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**HSE AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (AIAC)**

**ARBORICULTURE AND FORESTRY ADVISORY GROUP (AFAG)**

**Overlap between the activities of AFAG and FISA – Proposed way forward**

**Paper for AFAG Meeting: 2 May 2013**

**Summary**

1. This paper sets out proposals for managing the overlap between the AFAG and the Forest Industry Safety Accord (FISA) and its working groups.
2. AFAG's Terms of Reference are attached at Annex 1. The Forest Industry Safety Accord and a summary of the activities of its Working Groups are attached at Annex 2.

**Background**

3. The AIAC has agreed that AFAG should continue to operate as a sub-committee of it and deliver its aims and objectives through the agreed series of 'task-and-finish' projects.
4. AFAG's Terms of Reference and Aims and Objectives (see Annex 1) seek to:
  - Identify and tackle major areas of risk to health and safety arising from work activities in arboriculture and forestry;
  - Help implement HSE's Strategy for health and safety in GB;
  - Promote a fundamental change of behaviours and culture within the tree work industry with regard to the prevention of accidents and ill-health;
  - Achieve its objective through working with stakeholders;
  - Develop and evaluate innovative intervention strategies for the industry; and
  - Develop a communications strategy for the industry to assist in achieving the above. The Terms of Reference Aims and Objectives are attached at Annex 1.
4. FISA was established in June 2012 following a forestry summit earlier in the year. Its focus and activities concern the forest industry only. Members

of the Accord have agreed to seek to improve the industry's health and safety performance through the development of a new safety culture driven by strong leadership and collaborative working

5. FISA intends to achieve this:

- Through a dedicated Safety Group to provide the necessary strategic direction and impetus;
- Through clear and proactive leadership to change attitudes and behaviours;
- By being inclusive to ensure individual and collective responsibility for risk taking behaviour;
- By sharing information (including examples of good practice?);
- By maintaining and improving the competency of the workforce; and
- Through a sustained and equitable commitment to action.

and to those ends, have established a number of working groups to progress some of these issues.

6. At the AFAG meeting on 1 November 2012, a review of current AFAG projects highlighted the extent to which AFAG and FISA objectives and activities have the potential to overlap with regard to forestry safety. It was also apparent that there were a number of issues on which FISA has an interest, but which are also relevant to arboriculture.

7. It will be necessary for both AFAG and FISA to agree arrangements for ensuring that there is no unnecessary overlap or duplication of effort, while ensuring the concerns of the arboriculture industry are not overlooked. The extent to which overlap may occur will depend on the AFAG workplan, and FISA plans for the future, both of which are in development. .

8. It is proposed that AFAG discuss possible ways forward during the meeting on 2 May, with a view to further discussions with FISA during the early summer of 2013.

## **Recommendations**

6. AFAG members are invited to consider the following proposal as a way forward:

- 1) where the issue concerns both forestry and arboriculture, AFAG will take it forward through a task and finish project group;
- 2) where the issue concerns arboriculture only, AFAG will take it forward through a task and finish project group, unless arboriculture members of AFAG believe they should take the issue forward independently of AFAG; and

- 3) where the issue concerns forestry only, FISA will be invited to take the issue forward. If FISA are unable to take ownership of the issue, then, subject to the agreement of members, AFAG will take it forward through a task and finish project group.

### **Actions**

AFAG members are invited to:

- 1) Agree the above recommendations as a proposed way forward;  
and
- 2) Agree to the Chair meeting with the Chair of FISA to discuss proceeding on the above basis.

**ANDREW TURNER**

**AFAG Secretary**

Head of Safety Section

HSE Agriculture, Waste and Recycling Sector

23 April 2013

**HSC AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
ARBORICULTURE AND FORESTRY ADVISORY GROUP**

**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**Background**

1. The Arboriculture and Forestry Advisory Group (AFAG) is a sub-committee of the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) Agriculture Advisory Committee (AIAC). It provides a forum for the HSE and industry stakeholders including the Forestry Commission, trade bodies, training and awarding bodies, employers and employees' representatives to work together to tackle health and safety issues in the tree work sector i.e. arboriculture and forestry.
2. AFAG's Terms of Reference and Workplan are devised and agreed with industry stakeholders and the AIAC to meet the needs and priorities of the tree work sectors.
3. The AFAG Workplan is endorsed by the AIAC to which progress is reported at each meeting.
4. Importantly, AFAG is the key mechanism through which those working and involved in the sector can influence HSE's strategy for tackling the health and safety performance of these industries and the development of new guidance. AFAG is recognised as providing authoritative guidance which is widely accepted as describing good industry practice; most of which has now been adopted by the Forest Industry Safety Accord (FISA) and the Arboriculture Association) AA.
5. AFAG also contributes to the ongoing development and delivery of HSE's Strategy for the Agriculture and the Land-based Industries; and in particular the key objectives of providing 'strong leadership', 'building competence', and 'creating safer and healthier workplaces'.

**Terms of Reference**

6. Following its reconstitution, the AIAC agreed that the AFAG should continue to consider and make recommendations to HSE and the AIAC to:
  - (a) Identify and control all major areas of risk to health and safety arising from work activities in arboriculture and forestry, including transport of timber in the forest; and
  - (b) Help implement HSE's strategy for workplace health and safety in Great Britain (see <http://www.hse.gov.uk/strategy/>).

**Membership**

7. The membership as at 1 May 2013 is set out at Annex 1.

**Aims and objectives**

8. AFAG will build on previous work to maintain its influence and involvement in the tree work sectors so as to provide an effective platform for partnership working with key industry stakeholders.

9. The tree work sector continues to have a high rate of fatal and major injuries (~ 4x that of construction). By analysing research that identifies the common factors and key influences that contribute to tree work accidents, serious injuries and ill health, AFAG will target key health and safety issues to enable resource to be directed to help deliver the overarching strategies of HSE and AIAC.

10. AFAG's objectives are to:

- 1) Contribute through a suite of task and finish projects to HSE's current and future Strategy.
- 2) Seek to achieve a fundamental culture change amongst those engaged in forestry, arboriculture and associated industries, with the aim of reducing the incidence of injuries and ill health.
- 3) Develop an overarching strategy for the tree work sector that delivers real improvements in both the incidence of, and cultural attitudes to, work related ill health.
- 4) Exploit synergies through joint working across Government Departments and agencies and with key industry stakeholders, to improve the well-being of workers in these sectors.
- 5) Develop, implement and evaluate innovative and cost-effective intervention methodologies e.g. Safety and Health Awareness Days (SHADs) to contribute to HSE's Strategy and targets.
- 6) Further develop and implement an effective communication strategy for the industry. This includes developing creative, high impact and 'state of the art' methods of communication that capitalise on opportunities afforded by evolving communication technologies, e.g. websites, podcasts, etc.

**FOREST INDUSTRY SAFETY ACCORD**

**The UK Forest Industry:**

- Believes that all fatalities and injuries are preventable.
- Supports development of a new safety culture where the health, safety and welfare of all those working in the forest industry is a fundamental priority.
- Believes that through strong and committed leadership we can work collaboratively to significantly improve the health and safety performance of our industry.

**We are committed to achieving this through:**

- The creation of a dedicated Safety Group to provide the necessary strategic direction and impetus to raise health, safety and welfare standards throughout the industry.
- Providing clear and proactive leadership to change attitudes and behaviour at every level in the industry.
- Involving everybody working in the industry to ensure individual and collective responsibility for health and safety, avoiding unacceptable risks and challenging unsafe practices.
- Developing a mechanism for the industry to share safety statistics, data and information.
- Maintaining and improving through training the competency of those working in the industry at every level.
- Recognising that improvements to the industry's health and safety performance requires sustained commitment and action - being equitable and fair to all those involved.

**FISA Action Plan**

**1. Management of Health and Safety in Forestry Guidance Booklet and AFAG Guidance Leaflets**

The industry wants to take ownership of these important HSE guidance publications.

**2. Safety communication and promotion**

Sharing information on incidents, good practice, additional training and advice.

**3. Better accident statistics**

A means of establishing and managing forest industry safety statistics to enable review of overall performance and to identify specific trends in accidents and incidents.

#### **4. Behavioural change management**

We wish to research and develop a longer term behavioural change Action Plan to encompass all of the sector.

#### **5. Chainsaw refresher training**

Supports the principle of compulsory refresher training for chainsaw operators on a five-year cycle. Facilitating the development of appropriate, relevant and up-to-date refresher training.

#### **6. Timber haulage in the forest**

Promoting safe operations in loading and timber movement in the forest.

#### **7. Working safely with electricity**

Developing a common understanding of the key safety management issues when working close to electricity power lines and create up-to-date guidelines for this working environment.

#### **8. Competency of forest works managers and the site supervisors**

The demands on forest works managers and site supervisors have increased. Key competencies need to be developed for managers and contractors alike.