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

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

**AFAG Workplan for 2013 and Beyond – Discussion Paper**

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

**Summary**

1. A number of factors including:
  - The successful conclusion or (in some cases) lack of progress on existing AFAG projects;
  - HSE's revised Sector Strategy for the tree work industry;
  - Changes in the industry; and
  - The creation of Forestry Industry Safety Accord (FISA)

make it necessary to review the current AFAG workplan.

2. This paper includes a summary of existing AFAG projects (Annex 1). It invites discussion on possible future work, reflecting HSE's Agriculture Sector Strategy (tree work extract at Annex 2) and the Sector Implementation Plan (Annex 3) for incorporation in the AFAG workplan for 2013 and beyond.

**Background**

3. The AIAC has agreed that AFAG should continue to operate as a sub-committee and deliver its aims and objectives through an agreed series of 'task-and-finish' projects.
4. Following a forestry summit in March 2012, the forest industry established the FISA whose activities relate only to the forestry industry.
5. The existing AFAG workplan was reviewed in 2010/11 to ensure consistency with HSE's new strategy – *'The Health and Safety of Great Britain – Be Part of the Solution'*. An updated projects list was prepared following the meeting in April 2012 and is attached at Annex 1. However, a further review in November 2012 highlighted the extent to which the AFAG workplan included work which was now being undertaken, or could be better undertaken, by FISA.

6. During the period April 2010 – August 2012 HSE consulted the AIAC and industry stakeholders on an Agriculture Sector Strategy, which includes objectives for the tree work industry. The strategy is organic and is currently being review. Extracts from the strategy relevant to the tree work sector is attached at Annex 2. The review provides an opportunity to identify future work for AFAG, and also an opportunity for AFAG members to input into the strategy.

7. The Agriculture Sector Strategy is supported by a Strategy Implementation plan (SIP), the tree work elements of which are included at Annex 3.

### **Recommendations**

8. This paper will be discussed at the AFAG meeting on 2 May 2013 with a view to developing a revised workplan, which takes into account the Sector Strategy and the work undertaken by FISA.

### **Action**

7. This paper invites AFAG members to:
- a) Review the tree work elements of the Agriculture Sector Strategy to identify opportunities for future work to improve the health and safety performance of the industry;
  - b) Provide any comments or opinions they or members of the organisations they represent may have on the tree work elements of the Agriculture Sector Strategy
  - c) Review the existing AFAG projects in the context of the Strategy to determine if they should continue to be taken forward by AFAG;
  - d) Review the membership of the existing project groups to;
  - e) and

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23 April 2013

## AFAG 13/03 ANNEX 1

AFAG Project (+ Leader)	Current position
1. Development of European Chainsaw Certificates (J Brown)	Ongoing.
2. Reduce accidents involving chain saws (E Ramsay)	Work to be progressed by WG (Emily Ramsay, Neil McKay and Pete Jackson,)
3. Improving Management of Work at Height (Alex Laver)	Project to cover tree climbing, rigging and use of cranes, Work being progressed through AA WG.
4. Machine Assisted Takedown of Trees (I Sutherland)	Work completed. Check to be made on what can be taken forward from Graeme Hodgson's report.
5. Market surveillance (product design) (H Fairley)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Gravity-fed Woodchippers (Arb/amenity) – Feed chute length on specific m/cs inadequate – non-compliance with current standards. Check on current situation to be made at APF.</li> <li>2. Crane-fed Woodchippers (Forestry) – Guarding inadequate to prevent access. Check on current situation to be made at APF.</li> <li>3. 360-degree excavators (used on steep ground in forestry for harvesting, etc) – New ROPS standard proposed by ISO lower than UK standard and inadequate for UK operations (IS to check?)</li> </ol>
6. Safe Tree work near Overhead Power Lines (I Sutherland)	<p>Aim to review and devise safe methods of harvesting timber and other tree work in forestry and arboricultural operations close to overhead power lines (OHPLs), including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standards and definitions in all relevant guidance to be consistent (eg 'Danger Zones' and safe working distances. In particular GS6 and AFAG 804</li> </ul> <p>ENA Project on machine takedown in red zone – Work still on going – revised AFAG 804 needs further drafting.</p>
7. Small scale self-propelled machinery in forestry (Duncan Ireland)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review the range of machines currently available in the UK;</li> <li>2. Confirm that their integral protective structures are fit for purpose and comply with the legislation;</li> <li>3. Work with suppliers and manufacturers to ensure that any issues identified are addressed;</li> <li>4. Develop guidance for the industry on the suitable risk assessment process that should be applied to the use of these machines and provide good practice guidance on their safe use;</li> <li>5. Promote guidance and communicate risk management and project messages directly through the</li> </ol>

AFAG Project (+ Leader)	Current position
	<p>Forestry Commission, industry associations and exhibitions/demonstration events, as well as via specialist trade publications.</p> <p>FC to see if resources available to progress.</p>
8. Felling of Large Trees (James Brown)	<p>Two issues</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Training in suitable tree felling techniques for large trees;</li> <li>2. Need for 2 people at the base of the tree under some circumstances. WG leader Donald McLean - to circulate amended paper..</li> </ol>
9. Promotion of Occupational Health Services (I Sutherland)	Check position
10. Hand Arm Vibration (Colin Saunders)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. FC agreed to fund further research on trigger times for a range of forestry/arb equipment that will be of use across a range of other industries – Supported and encouraged by HSE national Noise and Vibration team.</li> <li>2. FC produced ‘good practice’ guidance (in collaboration with HSE N&amp;V Specialists) – to be shared with others. FC to check position re 1 and 2</li> <li>3. HSE Specialist N&amp;V Team propose a project targeting manfrs/importers/suppliers to encourage provision of adequate information for users. The project was launched and is being taken forward internationally but due to current constraints in the UK work on this is on hold until next work year.</li> </ol>
11. Noise (Colin Saunders)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. HSE Specialist N&amp;V Team propose a project targeting manufacturers/importers/suppliers to encourage provision of adequate information for users. The project was launched and is being taken forward internationally but due to current constraints in the UK work on this is on hold until next work year.</li> <li>2. HSE’s new “Buy Quiet” initiative launched March 2010. Revised web site due to be launched shortly</li> </ol>
13. Managing Health and Safety on Sites (Phil Higginbotham)	Revision of INDG 294 almost complete. Comments to be progressed through WG.
14. Lone Working (I Sutherland)	To be progressed.

## EXTRACTS FROM THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR STRATEGY RELATING TO TREE WORK

(Note: for ease of use and integration into the strategy as a whole, original paragraph numbering has been retained in the Objectives section)

These extracts from HSE's Agriculture Sector Strategy seek to address the hazards and risks in arboriculture, forestry and related industries that involve the management of trees, woodland and forests.

For the purposes of the Agriculture Sector Strategy, the agriculture industry is defined so as to include:

- traditional farming activities such as arable, dairy, livestock and mixed farming, the growing of fruit and vegetables, production horticulture, agricultural and animal husbandry services etc; and
- the wider land based industries, including amenity management and landscaping, animal care, aquaculture, arboriculture and forestry, environmental conservation etc. and the fresh produce processing sector. *[N.B. For the time being the definition excludes hunting, shooting and fishing].*

## 1 STRATEGIC CONTEXT

### 1.1 SCOPE

By rising to the challenges and opportunities presented by the new Health and Safety Strategy for Great Britain (the Strategy), the Agriculture Sector Strategy seeks to promote major cultural and behavioural changes in the industry, which will have a positive impact on the key health and safety performance indices. Sustained activity will be required over 5-10 years (if not more) to bring about the sort of cultural and behavioural changes needed to improve health and safety in this sector. The strategy is therefore not time bound and will necessarily be subject to continual development and improvement. It is informed by and reflects work already underway within the industry..

## 2 STRATEGIC GOALS

This extract from the sector strategy addresses health and safety priorities across arboriculture and forestry. Based on the sector's current and historic health and safety performance, HSE's knowledge of the industry, consultation with industry partners and stakeholders through the AIAC and its working groups, the strategic priorities for the sector are:

- **Leadership** – the fragmentation across the industry means there is a need for ownership of the industry's health and safety performance and coherent leadership which key industry associations and representative bodies stakeholders/ intermediaries/AIAC members are best placed to take in order to promote/lead the necessary cultural change;

- **Building competence** - the current and future skills gap as the industry expands and the training needs identified mean it is essential that managing for health & safety is recognised as a core competence embedded in vocational qualification (VQ) schemes available across GB to raise awareness of the risks and control measures;
- **Customising support for SMEs** – the high proportion of micro-businesses in the industry means that providing duty holders the tools they need to improve performance and the confidence to know when they have “done enough” is an essential component of the sector strategy;
- **Investigations and securing justice** – the current industry performance on health and safety means enforcement remains a key component of the sector strategy to provide appropriate and justifiable benchmark standards and a sustainable programme of inspection and investigation to promote compliance; and

Collectively these aims and objectives are seen as the priorities in promoting a healthier and safer land based industry. They focus in the first instance on a limited number of the goals in the Strategy. Given longstanding experience of the industry it is unreasonable to expect to see simultaneous progress across all fronts but central to effecting improvement is the greater commitment, involvement and proactively of the key industry stakeholders. This will become all the more important in the light of the likely future resources available to HSE. An assessment of the potential Impact of the objectives in terms of harm, success and political importance are presented in appendix 1.

## 4 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

### 4.2 WIDER LAND BASED SECTORS

#### 4.2.1 Leadership (Wider land based industries)

**Problem definition** - Fragmentation of the wider land based industries means there is a need for ownership of the sectors’ health and safety performance and coherent leadership to tackle it. Key industry associations and representative bodies, stakeholders and intermediaries (including some AIAC members) are best placed to take and promote/lead the necessary cultural change.

**Aim: For the key industry stakeholders/intermediaries to accept ownership of their sector’s poor health and safety performance and to demonstrate leadership by promoting good management and health and safety practices with their respective memberships**

#### **Subsidiary destination statements**

*Leadership: The industry fully understands the importance placed on health and safety and takes responsibility for risk control.*

*Leadership: Stakeholders actively seek to learn from their own and others’ experience, use their influence to help others improve and share good practices*

*Leadership: Organisations have access to business support tools enabling them to assess the competence of their staff and can demonstrate how and what they are doing to improve health and safety.*

*Real H&S: leaders throughout the health and safety system see the prevention of harm from work activities as “the way we do business around here” and health and safety practice is accepted as an integral part of doing business.*

## **Objectives**

- 4.2.1.1 OGDs, retailers (supermarket chains) and other stakeholders use their influence within the sector to ensure that health and safety is accepted as an integral part of the business, by adopting viable and sustainable benchmark standards, and identifying and sharing best practice.
- 4.2.1.2 Public organisations (including LAs, Government departments and agencies) and private companies use their influence with suppliers of amenity and landscaping (amenity) services to ensure that health and safety is an integral part of procurement and service delivery.
- 4.2.1.3 Benchmark standards are used consistently by those with regulatory and inspection roles e.g. HSE, the LAs, retailers, trade associations and independent assurance schemes etc.
- 4.2.1.4 Business tools are made available that enable the assessment of competence of the workforce in a format that is easily understood and accessible.

Possible ways in which these may be achieved include:

### **Tree work (Arboriculture and Forestry)**

- *Working with industry representatives through AFAG to further develop and promote improvements in the framework for managing health and safety in forestry and promoting its adoption on forestry sites.*
- *A Forestry Safety Summit (possibly in 2011/12) involving CEOs/MDs etc. of the main forestry companies, trade organisations and unions to promote the sharing of good practice and securing a commitment to provide leadership to improve the poor health and safety performance of the forestry sector.*
- *An Arboriculture Safety Summit (possibly in 2011/12) sponsored by Arboriculture Association's Utility Arboriculture Group, targeting senior management of the network operators and contractors.*
- *HSE (Sector) attendance at and support for the Arboriculture Association's Arboriculture Trade Fair and the bi-annual Association of Professional Foresters show.*

### **4.2.2 Competence (Wider land based industries)**

**Problem definition** - the current and future skills gap in these industries make it essential that managing for health and safety is recognised as a core competence and that vocational training in managing health and safety is readily available and accessed.

**Aim: To promote the assessment of competence and the uptake of competence based training in managing health and safety in the industry and to collaborate in developing further training packages in the wider land based sector as necessary.**

### **Subsidiary destination statements**

*Competence: Employers are sufficiently competent to identify and proactively manage their risks; employees understand the risks they face, and their role in dealing with them*

*Competence: Those entering an organisation come with an ability (or are trained) to recognise and know how to mitigate risk.*

*Competence: Appropriate vocational training on managing health and safety in these industries is developed and taken up by employers.*

*Competence: Organisations have access to business support tools and can identify where to obtain health and safety advice/training recognised as competent at the time they need it*

### **Objectives**

- 4.2.2.1 Training in managing health and safety is recognised as a core competence for supervisors and managers in the industry.
- 4.2.2.2 Business tools to enable a business to assess the competence of their workforce are made available in an easily accessible format.
- 4.2.2.3 Relevant VQs are developed and offered by agricultural colleges and universities for the wider land based industries, similar to those in the farming sector and that they ensure that health and safety is properly addressed in syllabi.
- 4.2.2.4 Other training provided to the sectors (e.g. by relevant professional/trade associations) includes relevant health and safety elements.

Possible ways in which these may be achieved include:

- *Developing effective working relationships with the major UK retailers individually and/or the British Retail Consortium/the Fresh Produce Consortium collectively with a view to embedding the management of health and safety within fresh produce supply chains.*
- *Developing effective working relationships with major clients and LAs/the Local Government Employers organisation etc. so as to embed the management of health and safety within the procurement and delivery of landscaping and amenity services.*
- *HSE, Ofqual and relevant training and awarding bodies working together to develop similar management of health and safety qualifications in those wider land based industries, that are not covered by the existing VQs and for which*

*there is a similar training need and demand. These might include the amenity and landscaping, aquaculture, the fresh produce processing (packhouses) and tree work sectors.*

- *Stakeholders support the uptake of businesses tools that enable businesses to assess the competence of their workforce and signpost appropriate training*
- *Working with the Ethical Trading Initiative to develop relevant health and safety elements for the training they already deliver to parts of the agricultural industry.*

### **Tree work**

- *Working closely, directly (or through AFAG) with the training and certification organisations which award nationally recognised certificates of competence for forestry and arboriculture operations, to ensure the standards of training and assessment remain credible and fit for purpose.*
- *Working with the key industry bodies and associations in arboriculture and training/awarding bodies to encourage them to take 'ownership' and demonstrate leadership in devising effective standards, systems and business support tools for training so as to develop/maintain competence in the industry.*
- *Promoting the management and supervision of forestry operations in vocational, diploma and degree level qualifications through advisory bodies and stakeholders.*

### **4.2.3 SMEs (Wider land based industries)**

**Problem definition** - the high proportion of micro-businesses in the industry means that providing duty holders with the tools they need to improve performance and the confidence to know when they have achieved compliance is an essential element of the strategy.

<b>Aim: To ensure health and safety advice/guidance and core messages are disseminated effectively to the industry</b>
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#### **Subsidiary destination statements**

*Leadership: Organisations can demonstrate how and what they are doing to improve health and safety. They actively seek to learn from their own and others' experience, use their influence to help others improve, share good practice and recognise success.*

*SMEs: SMEs receive and/or are able to access consistent, accurate and aligned messages on health and safety from government and key stakeholders (link to Competence)*

*SMEs: SMEs take positive and proportionate steps towards achieving compliance and can demonstrate their staff are competent*

*Real health & safety: Leaders throughout the health and safety system see the prevention of harm from work activities as "the way we do business around here"*

## Objectives

- 4.2.3.2 Development and delivery of sustainable programmes of SHADs funded and delivered by key (trusted) stakeholders including specific SHADs dealing with tree work and aquaculture sectors.
- 4.2.3.2 Key clients for amenity work reinforce health and safety expectations through their contracting processes
- 4.2.3.3 Improved accessibility and quality of health and safety advice and guidance to industry

Possible ways in which these may be achieved:

- *HSE, intermediary bodies and other stakeholders, develop sustainable programmes of SHADs and SHAD type events to address the needs of the aquaculture, arboriculture and forestry sectors.*
- *Work with key stakeholders e.g. LAs and Parish Councils who engage amenity contractors to embed health and safety expectations through the supply chain.*
- *Support from HSE to the devolved administrations to ensure appropriate and consistent messaging. In Scotland for example, this is being taken forward by SEARS and the Healthy Working Lives initiative.*
- *Identifying and exploiting opportunities to share good practice, guidance and (information based) resources with international organisations; particularly with respect to forestry.*
- *Encouraging the acceptance and uptake of the NAAC 'Approved Contractor' and other schemes by key industry stakeholders.*
- *Continuing to exploit IT/online communications to deliver core messages to the wider land based sectors. In particular work with key stakeholders to develop online resources including visual materials on key health and safety risks in tree work.*

## 4.2.4 Securing Justice (Wider land based industries)

<b>Aim: To develop and make public appropriate and justifiable benchmark health and safety standards for the industry and a sustainable programme of inspection and investigation to promote compliance.</b>
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### Subsidiary destination statements

*Competence: The regulator is competent to fulfil its statutory obligations within the health and safety system and gathers intelligence from the industry to inform its benchmark standards.*

*Securing justice: Duty holders are aware of learning points from investigations of work-related ill-health, injury and other incidents and enforcement activity, and act on them so as to comply with health and safety law.*

*Health: Key stakeholders, including government, work together to support organisations to reduce work-related ill-health and promote rehabilitation within the wider land based industries*

*Safety priorities: The level of health and safety risks from different work-related activity is recognised ensuring that actions are appropriate, proportionate and prioritised so that the most significant risks are not overlooked*

## **Objectives**

4.2.4.1 Sufficient inspectors (in HSE and the LAs) are trained and competent to carry out inspection and investigation work in the sectors.

4.2.4.2 Fatal injuries in the sectors are investigated in line with guidance with enforcement carried out in line with the EMM.

4.2.4.3 Intervention strategies across Government Departments and the LAs are targeted, proportionate and consistent on health and safety matters

Possible ways in which these may be achieved include:

- *(The Sector) reviewing current benchmark performance standards which support the application of the Enforcement Management Model.*
- *(The Sector) clarifying the priority issues and topics in these sectors for FOD inspectors.*
- *(The Sector) providing appropriate training on priorities in the sectors to meet the demand for training by FOD (and LAs).*

## **4.2.5. Creating healthier, safer workplaces (Wider land- based industries)**

**Problem definition** – Health and Safety performance in agriculture and the wider land based sector is the worst of all traditional industry sectors. Issues relate to both health and safety.

<b>Aim: To set priorities to deliver a significant reduction in the rate and number of deaths, accidents and cases of ill health.</b>
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### **Subsidiary destination statements**

*The level of health and safety risks from different work-related activity is recognised ensuring that actions are appropriate, proportionate and prioritised so that the most significant risks are not overlooked.*

*New health and safety risks from emerging technologies or sectors are recognised and effectively managed at or before their inception.*

*Duty holders and others in the health and safety system actively seek new ways to reduce accidents, particularly within high risk areas and where progress has slowed*

*Reinstatement of a limited programme of proactive inspection in the farming sectors based on priority high risk topics to reflect the priority accorded to the industry by HSE.*

## **Objectives**

- 4.2.5.1 Use science, research and develop mechanisms to share intelligence to create compelling evidence to inform the setting of benchmark standards and to prioritise our actions and those of others best placed to address the work related health and safety issues.
- 4.2.5.2 Delivery of a limited number of local projects based on a range of inspection techniques e.g. proactive inspection, topic based/targeted inspection projects etc. reflecting national or regional priorities
- 4.2.5.3 Develop mechanisms for the sharing of intelligence between the industry and the sector
- 4.2.5.4 (The Sector) and (FOD) working with other organisations in developing integrated intervention strategies to address health, safety and welfare issues

Possible ways in which these may be achieved include:

- *Where appropriate (The Sector) commissioning research to create evidence*
- *(The Sector) undertaking ongoing review of new and existing occupational health and safety risks and controls in agriculture and the wider land based sector.*
- *(The Sector) to carry out market surveillance of new and existing machinery in use in agriculture and the wider land based sector to maintain good intelligence.*

## **5 POSSIBLE WAYS TO ACHIEVE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

The overarching approach to delivering this strategy is to promote closer working with relevant representative bodies, trade associations, other stakeholders, other Government departments and agencies etc. to improve the industry's health and safety performance. Specific examples of how this might be achieved are suggested under the aims and objectives above.

A number of mechanisms already exist through which HSE brings together employer representative bodies, trade associations, trades unions other stakeholders, OGDs and agencies etc to promote the aims and objectives including the Agriculture Industry Advisory Committee (AIAC), the Arboriculture and Forestry Advisory Group

(AFAG) and a number of task and finish project/ working groups which support these more formal structures. Over time the AIAC has been relatively passive due in part to confusion as to its remit and role. It is proposed to use the outcomes of a recent stakeholder mapping exercise carried out at the behest of the HSE Board to inform a review of the committee and its working groups (including AFAG), its terms of reference, membership and governance .

HSE acknowledges that it will require sustained activity over at least 5-10 years to bring about the sort of cultural and behavioural changes needed to improve health and safety in this sector.

**TREE WORK EXTRACT FROM HSE'S AGRICULTURE SECTOR SECTOR  
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (SIP)**

**See attached Excel spreadsheet**