

**HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE
AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
ARBORICULTURE AND FORESTRY ADVISORY GROUP (AFAG)**

**Minutes of the 15th meeting held on 15 October 2008 at Forestry Commission HQ,
Silvan House, 231 Corstorphine Road, Edinburgh EH12 7AT.**

Present

Alan Plom	HSE (Acting Chair)
Jim Dewar	FC (Tech Sec)
James Brown	Confor/AIAC
Gerald Bonner	Tree Care Industry Association (TCIA)
Hans Fairley	Agricultural Engineer's Association (AEA)
Neil McKay	Institute of Chartered Foresters (ICF)
Steve Osbourne	Public & Commercial Services Union (PCS)
Des Campbell	Northern Ireland Forestry Service (NIFS)
Donald Maclean	Forestry Contractor Association (FCA)
Peter Jackson	Utility Arboriculture Group (UAG)
John Price	Local Government Employers (LGE)
Simon Richmond	Arboriculture Association (AA)
Steve Hewitt	City & Guilds NPTC
Phil Higginbotham	UK Forest Products Association (UKFPA)
Chris Cooper-Abbs	Lantra Awards
Imogen Mole	National Association of Tree Officers (NATO)
Colin Saunders	FC Forest Research
Emily Ramsay	FC
Alex Laver	International Society of Arborists (ISA)
Frances Hirst	HSE
Simon Parry	HSE

1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES

[Secs Note: For convenience and ease of reference the notes of the meeting are presented as listed in the agenda, not necessarily in the order discussed.]

1.1 Alan Plom welcomed everyone to the 15th meeting and thanked the Forestry Commission for hosting the day. Alan was chairing the meeting following the departure of Roger Nourish (Chair) to a new post in HSE's Hazardous Installations Division. Members thanked Roger for his very significant contribution and support for the industry over many years, and wished him well in his new post.

1.2 Alan was pleased to welcome three new members to AFAG, Chris Cooper-Abbs (Lantra Awards), Imogen Mole (NATO) and Alex Laver (ISA). He also noted that Phil Higginbotham was substituting for Alex Murray/UKFPA.

1.3 Apologies were received from Ros Burnley (Lantra SSC), Alex Murray (UKFPA), and Robert Beaney (Unite/TGWU).

2. URGENT BUSINESS

2.1 Jim Brown (Confor) wished to record the dire straits the forestry industry found itself in and its current financial position. Following the collapse of the building industry orders were considerably down and imported timber was currently stockpiled at UK docks or undercutting the market price. There had already been redundancies and lay-offs in the industry and only a small number of orders currently existed.

2.2 Alan recognised the potential impact of the downturn on training and maintaining standards in the industry. Business impact assessments for any new requirements would obviously need to take account of this, but he emphasised this would not make a significant difference. In fact it makes AFAG's work all the more important, in promoting good practice to reduce losses caused by injuries and ill health, which in turn will help to sustain individual businesses and the industry generally.

3. MINUTES 14th MEETING 2-3 APRIL 2008.

3.1 The minutes were agreed.

4. MATTERS ARISING

4.1 **Action note 4.1 - 'Future' ATV Safety Helmet** – Actioned and discharged

4.2 **Action Note 4.2 - HSE's Insurance Initiative** - Alan Plom will pursue Roger Nourish's initiative with the insurance industry, seeking to establish risk assessed underwriting.

ACTION: A PLOM

4.3 **Action Note 4.3 Research – Future funding by FC** - The Forestry Commission is currently over committed for research budget 2008/09. Bidding for research monies for 09/10 should be submitted to Jim Dewar.

ACTION: MEMBERS

4.4 **Action Note 4.4. - Launch of new AFAG Community website** - Both community web sites are live and running. The closed site is for members only, the open site is for the public to encourage debate and discussion. Full membership is required to access its contents. Frances to ensure AFAG members have received a personal invite to join.

ACTION: F HIRST

4.5 **Action Note 4.6 - Accident Analysis/Training** - A causal link between training and accidents, and the amount of training delivered still needs to be teased out. It has not been possible to analyse RIDDOR reports or investigations retrospectively in this level of detail.

The take up of courses was suggested as a measure of AFAG's success. To date, 150,000 chain saw certificates have been issued (across all industries).

4.6 Action Note 4.8 - Training & Certification – Following further discussion about the value of case studies, all members were reminded to send information/examples of business successes to HSE to demonstrate the benefits of training and adopting good practices.

ACTION: ALL MEMBERS

4.7 Action note 4.11 - Steep Ground Working – Discussion during drafting of this guidance had raised issues over the definitions of Forestry Works Manager (FWM) and Site Safety Coordinator (SSC). Further work is needed and site management had been teased out of the Bomel report. Communication is the key to the risk assessment process.

ACTION: PROJECT LEADERS

4.8 Action Note 7.1.3 - Research into Accident Causation – Employment figures in forestry industry - Ros Burnley & Jim Dewar/Emily Ramsay have provided figures for accident rates for 2007. FC's accident rate increased in 2007/08 and their analysis endorsed the need to focus on chain saw related operations and update training.

4.9 Action note 7.1.10 - Barometer tool -The Bomel barometer is a research tool measures 'cultural change' to help quantify the benefits to industry from particular interventions. Pete Jackson reported that Bomel had confirmed the Tool could be used by private industry but it is expensive.

4.10 Action note 7.2.11 - Sector Approved Profiles (SAPs) - Steve Hewitt informed members of the important meeting being held on 30/10/08 at Lantra House NAC Stoneleigh. This was covering all 17 land based industry groups and Members were strongly encouraged to attend as SAPs were important to this industry. All qualifications are based on National Occupational Standards (NOS) and related SAPs. The industry needs to engage with Lantra SSC because qualifications will follow the NOS template. However, members were frustrated that the NOS had still not been sorted out, two years into a three year cycle. Jim Brown (recently appointed chair of the Lantra SSC Trees and Timber Group) observed that the 'book of standards' is too large to look at every 3 years and suggested there should be a more pragmatic way of updating the suite of NOS's.

4.11 This led to intense debate about the role of Lantra SSC. Members agreed this was a difficult issue to resolve, and it needed people in the industry to comment. They should not shout when it is too late. Some argued that industry does engage with Lantra but felt they did not want to hear what industry was saying. It was suggested this because of the structure of Lantra and that the NOS were disengaged with the training delivery side, leading to a disjointed situation between Lantra SSC, Lantra Awards and other training providers. The Chair pointed out that whatever individuals think, Lantra SSC still remained pivotal under current arrangements and Government policy.

4.12 It was agreed there is a renewed opportunity to re-engage with Lantra SSC, Pete Jackson informed members that there is access to funded training but industry has not grasped the baton. Steve Hewitt requested that AFAG/members must feed back to Lantra their concerns in writing, otherwise nothing would come out of this issue. Jim Brown

agreed that we are at a cross roads and an important position had been reached. Industry must act. Members asked the Chair to send a statement to Lantra on behalf of AFAG.

ACTIONS: MEMBERS/A PLOM

4.13 Jim Dewar thought that what employers want and understand is a certificate of competence (CoC) and not the 'NOS'. The two issues are divorced. Industry looks to a CoC as proof of competence. At the NOS discussions, the right people should be around the table.

4.14 Steve Hewitt explained the complex inter-relationship between Lantra, Lantra Awards, Lantra SSC and Government Departments and members suggested a simple diagram would be helpful to explain this to the industry. Ros Burnley to be asked to provide a suitable diagram.

ACTION: S HEWITT/R BURNLEY

4.15 **Action note 7.2.15 - NPTC Chainsaw qualifications review** – Ongoing - Action discharged.

4.16 **Action note 7.2.25 - Highways & Construction Training Agency** – S Hewitt and A Plom met the HCTA on 2 September to discuss their non-accredited Chainsaw Operators Registration Scheme (CORS). They were persuaded on the legal standing of the requirements under PUWER/ACoP and the primacy of AFAG Guides for all users of chain saws. HCTA are to continue liaising with Steve to ensure scheme is comparable with the existing NPTC CoCs and to get it accredited within the Qualifications Framework.

4.17 **Action note 7.2.26 - Passport Schemes** – Further work is need on analysing the applicability of existing schemes to arb and forestry.

ACTION: HSE

4.18 **Action note 7.2.28 - Training & Certification** – Action by HSE to draft letter highlighting issues that need to be addressed and the convening of industry focus groups to be discussed under Item 6.

4.19 **Action note 7.3 - Review of Projects** – Action to reinstate missing text/traffic lighting on table and to update AFAG 08/01 discussed under Item 7.

4.20 **Action note 7.3.3 - Work at Height** – The final draft of AFAG 401 has been sent to HSE's Work at Height team for their consideration/approval. It had been agreed that the type of chainsaw trouser used by climbers may be determined by risk assessment, ie if heat stress/dizziness is an issue then type A trousers may be worn. Whether ladders may be tied or footed still needs clarification.

4.21 **Action note 7.3.4 - AA MEWP guidance** - The booklet has now been published and is available through AA at £10.

4.22 **Action note 7.3.6** - A fax from Gerald on the Irish Government's position on the WAH Regs had gone astray and is to be re-sent.

ACTION: G BONNER

4.23 **Action note 7.3.7 - Rigging & Dismantling Techniques in Arb** Action complete – report with Elizabeth Gibby for approval

4.24 **Action note 7.3.10 - Machine Assisted Takedown of Trees** - Research completed and report drafted. AFAG asked to decide whether to a new AFAG Guide is needed or revise AFAG 310 & 603 to cover M/C assisted takedown of dangerous edge trees.

ACTION: MEMBERS

4.25 **Action note 7.3.11 - Chainsaw PPE** - Action complete – discussions on standards for chainsaw trousers held.

4.26 **Action note 7.3.13 -Promotion of Occupational Health Provision/Rehabilitation Services** – Project stalled due to lack of HSE resource in Scotland.

ACTION: HSE

4.27 **Action note 7.3.14 MSD** – project plan produced, issue discussed further under Item 7.

4.28 **Action note 7.3.18 Noise** – information from research to be fed back to HSE’s Noise and Vibration team, issue discussed further under Item 7

4.29 **Action note 7.3.19 - Reduce Exposure to Pesticides Used in Tree Planting** - report on reducing exposure to pesticides used in tree planting being considered by PSD. Issue discussed further under Item 7

4.30 **Action note 7.3.22 - Promotion of Best Practice** – HSE has geographically mapped the Engaging Arb Client SHADs and is currently mapping the Forestry SHADs. These are to be made available to members.

ACTION: HSE

4. 31 **Action note 7.3.26 - Production, Review & Maintenance of Guidance** – List of relevant guidance to be updated.

ACTION: HSE

4.32 **Action note 8.3 Review of Standards Work** – Members to be provided with a regular update. Issue discussed in more detail under Item 8

4.33 **Action note 11.4 AFAG workplan 2008-09 and beyond** – HSE to draw up new workplan for 08/09. Issue discussed further under Item 5

5. AFAG WORKPLAN 2008 and BEYOND

5.1 Alan Plom asked members to endorse the updated AFAG workplan (AFAG 08/03) for his presentation to the AIAC on 11/11/08. As suggested by members the Terms of Reference now included two introductory paragraphs summarising AFAG’s history and pivotal role in the industry. HSE’s targets have changed to DSO’s and the aspirational targets set by AIAC may have to be altered in the future. Para 6 recognises the merger of HSC and HSE and the proposed new HSE strategy for Health & Safety in the UK. This is likely to be based on 10 key themes, which AFAG’s current plans should embrace.

5.2 Other changes to the ToR were highlighted (in italics) - the statistics quoted were verified by HSE Statistics Unit; para 10 summarises the AFAG projects – ‘task & finish’ groups remain the foundation of the work plan. Annex 1 attached to 08/03 summarises the work plan. Members (especially Project leaders) were requested to send comments on text, content, and improvements to A Plom by 29/10/08.

ACTION: MEMBERS/PROJECT LEADERS

6. TRAINING & CERTIFICATION.

6.1 Steve Hewitt expressed his disappointment at the lack of comments received on C&G NPTC’s draft suggestions. The final qualifications have to be based on the NOS and as previously discussed it is very important that industry leads in developing these and agrees them. The new CoC’s must be ready by September 2009. There are seven NOS units related to the use of a chainsaw.

6.2 Donald MacLean thought that the NOS are too generic. Steve Hewitt explained that the NOS creates the syllabus and assessment of operators should follow this process. Lantra Awards will have to work closely with NPTC on this issue.

6.3 Jim Dewar observed that for any training and qualification scheme to be successful industry buy-in is essential and industry involvement is required to develop the content and qualifications. Jim Brown asked AFAG members what they thought about current membership of Lantra’s Trees & Timber Group, Some felt that Lantra appear set against those who are not present and sought clarification on who should attend. A major problem is that those who should be involved are necessarily out working and do not have time to spare.

6.4 **European Certificate of Chainsaw Competence.** - Steve Hewitt outlined the latest developments in Europe, A group of European chain saw schools and trainers have met to produce a European certificate of chain saw competence. The UK’s current NOS are to be used as a basis for comparison of content/standards of training in European countries. These will be compiled on a spreadsheet and the report back of the results is due in November 2008. The results will then be used to produce a ‘European standard’ that each member country can base its certificate upon.

6.5 Jim Dewar commented that quality assurance must match the certificate and their equivalents in Europe. Jim Brown stated that the intention is to establish acceptable certificates to allow operators to work across Europe, to facilitate the full exchange of labour envisaged within the EU. AFAG were assured that the UK will not reduce its standards to allow foreign chain saw operators to work in this country.

6.6 Alan Plom thanked Lantra and Confor for joining HSE in sponsoring Jim Brown’s travel itinerary enabling him to attend the Brussels meeting.

6.7 Simon Richmond reminded members that the T&C project group have been looking at the potential for a register of tree work operatives (‘RTwo’) which will provide a structure of career progression from entry level upwards. The aim is to address the existing gaps in the system. Although UK has a well defined system of training and certification in which people come out “fully trained” they are not experienced. This is

applicable to both chainsaws and aerial tree work. Roger Nourish had set the industry a deadline, as the T&C WG has been working for 2 years to try and resolve the issue. It now needs industry endorsement to take the issue forward. To this end discussions were proposed through the arb and forestry 'Focus Groups' and these were asked to feed back to this meeting. If industry support was not forthcoming then the work was to be dropped.

6.8 The Arb Focus Group met on 24 June and the notes of the meeting have been circulated to Members. There was strong agreement within this group that the issue did need addressing. It was recognised that career progression was important as this would raise standards. The group however did not come up with an agreed model that could be taken forward

6.9 Jim Brown reported that the Forestry Focus Group had not met due to personal difficulties convening the meeting, but he had discussed the proposals with relevant stakeholders. A number of comments had been received, including that training was found to be "variable" and being delivered by people who were too far removed from the "coal face". They were also unaware of modern equipment and techniques. It was thought the current registration scheme was OK but could be improved by the introduction of a photo card with additional info on it. It was important for AFAG to continue to push for changes.

6.10 The industry supported the view that the VQ is the preferable route because it provides wider training. Better update training on new techniques was also required, not just reassessment.

6.11 Simon Richmond commented that the issues identified by Emily Ramsay highlight that the job has changed since CoCs were introduced and it is important that we have a structure by which we can assess skills/ability of individuals, not just the fact that they have a ticket. What we need is something to fill the gaps on capability and experience. We also need to be able to check that if someone has been away from industry for sometime their skills are still at a suitable standard. This could be addressed by having an individual portfolio overseen by the employer or an independent registration scheme.

6.12 Gerald Bonner concurred with Simon's analysis and Jim Brown's view. He suggested that the original project is complete as consultations have taken place which identify the limitations of the existing scheme. A new project should be started to devise an industry acceptable alternative.

6.13 Jim Brown commented that a range of possibilities and options already exist. The best way forward is to devise a sample record which individuals can choose how to complete, otherwise we could end up with something too burdensome. Simon Richmond agreed that this was probably the only way of making something happen quickly and which employers were likely to find useful.

6.14 John Price suggested that a better means of recording competencies is needed. Simon added that the problem remained because the current system of CoCs doesn't necessarily mean someone is proficient/experienced. It is just an entry level

qualification. Hans Fairley commented to be 'competent' an operator has to be safe, proficient and experienced.

6.15 Jim Brown stated that the problem is that employers and clients see someone with CoCs and assume that they can do the work they are being asked to do. Similarly the CoC holder also thinks they are capable. Retesting after a period would help. All this is a fault of the existing culture not the CoC itself. It could be better if use could be made of vocational training. Better recording of experience would improve CVs.

6.16 Steve Hewitt suggested that AFAG needs to look at what other industries do. All external verifiers and many other professions have systems of recording CPD. There are existing registers for other industries. It would be possible to develop new units for these.

6.17 Chris Cooper-Abbs asked for clarification on what the aims of the project group were, ie were they looking at employment or safety issues. Simon Richmond replied that it was originally just a safety issue but it inevitably does merge into employment culture.

6.18 Donald Maclean commented that to progress this, further work needs to focus on what the drivers are. It is not worth spending any more time on developing a register as this won't improve health and safety. It may be of use to large employers but not to small ones. Emily Ramsay agreed that we do not need an over complicated system. *Managing health and safety in forestry* already has a useful question set for contractor selection which should already include a discussion about ability to do the work.

6.19 Jim Dewar agreed that in many respects a register won't have any status and will be just a logging system. It may provide employers with some additional information but they will still have to check an individual's capability.

6.20 Phil Higginbotham was concerned that any register would just involve more paper work without achieving any improvements in health and safety. Simon Richmond shared other's concerns about introducing a bureaucratic system which won't achieve anything, but the industry does need a way of checking that a worker is properly proficient.

6.21 John Price confirmed that a scheme is needed to help clients understand who they are employing. Alex Laver asked whether there was a possibility of a scheme like CORGI being introduced which would also inform the general public.

6.22 Alan Plom commented that AFAG hadn't envisaged creating the equivalent of an approved contactor list but there was a need to help the industry meet the increasing demand for information from clients. Although the project began on grounds of safety it also makes good business sense. Any scheme introduced would somehow need to help businesses help themselves. Lantra's OCF (online system) could still provide a solution and it can be badged anyway the user wants. AFAG 805 needs updating to highlight the importance of experience.

6.23 Phil Higginbotham added that current CoCs are not proving competence, further in house training is needed. Simon Richmond confirmed that this was the issue that was

trying to be addressed when the CoCs were introduced. The structure is there but employers are expecting too much. What is proposed is a way of recording consolidation. One way forward is to develop the principles in *Managing health and safety in forestry* and pilot them.

6.24 John Price commented that if this work is led by the clients it is likely to be successful, particularly as some of them are doing it already.

6.25 Simon Richmond proposed that a small WG be set up to refine the existing information and incorporate into a revised AFAG 805. A provisional period for CoCs could also be looked at as part of the current review. Volunteers for the WG included John Price, Emily Ramsay (or a nominee), Donald Maclean, Gerald Bonner (or a nominee) and Alex Laver. Simon will draft a summary of the information needed and the group will report back at the next meeting.

ACTION: SIMON RICHMOND/WORKING GROUP

7. REVIEW OF OTHER AFAG PROJECTS 2005-2008

7.1 Project leaders were asked to check the information & review their project wording in AFAG 08/04 and send comments to A Plom by COP 24 October.

ACTION: PROJECT LEADERS

Progress reports

7.2 Project leaders were asked to produce an update before each AFAG meeting eg ¼ page feedback paragraph with traffic light annotation. Reminder to be sent with meeting calling note.

ACTION: PROJECT LEADERS/HSE

7.3 A1 Research into Accident Causation and Evaluation of SHADs

7.3.1 The Bomel report will appear on the HSE website on its research page. It endorses AFAG's current project work and although identifying nothing new, it reinforces our work and gives hints about how to go about improving things in industry. It is important to note that on reading the report it is necessary to differentiate comments relating to forestry and arboriculture. The report provides data to move forward in the right direction.

7.3.2 Pete Jackson commented that safety management in tree work is an increasingly significant issue. What has been done in the past is not good enough and the Bomel report emphasises this. Evaluation by HSE is the key to future work and development and the report sets a benchmark.

7.3.3 Phil Higginbotham pointed out that some UKFPA members (chain saw operators) were interviewed by Bomel, and an executive summary would be helpful to feedback to his members and their employees, as they have asked what has happened following the workshops. It was pointed out that the report is very long but there is a 13 page executive summary which will also be made available on the HSE website.

7.3.4 Frances Hirst distributed a handout summarising the forestry fatal accident incidence rates which helped members understand the skewed figures, and to facilitate benchmarking.

7.3.5 The report of the Bomel on incidence of occupational health will also be put onto the HSE research web site.

ACTION: HSE.

7.3.6 Simon Richmond proposed that a press release and/or trade journal articles should be produced communicating the findings and recommendations to the industry.

ACTION: HSE

7.3.7 Members discussed the relevance of incidence rates. Hans Fairley commented that 150,000 certificates of competency for chain saw use had been issued, whilst Emily Ramsay observed that the forestry industry is changing dramatically due to mechanisation. Gerald Bonner thought we should not compare research & accident rates from 10 years ago, as the industry is changing rapidly.

7.3.8 Pete Jackson noted that there no benchmark measure exists to enable individual companies to compare their 'accident performance'. They were being compared with other industries. Donald MacLean enquired if RIDDOR reports could not be further interrogated to obtain more qualitative information. Alan Plom emphasised that unfortunately, as things stand with RIDDOR and investigation reports, we have to accept that such information cannot be teased out.

7.3.9 Colin Saunders commented that there was now a great deal of lack of knowledge & experience across the industry. Jim Dewar suggested that the publication "Tree Work Accidents" should be revised to capture new and more relevant data and the publication should contain a checklist for self investigation. Chris Cooper-Abbs enquired if information could be gathered from other than the RIDDOR reporting system? Alan Plom said this had been tried via insurers but they were reluctant to release details. Information from leading companies in the industry, including case studies, is needed.

ACTION: ALL MEMBERS

7.4 New projects for 08/09

7.4.1 **A3 Reducing chainsaw accidents in tree work** – Emily Ramsay will share information from the work the FC is doing on management of chainsaws with the group. Members to include Emily Ramsay and Gerald Bonner. Pete Jackson, Ros Burnley and Gerald Bonner are also to be asked to join Project Group.

ACTION: E RAMSAY/HSE

7.4.2 **B8 Safe Tree work near/beside overhead power lines** – Project leader to be confirmed. Project outputs to be decided. Pete Jackson to be asked to join. Jim Brown and Alex Laver have also volunteered.

ACTION:HSE

7.4.3 **D3 Management of H&S at Forestry Sites - Role of FWM & SSC+ Lone Working** - Additional members required to join this project group.

ACTION: S PARRY

7.5 Existing Projects

7.5.1 **B2 Work at Height** – requires a new leader - Alex Laver volunteered. The narrative on this project in AFAG 08/04 should mention that current work is complete.

7.5.2 The final draft of AFAG 401 is to be circulated to all members for comment /approval

ACTION: HSE.

7.5.3 **B3 Welfare on forestry sites** – Emily Ramsay reported that the ACP report concluded that further training is required for Alpha cypermetherin spraying.

7.5.4 **B4 Rigging and Dismantling Techniques in Arboriculture** - technically complete, project now to embed the information into industry good practice.

7.5.5 **B5 Mechanical Takedown of Edge Trees** - Decision required from AFAG on the projects findings; revise AFAG 603& 310 or new industry guidance?

7.5.6 **B6 Chainsaw PPE** – Actions complete.

7.5.7 **C1 Promotion of rehabilitation services** – this Scottish based project has stalled, Alan Plom to re energise this project with HSE Scotland.

ACTION: HSE

7.5.8 **C2 MSD** – Decision needs to be made on whether the scope of this project should be extended beyond providing web-based material.

ACTION: PROJECT GROUP/MEMBERS

7.5.9 **C3.1 Whole Body Vibration** – Colin Saunders reported back on the COMFOR project, information from which will be used to inform the WBV project. PPT presentation to be sent to all members. Further information is available on <http://www.enfe.net/comforopen/comfor.htm>

ACTION: C SAUNDERS

7.5.10 The position regarding the WBV information sheet needs to be followed up.

ACTION: HSE

7.5.11 **C3.3 Noise** – Issues from HSL wood chipper research (including provision of information and use inadequate hearing protection with forestry helmets) need to be fed back to industry and relevant BS/CEN/ISO Standards committees.

ACTION: H FAIRLEY/HSE

8. REVIEW OF STANDARDS WORK

8.1 A summary of where the standards have reached is to be produced for Members.

ACTION: HSE/C SAUNDERS/H FAIRLEY

9. COMMUNICATIONS

9.1 Frances Hirst reported that dates had been set for 3 Arb client SHADs and Simon Parry reported that 3 forestry SHADs were planned, 2 in Scotland and 1 in England. AFAG members felt these events should continue in the future, whilst there is a suitable target audience. Phil Higginbotham suggested Forestry SHADs should also be targeted at forest owners/agents.

9.2 Alan Plom reported that the HSE stand at the APF had been very busy. A one page summary on the work of AFAG was produced for the Show, giving links to the website. He also informed members that “Euroweek” for the next 2 years will be focussing on risk assessment.

9.3 Jim Dewar informed members that following the ice storms in China which devastated its forests, Jason Liggins had arranged for relevant AFAG leaflets to be translated into Chinese. These had been much appreciated by the Chinese authorities.

10. RESEARCH

10.1 This item was discharged under the relevant projects.

11. AOB

11.1 Jim Brown updated members on the ongoing work with the GLA. Discussions are still taking place and the welfare project needs to be reviewed in light of these. AFAG needs to come up with a practical approach. Samantha Peace is the Sector contact with the GLA and she is to be asked to contact Jim.

ACTION: HSE

11.2 Jim Brown thanked Roger Nourish for the work that he had done on behalf of AFAG and wished him well in his new role.

12. NEXT MEETING

12.1 The date for the next meeting will be set once the date for the next AIAC meeting is known. It will be held at Stoneleigh.