inefficient company with the worst website ever.
- Nightmare to claim back.
- Its just a money making scheme.
- Do not get out anything from it at all.
- Its just another tax.
- We don't get anything back.
- We like the CITB as we get more out than we put in the apprenticeship grants.
- Its daylight robbery.
- Opted to keep it although we do feel its quite unfair and put in more than we get out.
- Don't get out as much as put in.
- The CITB's method of registering companies is shambolic. There is no logical system in place to ascertain who should or should not be registered, its purely a matter of chance whether a company is detected.
- CITB do not provide any form of training that is of any use to our company.
- We have been registered for 20 years and never claimed anything back, we are a small company so not able to train apprentices. It is like a another tax.
- We don't think it is a fair way of doing it as we don't get back anywhere near as much as they put into it.
- We hate filling the forms in and the deadline they give.
- Is a nightmare.
- The FMB vote on my behalf.
- I feel that the CITB is a very dated and unfair system and should be scrapped. We definitely receive no benefit from the system nor do I see any benefit within the industry.

## Summary of Comments

- Don't get as much back as we put in and we pay for additional training.
- Too complicated, scrap it.
- Its a waste of time.
- The money goes to the big boys and it is an absolute con.
- Its certainly not value for money.
- They are not fit for purpose in our opinion.
- Its the biggest con.
- Its just another tax.
- It is so complicated and totally ridiculous.
- Waste of time, serves absolutely no purpose.
- Pay out a lot more then we put in.
- Health & Safety training and on-going CPD is an essential part of the Construction industry procedures and practices, but it must be managed more efficiently to keep up to date with the industry. Any review must be through a non biased system of reporting and consultation.
- The system is being misused and needs looking into.
- A load of old rubbish, nothing applies to us in regards to training.
- Pain for all the administration.
- The levy generally works well for us a company, especially with regards to our apprentices.
- CITB levy represents very poor value for money for our small business.
- The levy should be fairer for smaller companies.
- We pay £1100 a month. Had to pay for a fire awareness course ourselves. The levy should be fairer for small companies.

## Summary of Comments

- We believe that although we do not pay much levy we do think it is an unfair scheme.
- We could pay for our own training for a lot less money than the levy we are paying.
- Outdated and not flexible.
- Its a waste of time and money.
- Always a massive cost, don't get back what we put in.
- We do not benefit from the scheme at all.
- Not always trade specific its a good theory but its the implementing which is the issue.
- £7000 per year and definitely don't get that back. Don't get value for money.
- They move the goal posts constantly, its only the big boys that benefit.
- We don't get as much back as we put in, we paid £4704 in levy in 2018.
- I am happy with the service we get from the CITB but in an ideal world we wouldn't pay a levy.
- Waste of time.
- Only benefits the big companies - not the small.
- As long as we can claim back grants we are happy to keep the levy.
- I don't think we should have to pay 2 levies.
- Felt like we were bullied into it.
- We pay more levy than we get out, we think the people on the council get the most out of it.
- Money for them and nobody else.
- We pay in more than we get out.
- Just another tax on the construction industry.

## Summary of Comments

- If you take on self employed youngsters (16, 17, 18 year olds and they what to go self employed then you have to foot all the bill to help them get on the ladder with the CITB. It is just to pay the staff (some rich persons son or daughter) to run CITB. Another ministers idea to tax small business - small business with less then a £1million turn over should be exempt.
- There is no transparency, very, very scary. More of a 2nd tax. Very confusing, do not trust them.
- It is a good idea but does not work.
- For small and medium size companies CITB doesn't bring any benefits. It is just another tax that is more of a burden, rather than a problem solver. Also I don't agree with the new way the levy is calculated. Why should CITB have access to the CIS Returns of each company? CITB is not a Government Body, is a charity ... I don't believe that is correct for the financial information of companies to be ready available to CITB, without them lifting a finger in order to charge the levy. And then again, our company didn't had any benefits from CITB, as we don't claim training costs.
- Weak in legislation, no one is policing it.
- Too much aggro applying for grants. The big boys get all the money and the smaller companies lose out.
- As a company, we have not benefited from the Levy scheme in the sense that the money we have paid in, is nowhere near the amount we have been able to claim back over the course of the year. In addition, its complicated when you are making a manual claim, costing a lot of time to upload claims without errors. Lastly, as we are not a construction company, but a Civil Engineering company, many courses we needs as a business is not covered under CITB and therefore we can't claim these.
- Just another form of tax. Can't claim back much. Given up even trying to claim back, just for the big boys.
- Only just signed up with CITB so not paid a levy yet.
- Get rid of them.
- Don't offer any benefits, slow business down, no grants or training for concreting companies.

## Summary of Comments

- The CSCS card scheme and training schemes are a waste of time and money it would make much more sense to have a working safe card for general site and trade as there are professional trained tradesman working with labourers cards due to not having city 7 Guilds or NVQ also the industry needs to make large companies take on apprentices and government contracts should also make sure that part of the contract is taking on apprentices from the colleges and schools because the industry has lost a generation and the ones who just go to college can't get work due to lack of experience.
- Its not fit for purpose.
- Its a complete waste of time.
- Last year we only tried to claim for a Three day First Aid Course and we were informed that this course was no longer supported by CITB!!!!
- Its a quango, a complete waste of time.
- It is totally unfair. They are making it harder and harder for us to make claims.
- Complicated and easier not to bother.
- It is very difficult to arrange training when we as a business require it and then tie this in with receiving grant and funding support. System is too complicated and too slow to move.
- A tax on the working man set up to keep pen pushers employed. Complete rip off.
- Doesn't do much to help small construction companies.
- Not fit for purpose.
- It is a shocking waste of money.
- Stopped doing grants for first aid and manual handling. Scrap the website. It needs something but need to replace them with something fit for purpose. I believe that as they are not giving grants out for some training, people will stop doing that training all together.
- Just another tax forced on the construction industry.
- Very expensive.



## Summary of Comments

- CITB currently is not fit for purpose, and does not provide the training that we the employers actually need. The levy is totally unfair for SME's and rewards only the larger companies who operate training schools/courses to recover their full levy and much effectively profiting from the CITB. The levy is a compulsive form of tax on smaller construction companies and provides a gravy train for the privileged few, it is totally unaccountable, and ironically financed in the main by the smaller contractors who can least afford the levy charges. Get rid as soon as possible!!!
- It is a rip off, get nothing for it, get no service from them and the only grant we get back is £500 every 6 month for 2 apprentices.
- Small companies with less than £500,000 turn over should be exempt from the Levy fee.
- We pay a lot of levy at the moment and claim no where near what we pay out back in grants.
- We are a small company and we have only been running for 2 years and the levy and grant schemes are a great help towards training etc because training cost are very expensive.
- Waste of time and money!
- It's a complete waste of time.
- I feel it is a total waste of money, keeping fat cats in high paying jobs with no use to the industry at all.
- So outdated.
- Complete waste of time we get absolutely nothing from this levy apart from a hefty bill each year.
- There are some courses in which full funding isn't available, even though the standards are the same. NPORS (machine cards) can receive initial training grant, but the achievement grant cannot be claimed for completing the Test Element of the card, as this is not recognised by the CITB, meaning we technically lose out on Achievement grants for all our operatives doing the NPORS. CPCS on the other hand, is accepted for all grants, and therefore we feel CITB favour the CPCS scheme over others.
- The majority of courses we use are not available on CITB.
- We got more out of the grants than we put in through the levy.
- I've paid it for years and never had anything back from it.

## Summary of Comments

- Where's the return for small businesses who don't have the resources to exhaust themselves trying to benefit from the CITB Levy system and the complicated training benefits? Only the big companies appear to benefit as they have departments and staff who know how to claim from the CITB.
- The CITB claim the payment but they are very poor at letting employers know what is available, there is a total lack of communication with employers and the process of claiming grants isn't always clear.
- CITB has no relevance to training and/or retraining as the costs applicable are just ridiculous directly through this body. Each time we train or retrain, other equivalent courses are available to book online at a far cheaper rate even if CITB were to discount, therefore there is no benefit to our company. I have personally spoke to CITB on this matter but on each occasion you get nowhere. Personally I believe that training of operatives is an imperative part of the continued development within the industry but the cost is being passed down to the smaller contractors who may well be struggling in the current market with no potential gain to them.
- Essentially training within construction is complicated, CITB is now no longer aligned with CSCS, making training confusing and difficult to co-ordinate.
- I didn't know I was registered with the CITB until I received a £6k bill!
- We pay £9k in levy and haven't had anything back.
- Just another tax.
- We pay £30k in levy but can only claim £5k in training grants back.
- The levy is high for us and we do not get much back from the scheme and end up funding most training ourselves.
- Frustrating and too difficult to claim grants. Just another tax - no other industries have to pay it.
- We don't get anything out of it whatsoever, the CITB do not recognise training for partitioning yet we still have to pay a levy.
- Got grants back this year for the first time in 8 years.
- Claiming grants for the first time this year he will see how it goes.
- Its an archaic club that does nothing for the construction industry.

## Summary of Comments

- Only just registered with CITB so not yet had to pay a levy but would prefer not to.
- Complicated system and isn't user friendly for small businesses. Paying a £1000 month over and getting very little back.
- Too expensive, limited training grants, 99.9% outside of CITB.
- Good for apprentices but other areas need to improve training.
- It is a very complicated scheme, very difficult to claim grants, we do not want to pay the levy.
- As long as we don't pay the levy we are not bothered what they do with it.
- Its a sham, just goes against the ethos of what the CITB claim to be about.
- Its money for old rope.
- We don't get back what we put in.
- All training should be included it shouldn't be age specific. We should receive grants for everyone when we pay into it.
- Far too complicated.
- Don't want to keep it in it's current form.
- Not enough communication from CITB and not knowing who our representative is.
- An admin nightmare for nothing in return.
- Another tax for the construction industry.
- Should have a complete overhaul.
- Just another tax.
- Only wanted to keep the levy because something needs to be in place.
- Get rid of it!

## Summary of Comments

- Mockery loads of people don't pay it and don't get caught. Too expensive don't get rid of the CITB because there needs to be something. New cards and stuff would be a nightmare for companies to figure out what they mean.
- Big companies are getting away with it, 5000 paid and claiming 500 back, trying to claim is a joke is just harder and harder. absolute nightmare.
- We pay much more in levy than we can ever claim back for training.
- Not beneficial, they don't cover the whole cost of training, we don't train people for years yet we still pay the levy. Its like throwing money out of the window.
- Purely a money making organisation, who purely create new courses as they go along to create increased revenue. The courses however are dumbed down so no one fails!!
- One area that the CITB are not needed, they overhauled a system that the world of construction doesn't need, everything was running perfect until they came along.
- No idea why we are paying it, they make it so hard to claim anything back.
- Scrap the CITB
- We will never get the money back we put in.
- It's a con, they're conning me out of money. The only training our lads need is a streetworks card and the CITB do not provide this yet we still have to pay?!
- Waste of money.
- Scaffolders are being passed out with part 2 and advanced tickets who are not capable of being a lead hand and erecting and over seeing a scaffold safely.
- Its disgusting its just more money for the suits!
- The current system is entirely unfair and should be withdrawn.
- We find the new claim system too complicated and expensive for what we can get out of it.

## Summary of Comments

- From the CITB Website: "It's our job to work with industry to encourage training" Training is already encouraged through the HSE, who demand compliance with their rules and guidance, and by the client/architect who demand certain standards are met. This leaves the CITB without a purpose, causing them to push the 'innovative and new' agenda harder and harder every year to justify their existence. Unfortunately for every small and medium business, innovative and new does not pay the bills and often changing processes incurs more cost and expense for the contractor who is already paying out a large amount in levy to bring about this change. While innovation is important in our industry, it needs to be lead by the professional bodies and by the HSE. In my opinion, the CITB should be scrapped and any money in their 'pot' should be channelled into the apprenticeship schemes which could fund a whole new generation of construction workers for our industry.
- Mandatory renewals of plant training certs currently do not return any grant however new plant operator certificates do, but only a small percentage. If one but not the other, surely new cards issued should be heavily funded so where is the money going?
- It is totally unfair.
- Do not get out half of what we put in.
- Complete waste of time.
- We pay enough in corporation tax, personal tax, NI, and insurance. Why should we pay for something we have never used. It's just another payment from low profit margins.
- CITB does some very good work and without it Construction training and apprentices would be lost
- We pay for our own training and never claims grants so would prefer not to keep it.
- They do not give value for money, they are self promoting and self sustainable, it feels like an additional tax on our business. They are stifling the true growth and training programmes that DPS offer
- Just another tax on the construction industry.
- Need a fairer system.
- An absolute waste, the money I pay to CITB could be much better spent on own training within the company.

## Summary of Comments

- This is basically a tax which hurts small businesses and is very unfair.
- There needs to be something to fill the gap of training. Not had a single visit from CITB in last 2 years since the reform.
- We feel we do not benefit from it enough to justify keeping it.
- The gap between training grants and levy paid has closed over the last year or so but remains a negative investment.
- Very complicated and time consuming especially for small companies.
- The CITB is a very grey area when it comes down to grants.
- Overpriced and rubbish not fit for purpose.
- Cost you money and you can't get any back, not really a training provider.
- Paying in and getting nothing. It could be years before we need to train anyone yet we still pay year in year out.
- CITB is completely irrelevant for my business.
- Very rarely use the CITB training always check but never find what we want. So we go private for our training.
- Just a waste of money
- We use apprentices through the CITB but any training we do we go privately as the CITB is too complex and time consuming to do.
- Each year the CITB change rules concerning training. This includes the training covered and how you claim for the training. In addition, when we have contacted the CITB they are not always clear immediately with their advice; eventually we get to the correct answer.
- CITB have taken millions from contractors over the years, however we have not seen an increase in well trained tradesmen. Bring back woodwork in schools!
- Waste of space.
- Difficult to access grant aid and the training and development plan was so complex we gave up using it. There are very little staff to come out to companies to advise. We feel we benefit a little by paying into the levy scheme

- The CITB should be proactive with companies after taking all their money.
- Never benefited from it.
- We have paid tens of thousands of pounds to the CITB and reclaimed just a few hundred. It is a massive financial burden on subcontractors and we gain no benefit whatsoever from being a member.
- Grants should been given to small businesses to help with training costs without us having to pay a levy.
- We pay for training every year and since the new scheme we have received nothing in grants.
- CITB nominated training providers are very expensive. One gets the impression they complicate the route to qualifications in order to sell courses that are not needed or duplicate certification already held.
- Last time we tried to claim we put all our employees and some subbies on First Aid and were then told First Aid was not claimable but Mental Health was!
- Totally against this, we have paid £10's of thousands to this organisation and have probably received less than £1000 back - absolute robbery.
- There is absolutely no assistance from CITB, only Levy demands. Please negotiate to scrap the CITB in its current form to stop favour being shown to a handful of PLCs.
- I totally agree that the current CITB system favours the large companies at the cost of the SMEs.
- The way it is currently set up does not serve the SME's of the industry and the whole of the way training /apprenticeships are carried out in the industry need a radical change in direction. When some one can become qualified in 2 years but have no experience is beyond me. An apprenticeship should be a minimum of 3 years.
- The provision of training and the delivery should be more flexible, our business being able to decide what we want and when we want it, without the obligation upon small employers to pay a levy based on payroll. We have to undertake significant office duties trying to reclaim grant monies and manage the CITB system. We do get the cost of the levy back via our training but its an overhead cost trying to manage the system. Significantly cheaper for us as a business to not pay the levy and then just buy in our training requirements from the market place directly and avoid having to go 'around the houses' to recover the cost.

## Summary of Comments

- Money for nothing.
- The CITB are very quick to take money but make it extremely difficult and time consuming to actually try and claim money back. Most of the time it's more cost effective not to bother. A complete waste of time and money!!!
- One should pay for one's own training, not subsidize others!
- Does not offer a value for money service & claims procedure too bureaucratic.
- Waste of time for small to medium businesses, we don't have the time or resources to claim grants, we just want good value training, not levies. If training was cheaper we would put more operatives on courses, grants should be aimed at reducing training costs. Larger business have dedicated people dealing with training and claiming grants, something we can't afford.
- They cater for the larger companies who can afford to have training officers who know the ins and outs of dealing with the bureaucrats.
- We used to pay into the scheme but were never able to get any form of funding as it does not cover our subcontractors and the cost is too high.
- My son did a 2 year NVQ roofing course was not worth the paper it was written on!!
- The recent changes to the CITB model have made it very difficult for companies to claim back training costs, the portal system is very difficult to use and some construction related training courses are no longer covered by a CITB grant. As a company we currently feel that the levy costs far outweigh the benefits/incentives to promote training. If the purpose of CITB is to promote and encourage companies to invest and train their operatives then the recent changes in the grant applications have made this much more difficult.
- As a small company we have to pay levy although all the training our operatives need isn't covered under the CITB scheme so we receive no help with training.
- The scheme only benefits the larger national firms who cash in on this scheme pulling out more than they put in.
- We have paid out thousands of pounds over the years to CITB with no chance of getting grants as, like many small businesses, run mainly by manual workers themselves. We have no spare staff to complete the myriad of forms required, or carry out the organisation required to run courses and training. For the last couple of years we have not had to pay the levy due to different way of calculating payments. However we fear we will soon be paying this tax again on our business which only benefits the "big boys" in the industry.



## Summary of Comments

- Over the years the training modules have been split within trades. If this trend continues it won't be long before you will be required to undertake a course on how to hold a nail, another to hold a hammer and a further course in how to use the hammer to drive the nail. In addition you will probably need a general health and safety course, a further course on selecting PPE and probably a course in diversity and equality so you don't favour one nail over another!!
- We recently asked for help in sorting out late levies and any possible claims out, I was told point blank by email until I had paid any overdue levies that I would get no assistance, levies are now all paid and feel we have no where to go to get the help we require.
- We waste so much money every year paying the CITB Levy. We don't get to use any of the courses they offer due to a number of reasons. ie location, timing, operatives need to be on site etc. CITB is no benefit to our business!! The money we pay could be better spent on our employees and business!!!
- CITB requires a massive overhaul as it is completely out of touch and does not achieve what it should considering the money it costs the industry.
- We pay thousands each year into this and do not claim a penny back. Even completion of the levy return actually costs us money due to the work involved in providing the information requested. We definitely do NOT support this levy.
- The cost are too expensive.
- CITB is a rip off for less than 10 operatives. Funding for training is a pittance.
- We would be able to spend far more on training should the levy scheme not exist.
- We think CITB is just another tax on small businesses who already have huge overheads.
- They make us pay the levy each year but any courses our guys need are never included in their scheme.
- CITB not fit for purpose. Anachronistic and far too expensive. It feels like we are funding a bureaucracy for little effective return.
- Only correspondence from them is a bill for the levy. When I did contact them about training I was told to ring my local college.
- Very expensive training costs. Cards out of date too soon.
- Pants!

## Summary of Comments

- We do not believe it holds any advantage for small to medium size companies and as such has no great relevance within the construction industry as a whole and agree it should be scrapped.
- Cannot see the point of it as we can't access it anyway for grants etc.
- Definitely not user Friendly. Awkward to use, with continually moving goalposts. Very long winded.
- Training grants should also include office based staff training for staff working in the construction industry.
- Not fit for purpose aimed at the huge companies, too many hoops to jump through for the small business, plus they give out incorrect information regarding funding.
- Why should we be paying in effect another tax and get nothing from it, all our staff are fully trained and it cost less than CITB even with there grant scheme.
- More people are choosing NPORS machine training due to lower cost and more clients recognising CPCS can be too expensive and harder to complete.
- Not a level playing field - small companies are subsidising the big companies
- Waste of time, many small builders like myself are not even signed up so get away with any reporting and payments. I am only registered as they sent me a letter but luckily am quite small so didn't go over the threshold to pay anything. Seems like a complete rip off and waste of time though as I never intend to take on apprentices.