



MLA CAMPAIGNS FOR INDUSTRY RECOGNITION

Master Locksmiths Association funds development of nationally recognised locksmithing qualifications and apprenticeship framework in England.

The UK's biggest locksmithing trade association is reaffirming its commitment to the long-term development of the profession by funding the creation of nationally recognised qualifications.

Working alongside the skills body for the security industry, **Skills for Security**, the **Master Locksmiths Association (MLA)** has been instrumental in promoting the development of nationally recognised qualifications and a dedicated apprenticeship framework for the locksmithing sector in England.

Skills for Security and an Advisory Working group comprising of a significant number of MLA members and other industry practitioners (working locksmiths) have been working for 12 months on **National Occupational Standards (NOS)** for the industry which will be submitted to the regulator at the end of this month (March). Once approved, qualifications can then be developed by Skills for Security and industry practitioners.

As well as spearheading the campaign to create a nationally recognised qualification, the MLA is also financially supporting the development of the programme through surplus expected from the organisation's MLA Expo 11 exhibition at The International Centre in Telford (9-11 September).

An initial consultation meeting is being held for all locksmiths interested in discussing their views on qualifications and apprenticeships. It will be held on 6 May 2011, 10am – 12noon at Skills for Security in Worcester, after which a working group will be established to begin the development process.

Dr Steffan George, development director from the MLA said: “The MLA has been campaigning for a nationally recognised locksmithing qualification and an apprenticeship scheme for years in order to raise standards, help legitimise the profession and improve the reputation of our industry whilst assisting companies wanting to employ apprentices. In Skills for Security we now have a partner which shares our passion for developing the industry and the people who work in it.

“By sharing sector experience and knowledge across the locksmithing industry, we hope to create a universally recognised benchmark and increase consumer perception of locksmithing as a skilled and professional industry.

“Because the MLA is so passionate about achieving a professional status for the locksmithing industry, we are investing surplus made at this year’s MLA Expo to developing this qualification and apprenticeship framework. We encourage anyone looking to support our mission to show their support by coming along to the Expo in September.”

Developing a qualification framework and apprenticeship scheme is part of the MLA’s push to regulate the locksmithing profession and boost public perception. It is also campaigning to combat unregulated training courses and the sale of specialist tools to un-vetted and possibly ill-trained individuals or those looking to use the tools to the detriment of the public.

David Greer, CEO of Skills for Security said: “As an employer-led organisation, one of our core functions is to consult with employers and stakeholders throughout the UK to ensure that we understand the needs and views of the various sectors that make up the security business sector. Working in close partnership with the MLA and locksmithing companies will ensure that what we develop delivers the skills, competencies and qualifications employers, staff and clients need.

“The meeting in May gives locksmiths the opportunity to discuss and identify their qualification and apprenticeship requirements and our role is to ensure that their aspirations meet the regulatory guidance and that the qualifications we develop are fit for purpose. The Government is currently supporting apprenticeships with increased funding for training, so this is a great way to encourage younger people into the locksmithing profession.”

ENDS

Notes to Editors

Issued on behalf of the Master Locksmiths Association by Karol Marketing Group. For further information, pictures or to set up interviews please contact Hayley Ford on 0191 265 7765 or email hayley@karolmarketing.com

About the MLA

The Master Locksmiths Association (MLA) was established over 50 years ago to set and promote standards of conduct, practice and materials within locksmithing. The MLA is recognised as the authoritative body for locksmithing by the police, home office and other leading organisations such as the British Standards Institute.

As a not for profit association, the MLA ensure its member companies undergo strict vetting procedures so the public, government and industry receive the appropriate service and advice. MLA members share the ethos that 'skill and integrity' remain paramount in locksmithing and are able to provide sound advice based on knowledge and experience.

A list of approved MLA companies are listed on the MLA website, for further information please visit: www.locksmiths.co.uk

About the MLA Expo 2011

The MLA Expo 2011 is the 16th instalment of the event organised every two years by the Master Locksmiths Association (MLA). The three day event will take place 9-11 September 2011 at The International Centre in Telford. The event welcomes locksmiths, security personnel, police, insurers and suppliers from all over the world to discuss industry trends, find out the latest news and see the latest products.

For more information on the MLA Expo go to: www.locksmiths.co.uk/expo.

About Skills for Security

Skills for Security is the Sector Skills Body for the Security Business Sector and leads the way in raising standards to meet the demand for a more professional, highly trained and qualified workforce. Skills for Security works with employers and other stakeholders to develop standards, qualifications and apprenticeship frameworks that are fit for purpose and reflect the needs of the industry.

Locksmithing qualification meeting: **Friday 6th May 10.00 - 12.00** at Skills for Security in Worcester. To attend the meeting contact: ruth.oliver@skillsforsecurity.org.uk by **25th March**.

For more information on Skills for Security please visit www.skillsforsecurity.org.uk, email info@skillsforsecurity.org.uk or telephone 08450 750111.