



**ARBORICULTURE AND FORESTRY ADVISORY GROUP (AFAG)  
NOTES of 18<sup>th</sup> MEETING**

<b>Date</b>	6 May 2010	<b>Location</b>	Wakehurst Place Selsfield Rd Ardingly, Haywards Heath, West Sussex RH176TN	<b>Taken by</b>	Frances Hirst	<b>Action</b>
	<b>HSE</b>		<b>AFAG MEMBERS</b>			
	Graeme Walker (Chair) Alan Plom (Secretary) Frances Hirst Jason Liggins  <b>Observers</b> Wayne Grills (Lantra Awards) Dave Waldon (Senior Arborist – Wakefield Place)		Gerald Bonner (TCIA) James Brown (CONFOR) Chris Cooper – Abbs (Lantra Awards) Bruce Hamilton (PCS/IAgrE) Steve Hewitt (City & Guilds NPTC) Alex Laver (ISA) Martin Lennon (NHSS18) Neil McKay (ICF) Donald Maclean (FCA)		Imogen Mole (NATO) Graham Munford (IOSH) Stuart Phillips (Lantra SSC) Emily Ramsay (FC) Simon Wallis (FC)	
<b>Item</b>	<b>Key points and actions</b>					
1	<p><b>Welcome/apologies for absence</b></p> <p>1.1 Graeme Walker, Head of HSE's Agriculture &amp; Food Sector welcomed members to the 18<sup>th</sup> AFAG meeting and thanked Gerald Bonner for organising the venue. He welcomed observers Wayne Grills (Lantra Awards) and Dave Waldon (Senior Arborist, Wakehurst Place).</p> <p>1.2 Apologies were received from Robert Beaney (Unite), Des Campbell (DARDNI), Hans Fairley (AEA), Pete Jackson (UAG), Alex Murray (UKFPA), John Price (LGE) and Simon Richmond (AA).</p>					
2	<p><b>Minutes of 17<sup>th</sup> Meeting (1 December 2009)</b></p> <p>The minutes were agreed as a true record of the meeting apart from the need to change the reference to 'Lantra' in paragraphs 10.7 and 10.8 to read 'Lantra Awards', and to add a note under AOB about the discussion on the National Tree Safety Group, before putting them on the AFAG website.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>ACTION: HSE</b></p>					Done
3	<p><b>Matters Arising</b> <i>[Not covered in the Action Notes, or elsewhere on agenda.]</i></p> <p>3.1 Min 4.2 - The introduction to the Bomel Accident Analysis report has been changed. Arrangements in hand to publish it on HSE's research web site asap.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>ACTION: HSE</b></p> <p>3.2 Min 4.3 - Publication of the Bomel's Analysis of Occupational Ill Health is awaiting the restart of the Scottish Occupational Health Project.</p>					

	<p>3.3 Min 4.5 - James Brown is continuing his talks with the industry and has arranged to meet David Sulman and Neil McKay. <b>ACTION: James Brown</b></p> <p>3.4 Min 4.8 - Article on chainsaw gloves on hold until project group can clarify guidelines. <b>ACTION: Project Group/HSE</b></p> <p>3.5 Min 5.6 – Incidence Rates: A small working group to look at how the industry may be able to record the necessary information/performance indicators to provide base line information has still to be formed. <b>ACTION: Members/HSE</b></p> <p>3.6 Min 5.7 - Key learning points, from accident investigations, particularly on root causes, to go on Treework website. <b>ACTION: HSE - ongoing</b></p> <p>3.7 Min 5.11 - Hazard Alert on tree planting and pesticides issued on Treework website.</p> <p>3.8 Min 5.13 - Rigging Workshop postponed until 29 June 2010.</p> <p>3.9 Min 5.17 - PPE Standards: James Brown now member of relevant BSI Committee</p> <p>3.10 Min 5.18 - AIS 38 on guarding of wood chippers to be reviewed. <b>ACTION: HSE</b></p> <p>3.11 Min 5.20 - Occupational Health Project: Jason Liggins has met with Healthy Working Lives in Scotland, and a further meeting is planned for the end of May to take this work forward. <b>ACTION: Jason Liggins</b></p> <p>3.12 Min 5.21 - Research on MSDs found by Jason Liggins not sufficiently relevant.</p> <p>3.13 Min 5.24 - Specifications in NOS on manual handling to be checked at next review. <b>ACTION: Stuart Phillips/Lantra</b></p>	
4	<p><b>AFAG Workplan 2010-11 &amp; HSE's Strategy (AFAG/10/01)</b></p> <p>4.1 Paper AFAG/10/01 was introduced by Alan Plom. This was needed to show how AFAG's Workplan relates to HSE's new Strategy. A more comprehensive and complicated document may be required for internal HSE purposes.</p> <p>4.2 HSE is currently having to look at the costs involved in running Advisory Committees and Graeme Walker has been asked to look critically at AFAG in terms of its membership and meeting costs.</p> <p>4.3 HSE values the contribution that Members make and does not want to jeopardise future cooperation and involvement. Graeme Walker and Alan Plom will be talking to Members individually on the best ways of making AFAG more cost effective and will report back to Members at the next meeting. <b>ACTION: HSE</b></p> <p>4.4 Members were asked to consider "signing the pledge" to support HSE's Strategy. This can be done via HSE's web site <a href="http://www.hse.gov.uk/strategy/index.htm">http://www.hse.gov.uk/strategy/index.htm</a> . <b>ACTION: Members</b></p>	

5	<p><b>Review of AFAG projects (AFAG/10/02)</b></p> <p>5.1 Progress on individual projects reported in AFAG/10/02 was reviewed and updated at the meeting and a revised version will be placed on the website, asap. This format will be used to update members at future meetings, rather than discuss each project in detail. Project Leaders must therefore update the table before each meeting.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>ACTION: HSE/Project Leaders</b></p>	
7	<p><b>Communications</b></p> <p><b>7.1 APF 2010 – ‘Safety &amp; Training’ Arena</b></p> <p>7.1.1 Alan Plom reported on progress. The aim is to share a plot and marquee with key stakeholders, including Lantra, Lantra Awards, City and Guilds NPTC, FC’s Learning and Development. A series of practical demonstrations are proposed throughout the 3 days, including maintenance and transport (by FC Learning and Development); new methods to take down edge trees (based on recent research); work near overhead power lines (by EDF/ENA); user-worked rail crossings (Network Rail/ORR are providing a complete rail crossing as a permanent training facility); noise and vibration (promoting HSE’s new ‘Buy Quiet’ initiative); an accident /first aid scenario and lone working. There will also be scope for seminars in the marquee.</p> <p>7.1.2 Following the site meeting at Cannock in January, HSE paid for the large 50m site to secure the ideal plot. This was on the promise of contributions from other stakeholders, eg a large marquee to house all exhibitors, together with CCTV and refreshment facilities are needed, and equipment for the demonstrations. A ‘safety competition’ for CPD is also proposed, supported by FCA. Suitable prizes were suggested, eg chain saw ppe or other items from manufacturers, training, etc.</p> <p>7.1.3 We need to formally agree who will fund particular items and stand space/staffing requirements. Members were invited to attend the second site meeting on 4 June and to confirm to Jason Liggins by 15 May 2010 whether they or their organisation wished to be involved. Bruce Hamilton is to ask IAgRE for a contribution (to promote their Forestry Engineering Group and the LTA Scheme for technicians) and Martin Lennon is to approach UPM Tilhill.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>ACTION: Members, Bruce Hamilton, Martin Lennon</b></p> <p><b>7.2 Saltex 2010 – ‘Skills and Learning Zone’</b></p> <p>Alan Plom described this similar joint demonstration/exhibition area, forming part of a new ‘Skills and Learning Zone’. Organisations such as Lantra Awards, Lantra SSC, City and Guilds NPTC and colleges as well as other training providers are already committed. HSE will be focussing in particular on noise and vibration and mowing on slopes and there will be practical demonstrations and seminars. Other members or organisations interested in becoming involved in the ‘Zone’ should contact Alan Plom by 15 May 2010, or liaise with the IoG directly.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>ACTION: Members</b></p> <p><b>7.3 Forestry Summit</b></p> <p>Jason Liggins introduced the proposed event, outlined in AFAG/10/03. Members gave their support for an event focussing on forestry and agreed it should be organised as a short-term project, chaired by Jason. The APF was suggested as a possible opportunity, but this was thought to be impractical and unsuitable for ‘captains of industry’ to attend. Jason will send out additional information clarifying the intended audience and proposing a date and venue, asap.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>ACTION: Jason Liggins</b></p>	

	<p><b>7.4 AFAG Guidance</b></p> <p>7.4.1 The industry's continued demand for hard copies of leaflets vs web-only guidance was discussed. Emily Ramsay asked how many hard copies and of which leaflets are requested. HSE will ask Communications Directorate for this information, including who has requested them, when they were last reprinted and if/when reprints are due.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>ACTION: HSE</b></p> <p>7.4.2 Gerald Bonner asked whether it would be possible to make on-line versions interactive so the "tick boxes" could be used on-screen.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>ACTION: HSE</b></p> <p>7.4.3 Martin Lennon raised the issue of ensuring that information on general topics such as First Aid is consistent throughout the whole series of leaflets.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>ACTION: HSE</b></p> <p><b>7.5 HSE Tree Work Website</b></p> <p>7.5.1 This continues to be well used receiving ~2500 hits/month and the term 'AFAG' had one of the highest number of hits on HSE's website. It is essential that the information on the web site is kept up-to-date as it is a key way of contacting the industry. HSE propose to re-design the front page so that there is one link to all AFAG information, including meeting information and leaflets.</p> <p>7.5.2 Myerscough College is continuing to work on the training videos which will be put on the website as soon as they become available.</p> <p><b>7.6 SHADs</b></p> <p>7.6.1 The 3 most recent forestry SHADs were well received and the revised format is working well. Attendance has been good and a complimentary article has appeared in Forestry Journal (April 2010, p42).</p> <p>7.6.2 The Arb SHADs aimed at clients who employ arboricultural contractors also continue to be well received. It is hoped to tie attendance at these events in to an HSE project on procurement of contractors by Local Authorities.</p> <p><b>7.7 Training for HSE Inspectors</b></p> <p>There are currently 32 Inspectors for whom a need for arb/forestry training has been identified. The Sector is working with HSE's Field Operations Directorate on how to deliver this.</p>	
8	<p><b>Training and Certification</b></p> <p><b>Current issues with certification and CS Units (nb. To simplify the notes of the lengthy discussion, Members comments are recorded under each topic.)</b></p> <p>8.1 Steve Hewitt introduced AFAG/10/04. This paper is in 4 sections and covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Independent Assessment,</li> <li>(b) Consolidation periods between training and assessment ,</li> <li>(c) Unit CS32 – maximum diameter and</li> <li>(d) CS Unit Revision</li> </ul> <p>Graeme Walker apologised that the paper had not been sent out prior to the meeting, but this was delayed due to the late meetings held with NPTC and Lantra Awards.</p>	

### (a) Independent Assessment

8.2 Independent assessment was originally introduced to increase quality assurance. The alternative is 'integrated training and assessment' (ITA).

8.3 The new QCF allows for and promotes greater flexibility in terms of delivery and assessment and the units currently contained in the CoCs now appear in the NVO. The NOS form the basis of the chainsaw units. Operators can now either be assessed in the workplace as part of a Workplace Diploma (WPD) or by way of a Certificate of Competence. Because there are now more robust ways of quality assuring ITA qualifications, the Industry needs to decide whether it wishes to continue with a system of independent assessment..

8.4 The status quo would be to keep CoCs that have to be independently assessed. WPDs do not have to be independently assessed. Other possible options are:

- Not to require independent assessment but to adopt quality assured ITAs; or
- Recognise say 4 key units eg CS 30, 31, 38, and 39 as core units and require that these are independently assessed, and use ITA for all other units.

8.5 Wayne Grills replied that the issues for Lantra Awards are not dissimilar to those for City and Guilds NPTC. There is no point in devising a new system unless this has industry backing. There are differences between arb and forestry and it is crucial to deliver what the industry actually wants.

8.6 There is increasing pressure from customers/stakeholders to ensure that training is robust, whether delivered through CoCs or via the QCF. Whatever is decided will impact on the guidance in AFAG 805 (currently being revised).

8.7 The introduction of the QCF may lead to an increase in the number of awarding bodies which could add to the confusion.

8.8 Key points from the discussions were:

- 1) Qualification through the VQ route gives a wider, more rounded training but it is difficult to get funding.
- 2) The status of the WPDs needs to be clarified. Do they in effect provide a "license to practice"? There must be no confusion over what is acceptable. The introduction of the QCF has thrown this up in the air. If the industry wants to retain a *de-facto* "license to practice" the CoCs will have to be differentiated from other ways of receiving training.
- 3) If WPDs are not deemed to provide a "license to practice" then there is a danger they won't be taken up. Currently, WPDs are assessed by individuals who have not gone through the rigorous updating and verification of a City and Guilds NPTC assessor. Individuals who take a WPD won't want to be assessed for a second time to achieve a CoC.
- 4) If industry wants a "license to practice" then a decision needs to be made on whether this needs to be independently assessed or whether it can be based on ITA. Once this is decided, the WPD can be designed to comply with this and all awarding bodies will be working to the same standard. If the industry wants independent assessment then this can be built into WPD.
- 5) Completing a CoC in separate parts through a WPD could be a good thing, provided there is rigorous assessment.
- 6) The industry needs to make it clear to the awarding bodies (and HSE):
  - what products are needed for arb and forestry; and
  - whether it wishes the system to remain the same or be more flexible.

- 7) There are no proposals for the current PUWER ACOP to be changed for the foreseeable future.
- 8) City and Guilds NPTC and Lantra Awards are currently regulated by OffQual. Not all training providers are, eg HCTA. Candidates need to be aware/informed.

**(b) Consolidation periods between training and assessment**

8.9 The industry requirement for consolidation needs clarifying. Some organisations won't allow people without CoCs to work on their premise, pushing people into being assessed immediately after training.

8.10 The situation should be eased because not everything will need to be completed in one go to get funding. There is a danger though that as funding is tied to pass rates, there may be a pressure or tendency to pass borderline candidates, in the absence of independent assessment.

8.11 Members were in agreement that the industry needs to be re-educated to understand that a consolidation period is necessary to help ensure safety. A record will need to be kept of what has been achieved during this period.

8.12 There needs to be a clear statement for employers and clients clarifying that it is acceptable to have (properly supervised?) trainees on site. Candidates will need to know the limit of their training and employers will need to know what else might be needed.

8.13 A minimum consolidation period of 1 month and maximum of 6 months was suggested as being appropriate.

8.14 New FC guidance will be highlighting the need for consolidation. This could be strengthened to make consolidation mandatory. If the FC adopts this position, others in the industry are likely to follow.

8.15 Steve Hewitt agreed to send draft information, including advice on consolidation, the status of the WPD c/f CoCs and the paper work required to record on the job training to the T and C WG.

**Action : Steve Hewitt**

**(c) Unit CS32 – maximum diameter**

8.16 Members were asked if they felt the re-introduction of an upper limit on CS 32 was necessary. If so, CS 33 would need to be reintroduced. Under the current revision CS 32 has no upper limit and CS49 has been introduced to cover "more awkward trees".

8.17 Currently, Lantra Awards are maintaining their existing course structure reflecting customer demand.

- 8.18 Some in the industry are concerned that under the current situation
- CS 32 is now seen as a passport to fell any tree, and
  - assessors may not have experience of felling large trees themselves.

8.19 Members agreed that re-introducing CS33 in the short term would cause confusion. However better information is needed about the status of CS32 and CS49 and who could assess them. The issue will be revisited when the chainsaw units are reviewed later this year.

**(d) CS Unit Revision (including need for CPD)**

8.20 The NOS is due for revision shortly and the suite of CoCs will be revised at the same time,

	<p>giving the opportunity for a major overhaul. AFAG will be fully involved in the process.</p> <p>8.21 The CPD issue also needs to be sorted. The industry needs to decide what it requires and how to take it forward.</p> <p>8.22 James Brown commented that the last NOS revision was done too quickly and led to problems. The next revision will be better organised. AFAG Project Group A3 is looking at the actual amount of chainsaw use and what CPD is required. More information is required on risk assessment.</p> <p>8.23 Alan Plom replied that there had been long standing discussions on CPD including comparisons with other existing industry schemes. Information on the benefits of CPD and the means to record it needs to be included in the revised AFAG 805. This work needs to be moved forward as this guide for employers will also be relevant to clients to help them choose competent contractors. It may be better to publish this as an A5 booklet rather than the traditional AFAG multi-fold leaflet, As this would be easier to read and use as a web-based document.</p> <p>8.24 Industry must now decide what it wants and advise City and Guilds NPTC and Lantra Awards accordingly. Alan advised that if this includes specifying re-certification intervals then a Business Impact Assessment may be necessary. Arboriculture and forestry may need different systems.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>ACTION: Members</b></p> <p>8.25 Steve Hewitt and Wayne Grills agreed to collaborate in providing a summary of the deliberations on T&amp;C, in particular on consolidation, the status of the WPD c/f CoCs and the paper work required to record on the job training. The summary will be forwarded to all members on receipt.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>ACTION: Steve Hewitt</b></p>	
9	<p><b>Standards work</b></p> <p>9.1 The next International Standards Organisation meeting on forestry machines is being held in Peebles 17-20 May. Jim Christy can no longer attend and another delegate from the industry is needed. James Brown and Martin Lennon agreed to find a substitute.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Action: Martin Lennon and James Brown</b></p> <p>9.2 James Brown reported on progress with the EU standard for chainsaw operators. The last meeting was held in March. Progress is slow but the work is progressing.</p> <p>9.3 Steve Hewitt reported that there had also been a standards setting meeting. The UK's standards are generally higher than other European States except for Denmark and Finland (which are based on the UK's). There has been some hold up over the Leonardo Funding for the project but this has now been resolved. The work is progressing to our advantage as the UK standards are recognised as meeting the EU Standard and are actually slightly higher.</p> <p>9.4 Hans Fairley is to be asked to provide an update on the position with BSI committee AGE 29 and on chainsaw speed v standard of PPE before the next meeting.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Action: Hans Fairley</b></p>	
10	<p><b>Date &amp; venue for next meeting</b></p> <p>Agreed to be held on Tuesday 9 November 2010 at HSE, 1 Hagley Road, Birmingham, B16 8HS.</p>	

11	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p><b>11.1 Focus on Forestry First</b></p> <p>This new 3-year project sponsored by the Welsh Assembly Government and EU, is providing funding for training for sole traders, self-employed contractors and small businesses connected with trees and timber, who reside and work in Wales. Alan Plom reported that the coordinator of the scheme was willing to consider adapting the health and safety management VOs developed for farming, for the forestry industry, if there was demand. Further information is available at <a href="http://www.focusonforestryfirst.co.uk/">http://www.focusonforestryfirst.co.uk/</a> .</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>ACTION: HSE</b></p> <p><b>11.2 National Tree Safety Group (NTSG)</b></p> <p>HSE has recently received the NTSG's 'position statement' for comment. The 'industry guidelines' they are producing will be available for comment on the NTSG web site from the end of May. [nb. Now available at <a href="http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-7T6BPP">http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-7T6BPP</a> .]</p>	
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