

The Society of Brownfield Risk Assessment (SoBRA) was established in 2009 to support the growing number of professionals working in land contamination risk assessment. It is a learned society for individuals, with membership drawn from the private, public, voluntary and academic sectors. Its goals are to improve technical knowledge in risk-based decision-making related to land contamination applications and to enhance the professional status and profile of practitioners. To this end the society has delivered six annual conferences and seven workshops to date. It is also about to launch a new registration scheme to demonstrate competence as a land contamination risk assessor.

The ability to demonstrate that you are competent in your field of work is important to us all. The multi-disciplinary field of land contamination assessment and management means there are many different routes that practitioners may enter the sector, such as geology, chemistry, engineering and environmental science. Risk assessment is a critical element in the evaluation of land affected by contamination and provides the cornerstone for wider decision making in the management of contaminated sites. To date there has been no single industry-wide scheme to demonstrate competence as a risk assessor. The **SoBRA Register of Risk Assessors** has been developed to fill this gap, recognising and rewarding the technical skills associated with land contamination risk assessment.

Inclusion on the SoBRA Register of Risk Assessors does not demonstrate that an individual is an expert but it does show that the individual possesses the technical, scientific and communications skills required to design, perform and critically evaluate land contamination risk assessments. The scheme is focussed on the technical detail associated with risk assessments but also requires that applicants have a broader understanding of the context and impact of risk assessment on the management of land affected by contamination.

The SoBRA Register of Risk Assessors has two grades of membership to reflect an individual’s experience and skills. The entry level is Registered Grade; individuals who are capable of undertaking and/or reviewing routine generic quantitative risk assessments without supervision but who are likely to need some assistance or guidance in conducting more complex risk assessments. The advanced register entry is the Fully Accredited Member Grade which would be someone with a thorough understanding of land contamination risk assessment, with experience of carrying out and/or reviewing more detailed and site specific risk assessments. On admission to the register, individuals will be permitted to use the post-nominal signature designations of RSoBRA and MSoBRA respectively.

As many risk assessors have differing levels of experience in different practice areas such as human health risk assessment or assessing risks to water environment receptors, registration entries are linked to their specific areas of competence. In very broad terms the two grades have been designed to be consistent with the Level 3 and Level 4 of the SiLC skills framework.

The application procedure requires the submission of written evidence to demonstrate competency, attested by referees and attendance at an interview. There is also a strict requirement for all register entrants to maintain membership of a professional body and a requirement for those seeking the Fully Accredited Member Grade to be chartered.

Although the SoBRA Register of Risk Assessors is a standalone scheme, it has been developed to be consistent with the SiLC Land Condition Skills Development Framework and the Land Forum’s National Land Quality Assurance Scheme, as they are currently configured.

The first tranche of applications are anticipated to be accepted in spring 2016. If you are interested in being included on the register, then visit www.sobra.org.uk for full details on the application requirements and start gathering your evidence for your written submission!