REINVENTIVES
CONSTRUCTION

BRIEFING NOTE 014

Responding to sustainability questionnaires

Build a reusable evidence pack that answers customer questions consistently.

Version 1.0 | Published and reviewed: 9 September 2026 | 5-minute read

Status: Recommended reporting practice; specific requests may be contractual.

Audience: Construction suppliers, merchants and subcontractors; commercial and reporting leads.

Executive summary

A customer questionnaire should produce an accurate answer about your business, supported by evidence someone can retrieve. Repeated requests become easier when sales, finance, operations and sustainability use an agreed information pack. Start by establishing what the customer needs, which entity and period the answer covers, and whether it affects tender eligibility or contract delivery. A voluntary reporting framework can help organise the information, but it does not automatically satisfy every customer request.[1] Answer gaps openly and agree how they will be resolved.

Start here. Bring together three recent customer questionnaires and mark the questions that repeat, the evidence already available and the unresolved answers.

In plain terms. The questionnaire is the customer-facing form. Your evidence pack is the controlled information behind it: figures, policies, calculation records and approvals. Keep those records reusable, then tailor each response to the customer's definitions. One approved answer should never silently change meaning when copied into a different form.

Match the answer to the question

Customer asks for	Check before responding
Company emissions	Entity, year, activities, units and greenhouse gas scopes; a company inventory is not a product footprint.[3]
Product evidence	Product and factory coverage, validity, declared unit and the requested document type.
Policies and performance	Separate a signed policy, a future commitment and measured results. Give the relevant dates.
Independent review	State exactly what was checked, by whom and within which scope. Internal approval is different.

Use a framework without overstating it

The European Commission adopted a revised Voluntary Standard on 3 July 2026, building on the earlier standard for smaller businesses. Its Basic Module covers environmental, workforce and governance information; the Comprehensive Module adds detail and requires the Basic Module first. Requirements apply when choosing this voluntary reporting route.[1][2]

The adopted text links a limit on certain value-chain requests to companies averaging no more than 1,000 employees. Its cap provision is scheduled for financial years beginning on or after 1 January 2027; entry into force depends on Official Journal publication. It is not a blanket right to reject product-safety, procurement or other customer questions. Confirm the applicable legal position before relying on it.[2]

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Recommended actions

Suggested owners, timing and evidence for the next steps:

1. **Triage the request.** Record the buyer, deadline, entity, reporting period and consequence of an incomplete answer. Keep the original questions and obtain written clarification of ambiguous definitions or mandatory evidence. *Commercial lead, on receipt.*
2. **Create the answer register.** Give each recurring answer an owner, source, approval date and review trigger. Store links to evidence, with units and boundaries, so colleagues can reproduce the response. *Reporting lead, before drafting.*
3. **Resolve the gaps.** Distinguish unavailable, not applicable and zero. Assign gaps to owners; label accepted estimates. If a portal forces an inaccurate answer, agree a qualification with the buyer and keep its response. *Operations and finance, during preparation.*
4. **Check the complete response.** Reconcile totals and dates, distinguish policies from results, and review sensitive workforce or commercial information. Keep the approved export and the evidence version used to answer it. *Authorised reviewer, before submission.*
5. **Maintain the record.** Save the receipt, commitments and follow-up dates. Update reusable answers when the reporting year, product range or underlying policy changes, and correct material errors with the customer. *Account owner, after submission.*

Example in practice

Illustrative example: a merchant receives 40 questions, of which 28 match approved answers and 12 need clarification or new evidence. The team can reuse 70% of the responses, but still checks each question’s scope and date. An unanswered question remains visible; it is not converted to a zero.

Common mistakes and what to do instead

- Copying the parent company’s figures: identify the entity covered and explain any group-level answer.
- Claiming full framework alignment after answering selected questions: describe the limited scope accurately.
- Promising evidence later without an owner: record the commitment and follow-up date.

How Reinventives can help

Reinventives can turn recurring customer requests into an answer register, evidence map and approval process. A useful first deliverable is a gap review of your latest questionnaires, with named information owners and reusable responses. We can coordinate specialist input where product assessment, legal interpretation or independent assurance is needed.

Book a construction reporting conversation: reinventives.co.uk/construction/book

Related briefing notes: BN002 Scope 3 | BN011 Reliable carbon data

Sources and review dates

[1] European Commission, Voluntary Standard, adopted 3 July 2026, Annex I, paragraphs 1-15 and Basic Module.

[2] European Commission, C(2026) 5011 final, 3 July 2026, Articles 1-4; adoption and commencement provisions.

[3] GHG Protocol, Corporate Standard, revised 2004, chapters 3-4; organisational and operational boundaries.

The Commission’s adopted text was reviewed. Official Journal publication and the resulting commencement date were not independently confirmed; no current right to refuse a request is asserted.

Correct as of and sources accessed 9 September 2026 | Next review 9 December 2026

Review earlier when the EU publishes commencement or implementation guidance, or a key customer changes its reporting requirements.

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