

ContractorCalculator: Contracting news in brief

Agency Workers Regulations set to become law

Despite a last ditch attempt by the Association of Recruitment Consultancies to change parts of the legislation which could cause unnecessary and appropriate damage, hope has run out for [umbrella contractors](#), as the Agency Workers Regulations (AWR) have come to the [end of the period](#) in which MPs have the opportunity to amend the legislation before it comes into force. This means that any changes to the AWR before implementation on 1 October 2011 would require additional 'amending' legislation to be passed through Parliament. [More...](#)

IT and telecoms high priority in National Skills Audit

The National Strategic Skills Audit has identified IT and telecoms as requiring particular focus to meet the needs of the UK's future and changing economy. The audit ranked IT as first and telecoms as second priorities for future economic significance. Contractors in these sectors will find their skills in greater demand as, according to the audit, computing and software skills are of high priority and require immediate action. [More...](#)

City contractors benefit from financial sector job growth

More good news for IT contractors as the latest [Morgan McKinley](#) London Employment Monitor reports that demand for City workers is up 67% on February 2009. The City of London is the UK's largest consumer of IT contractors, and any upswing in its fortunes can only benefit contractors. Andrews Evans of Morgan McKinley is cautiously optimistic: "We remain more positive about the outlook for the financial services jobs market compared to a year ago, however the depth of the recession in financial services should not allow for any complacency and the jobs market is still at a delicate stage of growth." [More...](#)

Offshore and energy contractors ride with the waves

Contractors with transferable energy and engineering skills stand to gain from the world's first wave and tidal energy leasing round to developers. These new schemes will draw on the UK's huge strengths in offshore and energy related engineering. Roger Bright, Chief Executive of Crown Estates, which leases the offshore rights to developers, says: "This announcement demonstrates the UK's position as the leader in wave and tidal technologies. This emerging industry has a bright and promising future." [More...](#)

Construction contractors running out of time

The responses to the responses to the Treasury's 'False self-employment in construction' consultation have been published to the general dismay of the sector. Despite the fact that the Treasury understands the parlous state of the construction industry and does not intend to implement any changes until after recovery, it still seems intent on branding every worker in the sector an employee. [More...](#)

Headline unemployment falls, but big picture still unclear

The latest Labour Market Bulletin published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) shows that although unemployment benefit claims are down by 32,000, the total number of people in employment has fallen by 54,000 and the number of long-term unemployed has increased by 61,000. More than 20,000 people have opted for part-time work or self-employment, almost certainly including new contractors. So whilst some of the headline figures have improved a little, even ministers are expecting employment to worsen further before it improves. [More...](#)

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