

FROM THE INDUSTRY

COFNII

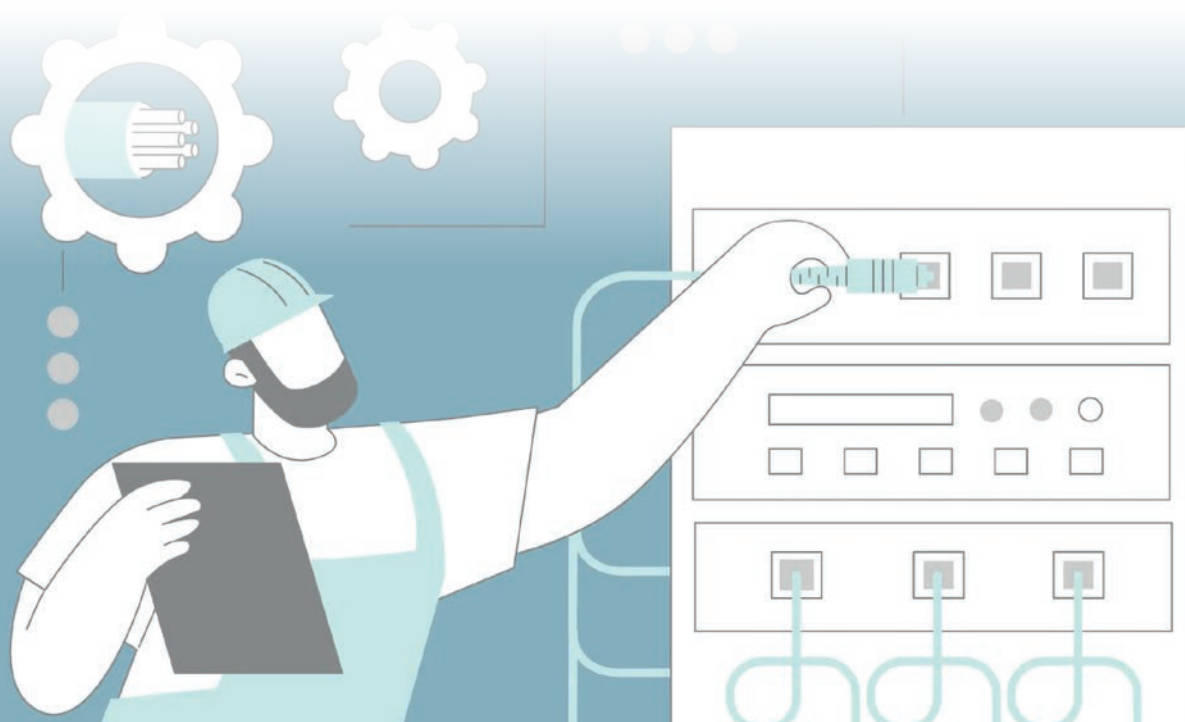
UPDATE

BY PAUL FORSTER, CHAIR, COFNII



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CHAIR, COFNII

THE CONFEDERATION OF FIBRE OPTIC NETWORK INFRASTRUCTURE AND INSTALLERS (COFNII) WAS CREATED AT THE REQUEST OF THE FIBRE TELECOMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY TO SUPPORT THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND NETWORK INFRASTRUCTURE INDUSTRIES.



The committee currently has 13 volunteer members from different backgrounds within the industry. It addresses network operators' issues that have arisen over the years, from planning and building networks to installation. You can view the members on our website: <https://cofnii.org/>

Some of the organisations who sit on the committee include:

- Total Network Solutions (Europe) Ltd
- Zzoomm (ISP)
- Lightspeed Broadband (ISP)
- Airband (ISP)
- City Fibre (ISP)
- Nokia
- VIAVI Solutions
- Aqua Comms (Global Carrier)
- CDJ Planning
- J Bayliss Consulting

Our mission at COFNII is not just a statement but a call to action. We believe it's time for change in the industry, and we're ready to lead the way. We want to work collaboratively across the sector to improve it and resolve the issues that have arisen. This is not just a mission but a shared vision that we can all strive towards.

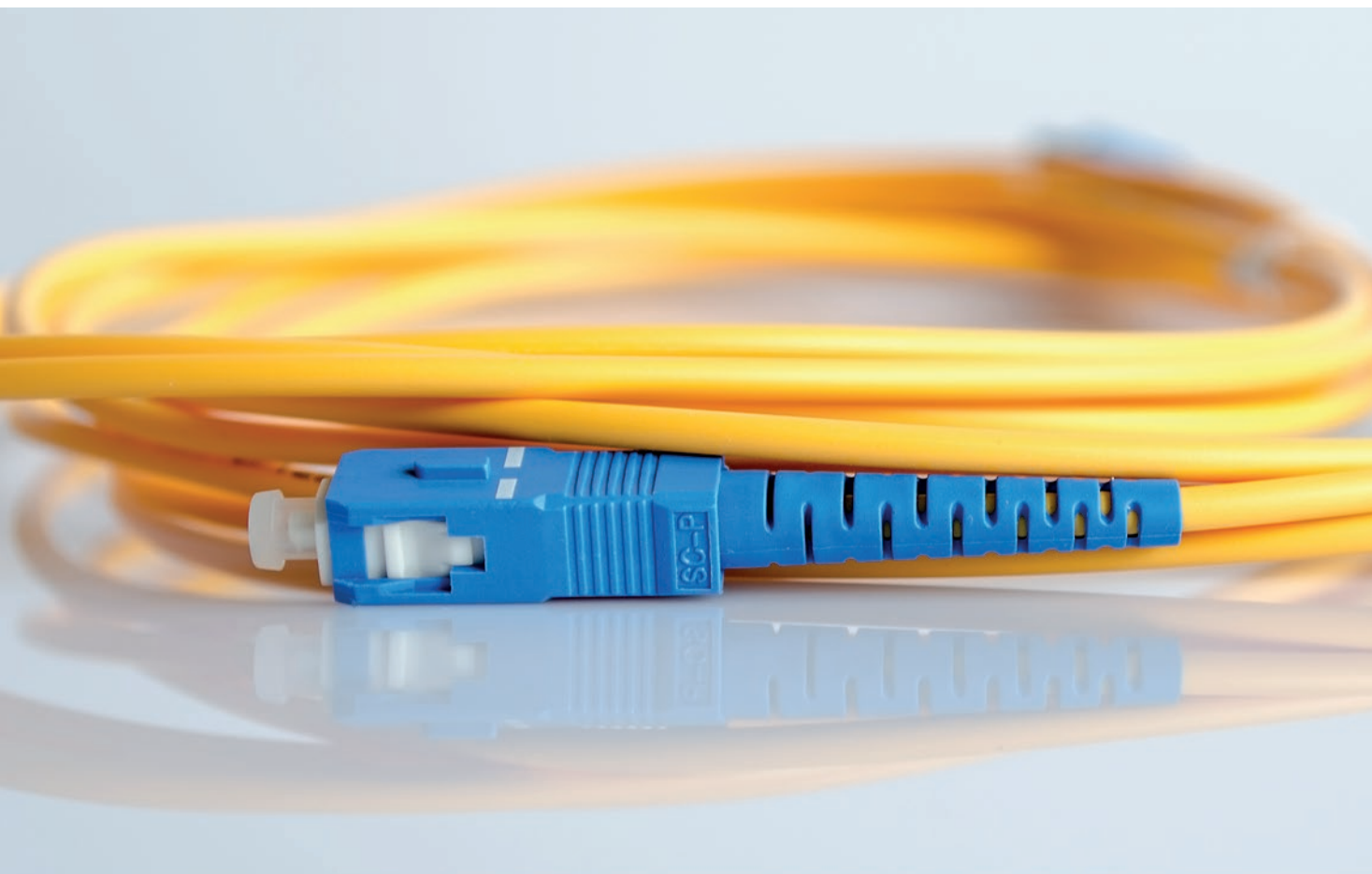
The Committee was formed to address the fibre telecoms market and communications sector, including the enterprise network.

Fibre broadband is the fourth most significant utility. Many find it more important than any other service as we move to a more excellent broadband delivery over fibre optics; end users use it for their everyday lives, and having access to the internet is a priority. Want faster upload and download speeds? Fibre optics give us this, whereas copper fibre to the cabinet (FTTC) is still limited.

The industry isn't perfect and it's far from ideal. Still, network operators have also been affected by the industry over the last five to six years. Many have entered the sector poorly trained and with no vocational qualifications; it's not their fault they chose a training provider who wrongly advised them.

The industry has been seeking help and advice on network deployments for years, and there are many different trade associations out there, but none want to take on a big challenge, not until now.

At COFNII, we don't believe in working in silos. We aim to bridge the gap between and work with network operators, manufacturers and installers. We're all part of this industry, and only by working together can we bring about the changes we all want to see.



1. Developing a new qualification to address the skills gap is not an isolated decision. It results from an industry-wide consultation in which your voices are heard and your needs are at the forefront. This qualification, currently undergoing due diligence, is a testament to our commitment to you.
2. The introduction of Individual Membership for qualified installers, with secure digital ID cards, aims to provide recognition and credibility to these professionals, similar to other trades like electrical and gas. This initiative not only elevates the status of installers but also ensures that they meet the required standards, enhancing the industry's overall quality.
3. Working parties set to address standards and aim for regulation of the industry.
4. Corporate membership is for organisations to stop poor quality and make them accountable, like other industries. Network Operators can verify and check the quality and prevent individuals from closing a



company and starting again under a different name. It's time to stamp it out, moving from one victim to another.

5. The approved training provider and certified trainer scheme aimed to combat poor-quality training and ensure that training is delivered correctly to the required standard.
6. A working party to work on standards and how the industry should work with standards bodies like the BSI group.
7. Training provider selection is in progress to raise the standards of training required to ensure network operators and employers can bridge the skills gap. Some of the COFNI-approved schemes are featured above.

COFNI aims to collaborate across the industry, including close partnerships with the SCTE and others, to ensure the correct and high-quality construction of fibre networks and network infrastructure. By collaborating, both parties want to strengthen the industry and raise standards.

The hard work has started and is now gaining momentum. If you want to get involved, more information on the Confederation of Fibre Network Infrastructure and Installers can be found at <https://cofnii.org>. Please email us at info@cofnii.org or call us on 0330 133 1823.

<https://cofnii.org>