

BCIS Data Collection Confidentiality Policy

March 2020

The Building Cost Information Service (BCIS) of RICS is the leading international professional body providing construction cost and price data to professionals in the built environment. We have been serving the industry since 1962 and are the only provider of independent cost information.

A highly qualified and dedicated team of data analysts deliver this data, adhering to the highest professional standards when collecting and handling commercially sensitive cost information.

We know the importance of keeping the data submitted to us strictly confidential and understand the potential predicament to the provider, as well as RICS, should this data be made public without specific permission. We have therefore put highly technical organisational measures in place, to ensure commercially sensitive information remains anonymous.

Unless permission has been expressly given, collected data will not be published. Published cost analyses are available to subscribers through the BCIS Online service. Project data that we do not have permission to publish will be held in a secure location and will only be used in anonymised statistical analysis that cannot be publicly connected in any way to the contributing organisations. No confidential information will be issued to any third party.

All RICS employees and contractors/consultants read, understand and agree to comply with this policy. They are expected to take all reasonable measures to safeguard and protect the data submitted to us and ensure confidentiality of information. We provide RICS employees and contractors/consultants with a copy of the most recent confidentiality policy and appropriate training, prior to these individuals gaining access to any data.

RICS management routinely review this policy and monitor its implementation and employee compliance closely. The executive director responsible for BCIS products and services oversees the implementation, maintenance and review of this policy.

We keep all submitted data in a secure location. Access is strictly limited to team members who have undertaken appropriate training. We implement adequate technical measures to protect your data.

This confidentiality statement applies exclusively to the data collected for the purposes of BCIS products and services and adheres to the current UK legislation.

Unauthorised disclosures of confidential information by employees will be treated as a disciplinary matter and reported to the relevant law enforcement authorities as appropriate.

DEFINITIONS

Confidentiality

For the purpose of this policy, confidentiality means any data collected will not be given directly or indirectly to any third party without consent by the data provider.

Data

Data submitted in electronic or hardcopy format.

Types of Data we receive

- Bills of Quantities
- Contract Sum Analysis
- Schedules of Work
- Design & Build

Types of companies who send us data

- Professional Quantity Surveying practices
- Professional multi-disciplinary practices who employ Quantity Surveyors
- Contractors
- Developers/Construction companies
- Local public authorities (councils)
- Health organisations (e.g. NHS etc)
- Housing Associations

Employees and contractors

- Employees refers to anyone employed by RICS to work on BCIS products and services.
- Contractors/consultants refers to anyone engaged on a consultancy basis to work on BCIS products and services.

Commercially sensitive information

In this policy, commercially sensitive information includes all information provided by the information supplier for the purpose of computing BCIS indices and analyses. The information includes, but is not limited to:

- project cost data
- programme data
- project description
- resource cost data
- project ownership information
- personal contact data.

Adequate technical measures

Databases

IT systems employed to secure the databases that contain all information submitted. This includes firewalls, encryption techniques and authentication procedures to maintain and protect the data. Our databases are protected from general employees' access and only a limited number of employees can change or copy content.

Security level

All project data submitted is assigned a security level denoting what we have permission to use the data for. The security levels are as follows:

1. vacant
2. draft sent to be published
3. permission to publish cost analysis
4. permission to publish analysis but analysis and/or GFA missing
5. needs permission to publish or permission is being sought
6. permission to publish denied at this level of analysis
7. permission to publish denied and will not be published
8. hosted analysis only available to the stakeholders
9. hosted analysis only available to the stakeholders and not suitable for statistical analysis (used for estimates etc.).

BCIS Online subscribers have access to all analyses with a security level of 3. The security code applies to the project analysis, e.g. an analysis at security level 3 will be available in full except for location information that is not for publication, Tender Price Index (TPI) data, TPI cost breakdown, trade indices and TPI credits. We only publish projects with a security level of 3.