



PIPA Review 2024

About Us

Who we are

“PIPA” is the Professional Inflatable Play Association. We are an industry body set up to improve standards in play inflatable safety in the UK. As a ‘not for profit’ organisation, our work connects inflatable play inspectors, operators, organisations and enforcement to ensure standards continue to improve across the industry in the UK and beyond.

What we do

PIPA’s inspection scheme provides a framework to certify inflatable play inspectors as competent to undertake inspections of inflatable play devices. It provides an online inspection portal to record and publish inspection reports, providing assurance about how inspections are conducted. PIPA verifies that its inspectors remain competent and up to date as it continues to expand on the current safety standards to bring more inflatable play devices under the scope of the scheme. PIPA provides training and guidance to members of the industry to promote confidence to members of the public when they use inflatable play devices.

Where we work

Our work is primarily focused in the UK. As a trusted organisation, we have provided assistance to EU member-state countries in providing guidance and clarification on inflatable play safety. PIPA inspectors can be based in any location in the world.

Who we work with

PIPA seeks to work with all members of the industry to improve standards in inflatable play. We have a strong relationship with the Health & Safety Executive in the UK, who were consulted at every stage of PIPA’s inception, and who we continue to work with today. As we continue to grow the scope of the scheme, PIPA is here to work with manufacturers, controllers, operators, local authorities and the public to ensure its work meets the demands of all its stakeholders.

How we are governed

The day-to-day activity of PIPA is conducted through the PIPA office. The executive board of PIPA is the PIPA Leadership Group (PLG) who are an elected group of members, and co-opted non-members, who are there to hold the PIPA office to account, and ensure the scheme is delivering its objectives.

Accountability and Funding

PIPA is funded through fees levied within PIPA inspections generated through its inspection portal. It also generates funds from training programmes and membership. It is accountable for how these funds are used in order to improve the industry. Part of the accountability is by the PLG not being a paid function for the work they do as the governing body. As we are entrusted to ensure funds are used appropriately, our members are provided with details of account information during the annual general meeting.

Project Alpha

PIPA has had substantial growth in the past 2-3 years, and it has led to some of its functions being outgrown to how the organisation operates and manages the scheme. Project Alpha is PIPA's transformational agenda in ensuring the scheme remains viable for at least the next 10 years.

The project is in two phases. The first phase introduces an employed PIPA office to carry out the day-to-day operation and management of the scheme, whilst moving the PLG away from an operational function to a more strategic role. The second phase helps to secure assurance with our stakeholders, by becoming a UKAS accredited body in its function to certify PIPA inspectors.

Vision 2035

Setting out our vision helps us to focus our work on moving forward to where we want to be for our stakeholders. And by doing so, we know that we are using our resources in a way which helps improve the industry and provides assurance to those who use the PIPA scheme.

In 2035, PIPA will be:

- The UK's inspection scheme for all inflatable play equipment.
- The industry's professional body, representative of manufacturers, controllers, enforcers, and end-users.
- A trusted organisation, looked up to by both those who work inside the industry, and those who use the inflatable industry's services.
- Operating as a professional and efficient organisation.

To ensure that we achieve our vision, we are committed to working with other organisations and individuals who will support our work in raising standards in inflatable play.

PIPA Review 2024

In summer 2024, PIPA conducted a series of consultations for both PIPA members, and all other stakeholders. The aim of the consultation was to obtain feedback, comments and views from all about how the PIPA scheme should work for the industry and the public. The feedback we obtained is critical as we re-align the scheme in preparation for our journey to UKAS accreditation.

This document illustrates the changes to PIPA which will be presented to members ahead of the 2024 AGM, to seek approval to change the scheme rules to align against this review.

Sections which are written in blue italics, provides details gained from PIPA's consultations. In total we received 102 responses, split evenly between PIPA Member responses, and the public response.

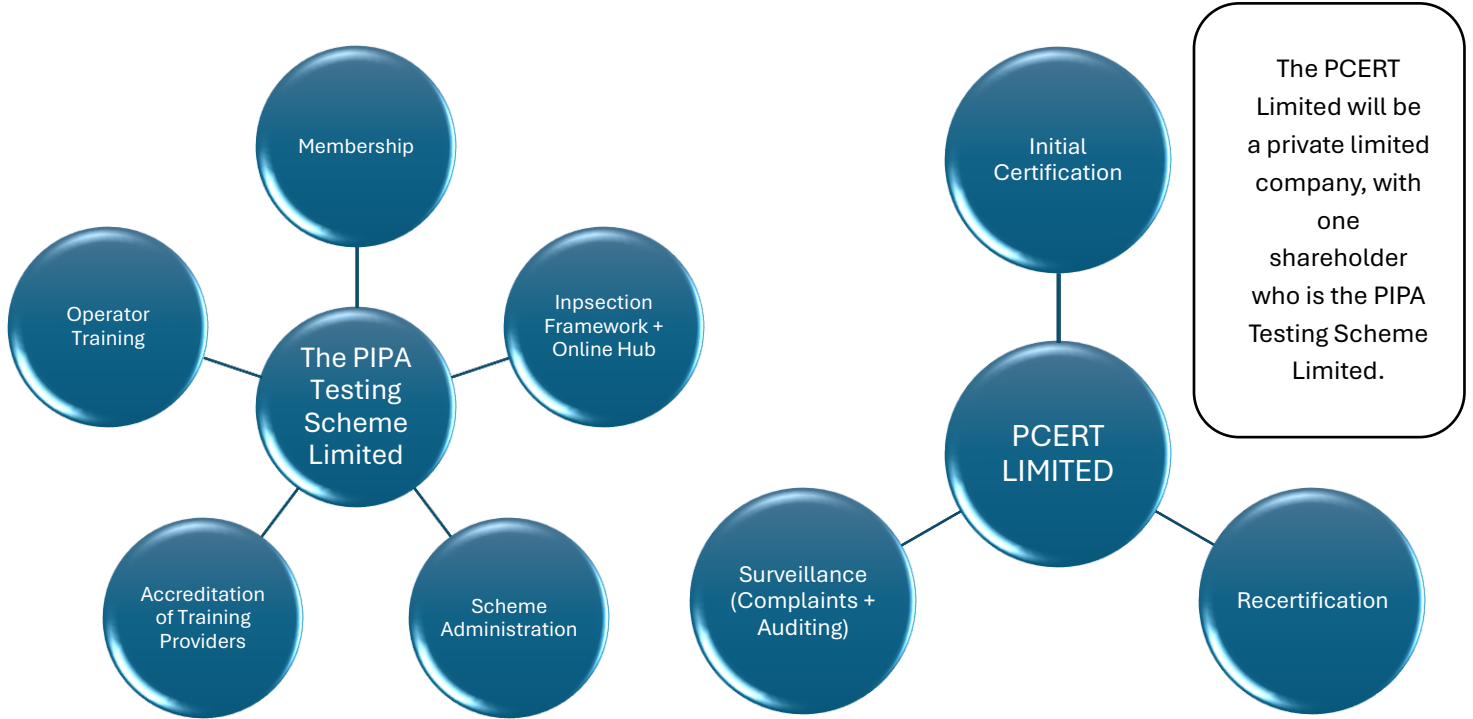
Where we state, 'expressed agreement', this is when people responded with somewhat agree or above in the following choices:

Very Disagreeable – Disagreeable – Somewhat Disagreeable – Somewhat Agreeable – Agreeable – Very Agreeable

1) The Structure of PIPA as an Organisation

The structure of PIPA will change into two companies responsible for different aspects of the scheme.

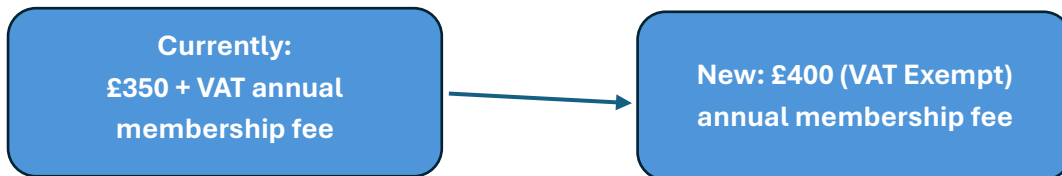
This will help to separate the functions which need to be impartial and have zero to little influence by PLG, away from the rest of the scheme.



To be a member of The PIPA Testing Scheme, you must be a certified person

- ✓ Certification completed by PCERT Limited
- ✓ Fees will be levied in the normal manner

Update to Fees



2) The Structure and Function of the PIPA Leadership Group

Function of the PLG as a group



The PLG is there to :

- Ensure the integrity of PIPA is upheld
- To remain impartial from the certification scheme
- To set the strategic direction of the scheme by drafting and approving strategic documents
- Ensure the finances are used appropriately
- Identify risks to scheme and take action
- To formalise sanctions imposed upon the members of the scheme
- To ensure the managing director and PIPA office is effective

Structure of PIPA and the PLG

- There will be 10 elected PLG members in total
 - o At least 4 PLG will be members of the scheme
 - o The remaining 6 PLG will be a mixture of members and non-members
- All PLG members will be directors of the organisation (provided they meet prerequisites)
- The PLG will vote a chairman by secret ballot
- There are rules for PLG membership, elections, directors, co-option, and removal
- The PLG act as a board for the organisation. The managing director is answerable to the board.
- Each PLG member will sit within a specified committee

PLG Committees

The below sets out the expectations of each committee. There is a term of reference for members of the committee to adhere to.

- Finance Committee
 - o Responsible to detect fraud or improper use of the schemes finances
 - o Monitoring adherence to finance related policies
 - o Annual budget analysis
 - o End of year financial review and analysis
- Governance and Compliance Committee
 - o Oversight of the complaints procedure
 - o Maintenance of a company risk register
 - o Policy compliance and audit

- Investigation Outcome Committee
 - o Authority to issue formal sanctions as part of the complaints process
 - o Review of appeals (complaint and non-complaint related matters)

General terms

A full term of reference for PLG members has been drafted. Within it dictates the PLG code of conduct, how meetings are conducted, how PLG members should act in public, the commitment levels expected as a PLG member and remuneration as a voluntary role.

3) PIPA Inspections

Definition of a PIPA Inspection

A PIPA inspection is based on the standard BS EN14960 and is underpinned by PIPA guidance. It uses the framework provided by HSG175 to dictate the frequency and style of inspection (Pre-Use Inspection, Annual Inspection etc). PIPA Inspectors can only perform inspections against devices which:

- Fall under the scope of the scheme
- Fall within the scope of their certification

The ability to update guidance quickly means inspection standards will be implemented as and when new data or research becomes available. This helps to continue to improve and drive standards across the industry.

Findings Framework

The PIPA findings framework sets out the particulars of what is a pass or a failure for components of a PIPA inspection and describes which guidance should be referred to and considered. It helps not only to drive improvements and better standards, it also helps to ensure consistency amongst inspectors.

This will also involve the scope of a risk assessment, and when it can be applied against a device.

48 out of 51 respondents in the public consultation, and 47 out of 51 respondents in the PIPA membership consultation, think PIPA should continue to produce further guidance and technical bulletins to show the expectations against BS EN 14960.

47 out of 51 respondents in the public consultation, and 45 out of 51 respondents in the PIPA membership consultation, think there should be clearly defined tolerances and limits for then they can be used.

Inspectors cannot perform inspections of their own equipment

The style of inspections being performed are conformity against the PIPA inspection framework. For conformity to work at its best, it must be an impartial assessment of the device. There are too many variables when the devices being inspected are also owned by the person performing the inspection assessment.

35 out of 51 respondents in the public consultation, and 42 out of 51 respondents in the PIPA membership consultation, expressed agreement in restricting inspectors being able to perform inspections against equipment owned by the inspection body.

Inspectors can perform inspections outside of PIPA

The PIPA inspection scheme has a governance framework which oversees inspection reports which are produced. In the event of a query or concern, PIPA is able to take action against the inspector. If a PIPA inspector was able to produce an in-house certificate, there would be a risk that inspectors could bypass the governance framework which oversees their work.

However, PIPA inspectors will be able to produce an inspection report provided it is issued under the guise of another UKAS accredited scheme.

Inspection of Indoor Inflatable Leisure Parks

PIPA's vision is to enable all devices to fall under the PIPA Scheme. For some time, consideration has been given to how to bring large inflatable play parks into the scheme. There is great variance in how these play parks are designed and manufactured, and there have been a number of accidents which puts them in the spotlight. A major accident could tarnish the industry into bad light despite these inflatable play parks not being part of PIPA.

To help improve consistency within the industry, we have been in discussions with the Leisure Equipment & Asset Protection Scheme (LEAPS) who have been producing a framework for inflatable play parks. Rather than create two different inspection frameworks, we have agreed to collaborate to produce a single framework with the following principles:

The logo for LEAPS (Leisure Equipment & Asset Protection Scheme) is displayed in large, bold, blue capital letters. The letters are spaced out and have a slight shadow effect, giving it a three-dimensional appearance.

- ✓ A single and jointly agreed inspection framework used by both PIPA and LEAPS
- ✓ Inflatable play parks will be PIPA tagged
- ✓ Only inspectors who have undertaken the necessary steps and hold a current membership with LEAPS will be permitted to tag and inspect inflatable play parks

- ✓ Only inflatable play parks which fall within the LEAPS scheme will be permitted to be PIPA tagged:

- Indoor attractions only
- LEAPS annual inspection
- LEAPS operational assessment

35 out of 51 respondents in the public consultation, and 26 out of 51 respondents in the PIPA membership consultation, expressed agreement in opening up the PIPA scheme to be used by other organisations.

40 out of 51 respondents in the public consultation, and 45 out of 51 respondents in the PIPA membership consultation, expressed agreement in expanding the PIPA scheme to enable inspections outside of BS EN 14960.

Updated Pricing Structure

To ensure PIPA remains viable and is used in a manner that is promoted within the industry, the following pricing changes will take place with regards to PIPA inspections:

- PIPA Tags will become free of charge
- PIPA Reports will be £10 per issued report, with no charge for failed inspection reports

To help manage the costs associated with providing tags free of charge, a maximum limit of 10% of an inspector's annual usage, or 20 tags (whichever is greater), will be permitted at any one time. The minimum quantity delivered will be increased to 20 tags.

4) Becoming a PIPA Inspector

Types of PIPA Inspector

Certification will enable the scope of an inspector to vary. This means that there can be different types of inspectors so people can work within their own contextual area.

- All inspectors will be able to perform Pre-Use Inspections and/or Initial inspections on inflatable devices which fall under the scheme rules.
- Inspectors who complete additional assessment will be able to conduct annual inspections
- As inspectors undertake additional training and examination, the scope of their certification will expand to include further devices (such as non ride-on games, toddler playzones, etc)



Minimum Experience Requirements

The requirement to undergo PIPA initial certification will include:

- ✓ A minimum of 3-years industry related experience (such as an operator or controller)
- ✓ Completion of a PIPA accredited inspector training course
- ✓ A basic DBS check
- ✓ PIPA examination
- ✓ Insurance documentation check
- ✓ Equipment audit and calibration check

43 out of 51 respondents in the public consultation, and 45 out of 51 respondents in the PIPA membership consultation, expressed agreement in the requirement of holding minimum experience to undergo PIPA certification.

23 out of 51 respondents in the public consultation, and 35 out of 51 respondents in the PIPA membership consultation, think PIPA inspectors should hold a basic DBS check.

41 out of 51 respondents in the public consultation, and 43 out of 51 respondents in the PIPA membership consultation, think PIPA inspectors should have their equipment calibrated and checked.

To enrol onto a PIPA accredited inspector training course

All those who are interested in completing a PIPA accredited inspector training course will need to undertake an aptitude test. This will help to ascertain they have the correct underpinning knowledge to understand the training given.

33 out of 51 respondents in the public consultation, and 40 out of 51 respondents in the PIPA membership consultation, expressed agreement that an aptitude test should be undertaken.

Training Requirements

There is an expectation that all PIPA inspectors complete a training course which has been accredited by PIPA prior to completing the PIPA examination.

Training courses will be provided by 3rd party training companies, which have been accredited by PIPA against a set training scheme to achieve specific learning outcomes. The learning outcomes will remain the same across all training courses to ensure that the same knowledge is being delivered across the board.

To recognise UKAS accredited membership schemes which assess against BS EN 14960, the accreditation will enable a gap analysis to be performed and a bridging course to achieve the same learning outcomes.

- Current PIPA members: will be required to undertake the PIPA transition course. This ensures inspectors understand the PIPA inspection framework, and how to complete pre-use inspections.
- UKAS Accredited Examinations against BS EN 14960: will be required to undertake the PIPA transition course. This ensures inspectors understand the PIPA inspection framework, and how to complete pre-use inspections.
- All other people will be expected to complete a PIPA accredited inspector training course

Out of 51 respondents in the public consultation:

- *23 want in-house training to be provided specifically by PIPA and inspectors are required to take the exam*
- *21 want training to be provided by an external provider, and is required to take the exam*
- *7 want training to be available in some format, but is not a requirement to undertake the exam*

Out of 51 respondents in the PIPA membership consultation:

- *30 want in-house training provided by PIPA*
- *18 want training to be provided by an accredited provider*
- *0 want training to be provided by an open market with no accreditation*
- *3 want no training to be required*

In review of the above, PIPA is unable to meet the requirements of UKAS if it were to provide training in-house. This is due to the risk of not being able to attain impartiality between trainers, examiners, and inspector members. Therefore, the training must be outsourced to third parties.

49 out of 51 respondents in the public consultation, and 46 out of 51 respondents in the PIPA membership consultation, stated a requirement for all people to become a PIPA inspector, they should complete a PIPA examination.



5) Remaining a PIPA Inspector

In order to remain a PIPA inspector, you will need to recertify every 3 years

Recertification is used to ensure that PIPA inspectors remain up to date with their work and continue to conform against the certification requirements. Recertification is either:

- Submission of a Portfolio of Evidence, or
- Undertaking the PIPA examination

33 out of 51 respondents in the public consultation, and 16 out of 51 respondents in the PIPA membership consultation, expressed agreement that PIPA inspector should resit the exam every 3 years.

Out of 51 respondents in the public consultation:

- 23 want inspectors to complete a portfolio of evidence before becoming a PIPA inspector
- 20 want inspectors to complete a portfolio of evidence after becoming a PIPA inspector
- 8 do not want inspectors to complete a portfolio of evidence

Out of 51 respondents in the PIPA membership consultation:

- 39 want inspectors to complete a portfolio of evidence
- 12 do not want inspectors to complete a portfolio of evidence

In review of the above, as examination was chosen as a method to assess the competence of people wishing to become PIPA inspectors, the portfolio of evidence has been used as a method to gain assurances for recertification every 3 years. It is up to the inspector whether they wish to complete the portfolio of evidence, or simply undergo re-examination.

Portfolio of Evidence

The portfolio is a way of showing that you remain up to date and current with the requirements of PIPA without having to undertake the PIPA examination. The exact nature of what the portfolio includes will be determined, but as an example we could request every three years the following:

- 1) CPD entries – 8 hours of CPD completed each year. Guidance will be provided about what CPD looks like and how to record it
- 2) A peer review discussion – a recorded account of a conversation held with a fellow peer about a particular aspect of your work, and your learnings and reflections as a result of the conversation
- 3) Mapped competency – submission of self-audited inspection reports against different types of devices

12 out of 51 respondents in the public consultation, and 44 out of 51 respondents in the PIPA membership consultation, stated it should be a requirement to undertake CPD to recertify.

8 out of 51 respondents in the public consultation, and 11 out of 51 respondents in the PIPA membership consultation, stated it should be a requirement to complete a peer review to recertify.

36 out of 51 respondents in the public consultation, and 23 out of 51 respondents in the PIPA membership consultation, stated it should be a requirement for their work to be audited by the PIPA office to recertify.

19 out of 51 respondents in the public consultation, and 10 out of 51 respondents in the PIPA membership consultation, stated that inspectors should complete a theory assessment to recertify.

In both consultations, 8 hours was the most popular choice for the amount of CPD inspections should be completed each year.

Surveillance

Surveillance refers to the techniques used to monitor certified persons to ensure they continue to remain within scope of certification. PIPA is already familiar with surveillance, through the use of audits and the complaints procedure. There is also a new type of surveillance which will be implemented – inspection feedback.



Complaints

PIPA will continue to utilise the complaints procedure it currently has adopted to monitor, enforce and address concerns raised about inspectors.

Auditing

The auditing process has been reviewed following the changes in the office function and inspection portal. Further details of what this looks like will follow.

Inspection Feedback

As part of the standard email to controllers after a report has been issued, a link to inspection feedback will be provided. People will be invited to provide feedback about inspectors, and this will be shared with inspectors on a regular basis.

Respondents in the PIPA membership consultation indicated that customers should be sent a link to provide feedback about their work. When asked in the public consultation 39 out of 51 respondents agreed.

6) PIPA Examination

Examination

After a review of the training and examination process in March 2024, the current style of examination will remain. This involved trainers, and examiners being different people and not involved at both stages to ensure there was an impartial process. There will be a slight adaptation to suit the different roles of inspectors as below:

All inspectors

- ✓ Theory Exam
- ✓ Practical Exam
- ✓ Method Demonstration (use of equipment and accepted measuring techniques)

Annual Inspections

- ✓ Theory Exam (supplement to above exam)
- ✓ Practical Exam



48 out of 51 respondents in the public consultation, and 47 out of 51 respondents in the PIPA membership consultation, expressed an agreement that it should be a requirement for inspectors to be examined in the correct measurement technique on each part of an inflatable inspection.

Exam Locations

During the transition period, more exam locations, dates and times will be available across the country to help people access the exam. After the transition period, exams will be offered on set dates, at set intervals (e.g. quarterly) across the country.

In both the public and the PIPA membership consultation:

- *33% opted for an online theory assessment, without invigilation (i.e. open book)*
- *33% opted for an online assessment, within an exam centre (i.e. open or closed book)*
- *33% opted for a paper-based assessment, within an exam centre (i.e. open or closed book)*

43 out of 51 respondents in the public consultation, and 36 out of 51 respondents in the PIPA membership consultation, chose the exam to take place at venues across the UK which meet a minimum requirement, compared to a single venue which is central in the UK.

Chief Examiner Role

The Chief Examiner is responsible for the conduct of examiners and will not be involved in the examination process by large. Their role is to provide an impartial overview to the process, audit, assess the examiners, and ensure consistency.

41 out of 51 respondents in the public consultation, and 36 out of 51 respondents in the PIPA membership consultation, agreed that PIPA should have a chief examiner role.

Inflatable Device Types

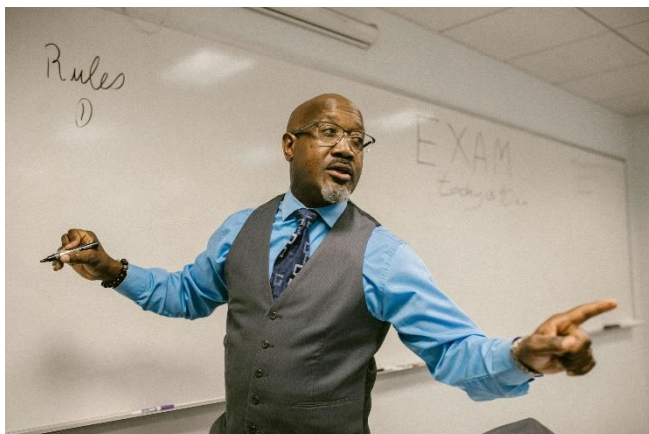
The main type of device used in the practical exam for all inspectors is a combo-slide inflatable. This will help to ensure that, plus the method demonstration exam, will help cover the different considerations during an inspection of an inflatable device.

18 out of 51 respondents in the public consultation (the largest selection), and 40 out of 51 respondents in the PIPA membership consultation, chose a Combo-Slide device as the unit inspectors should be examined against.

Pass Mark = 80%

In the public consultation the average pass mark from the answers provided was 82.87%. Whilst for the PIPA membership consultation the average pass mark was 81.04%.

Requirements to become an examiner



The following is required to become an examiner:

- ✓ 4 years' experience as a PIPA inspector
- ✓ 90% pass mark in the PIPA examination
- ✓ Completion of invigilator training e-learning
- ✓ Audit of latest work
- ✓ CV and history check

The examiner will be re-assessed every 3 years to check they remain suitable, whilst undergoing surveillance whilst in their role.

In the public consultation the average number of required years for the answers provided was 3.63. Whilst for the PIPA membership consultation the average number of years was 4.19.

In the public consultation the average pass mark for an examiner from the answers provided was 87.47%. Whilst for the PIPA membership consultation the average pass mark was 90.55%.

33 out of 51 respondents in the public consultation, and 28 out of 51 respondents in the PIPA membership consultation, think examiners should be subject to an audit review of their latest inspections.

13 out of 51 respondents in the public consultation, and 23 out of 51 respondents in the PIPA membership consultation, think examiners should receive a structured interview.

27 out of 51 respondents in the public consultation, and 16 out of 51 respondents in the PIPA membership consultation, think examiners should have history checks undertaken.

In the public consultation, 23 out of 51 respondents believed examiners should undergo invigilator training, and 15 out of 51 respondents believe examiners should be under additional membership scrutiny (e.g. not under investigation, in bad debt, and complete a minimum number of inspections per year). These questions were added to the public consultation from the feedback received in the PIPA membership consultation.

Invigilators

PIPA will use invigilators working under written policies and procedures to oversee parts of the theory / written assessment.

32 out of 51 respondents in the public consultation, and 35 out of 51 respondents in the PIPA membership consultation, think invigilators could be used to oversee theory exams.

7) The Future of PIPA

PIPA will commit to work towards the following projects as part of its strategic plan and vision:

- 1) PIPA will work to include all constant air inflatables, used for commercial hire and reward, considered to be amusement play devices, within the PIPA scheme. This will remove the ambiguity around what can or cannot be PIPA tagged and provide a degree of homogenisation across the inflatable industry.

40 out of 51 respondents in the public consultation, and 47 out of 51 respondents in the PIPA membership consultation, expressed agreement in expanding the scope of the scheme outside of BS EN 14960.

- 2) PIPA will work to include devices outside of the amusement play category, due to their increasing prevalence. Such as tumble tracks and gymnastic equipment.
- 3) PIPA will work towards including sealed air devices, considered to be amusement play devices, within the scope of its scheme.

34 out of 51 respondents in the public consultation, and 28 out of 51 respondents in the PIPA membership consultation, expressed agreement to include sealed air devices.

- 4) PIPA will seek to accredit repairers to help drive improvements.

42 out of 51 respondents in the public consultation, and 36 out of 51 respondents in the PIPA membership consultation, expressed agreement that PIPA should accredit repairers.

- 5) PIPA will consider insurance aspects and see whether it has a role to play in providing insurance across the industry.

45 out of 51 respondents in the public consultation, and 46 out of 51 respondents in the PIPA membership consultation, expressed agreement to PIPA providing insurance for its members.

- 6) PIPA will work towards a Controller and Operator membership scheme. +

44 out of 51 respondents in the public consultation, and 42 out of 51 respondents in the PIPA membership consultation, expressed agreement in PIPA providing a controller membership scheme.

43 out of 51 respondents in the public consultation, and 45 out of 51 respondents in the PIPA membership consultation, expressed agreement in PIPA providing an operator/attendant membership scheme.