

# SUSTAINABILITY

## *BSIF Positioning Statement*

# INTRODUCTION

The BSIF in its own right as an entity and as the lead institution representing the interests of the Safety and Health Industry. We are committed to supporting all efforts to reduce our collective impact on the environment through sustainable practice.

Sustainability is a broad-spectrum subject and the BSIF has given thorough consideration to precisely what it means to us collectively, under the 4 key components in this paper.

We are not seeking to impose a view on others however given the criticality of the subject, consider it appropriate that our members and a wider audience sees affirmation of our position and the basis for it.

Following consultation with the membership through the mechanism of a survey and respecting the consensus views thereof, we have been mandated to provide a range of support and guidance, the scope of which we will address separately.



## POSITIONING STATEMENT

This statement has been developed in the context of the IPCC report on Climate Change, the UN's identification in 2015 of 17 SDG's (Sustainable Development Goals), the Governments' Net Zero 2050 commitment and commentary on the subject of circularity.

The BSIF considers that progress towards sustainability with measurable consequences for both people and planet, is dependent on the aggregate and synergistic effects of our collective efforts, behaviours and focus in 4 distinct interlocking subject areas:

- ENVIRONMENT
- CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY
- PRODUCT TECHNOLOGY
- ECONOMIC VIABILITY

## ENVIRONMENT

The single biggest contributor to global warming, the ultimate threat to our world today and for the generations which follow, is the level of CO<sup>2</sup> emissions.

The BSIF will encourage our members and the wider community to do all that's reasonable and realisable to progressively reduce emissions and while helpful, not to be satisfied with carbon neutral outcomes alone.

Individually, collectively and organisationally we should all be committed to limiting our direct impact on the environment through measures to reduce waste, reduce reliance on fossil fuel energy sources in favour of renewable/green energy, increase the use of recycled and recyclable materials where appropriate, achieve the progressive elimination of unnecessary plastic and maintain responsible use of scarce resources particularly water.

Plans which shape these measures should be regarded as evidence-based collateral when challenged or when seeking competitive advantage.



## CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY—CSR

Human resources are our most valuable assets with no distinction between those directly employed or working within the supply chains on which businesses depend. All have the right to expect fair treatment, fair reward, decent working conditions, opportunities to progress on merit and access to training and mentoring. Businesses with remote supply chains are legally obliged to satisfy themselves, to the greatest extent possible, that such conditions exist. The BSIF believes that a respected and well treated workforce directly builds sustainability ie: through continuity of employment, job satisfaction, increased productivity (good for business integrity) and security for the prospects of extended families.

Integral to the principle of social responsibility is the question of ethical trading. There is widespread evidence of the use of misleading or unsupported claims for the sustainable content of products which influence purchase decision making and on which people depend for their well-being. The label of “greenwashing” is an unwelcome addition to our vocabulary and the BSIF expects its members to be fully compliant with the CMA’s (Competition and Markets Authority) “Green Claims Code” guidelines on the basis for making environmental claims on goods and services.

## PRODUCT TECHNOLOGY

The BSIF considers that PPE product technology has a direct bearing on and contributes to, the wider dimension of sustainability.

Products which optimise wearer compliance through their design, (fit, comfort, protection, style, quality and features) mitigate workplace risk and in so doing reduce pressure on healthcare services, support productivity, assist continuity of income generating employment and help to sustain the workers and their extended family. Each factor yields a sustainability outcome.

Products which have extended life capability (excludes single use items) through their technology can be beneficial for the environment through: reduced replacement rates, reduced packaging waste, reduced admin processing and in many cases improved whole life cost profiles.



## ECONOMIC VIABILITY

The ability of businesses to improve their sustainability profile is highly dependent on their financial stability. Profit generation enables continuous investment in process efficiencies and other operational investments which lead to reduced environmental impact.

In parallel, financial stability supports the investment in skills and personal development-critical elements of organisational well-being and personal job satisfaction, both of which sustain business performance-a classic example of circularity.

