

**ARBORICULTURE AND FORESTRY ADVISORY GROUP (AFAG)
NOTES of 27th MEETING**

| Date | Tuesday 10th November 2015 | Location | FC HQ, Corstophine Road, Edinburgh EH12 7AT | Taken by | Frances Hirst | Action | |
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| | HSE | | AFAG MEMBERS | | | | |
| | Rick Brunt (Chair) - RB Andrew Turner (Secretary) - AT Iain Sutherland - IS Frances Hirst - FH | Simon Richmond (Arb Assoc) -SR Gillian Clark (FISA) - GC Martin Lennon (BALI) – ML Karl Lee (UAG) – KL Hans Fairley – (AEA) – HF Donald Maclean (FCA) - DMc | Tony Davies (C&G) - TD, James Brown (CONFOR), Simon Wallace (FC), Emily Ramsay (FC), David Sulman (UKFPA) | | | | |
| Item | Key points and actions | | | | | | |
| 1 | <p>Welcome/apologies for absence</p> <p>1.1 Rick Brunt, Head of the Agriculture, Waste & Recycling Sector welcomed members to the 27th AFAG meeting.</p> <p>1.2 Apologies were received from Stuart Phillips (Lantra), Des Campbell (DARDNI), Neil McKay (ICF),</p> | | | | | | |
| 2 | <p>Minutes of 26th Meeting (May 2015)</p> <p>2.1 DMc had requested one amendment. AT to complete this before Minutes published on the web.</p> | | | | | | AT |
| 3 | <p>Matters Arising <i>[Not covered in the Action Notes, or elsewhere on agenda.]</i></p> <p>Min 7.1 Relevant action taken, item closed.</p> <p>Min 11.2 revised guidance on chainsaw jackets to be circulated to Members.</p> <p>Actions from the previous meeting not listed above are either discharged or appear on this agenda.</p> | | | | | | FH |
| 4 | <p>Future of AFAG</p> <p>4.1 Members were in unanimous agreement that AFAG does still have a role and its work should continue. There is no other organisation which is able to represent both arb and forestry.</p> <p>4.2 Issues for the future include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • collecting additional data to help identify topics that need attention; • ensuring membership remains representative e.g. to reflect devolution issues. | | | | | | |

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| | <p>4.3 The non-attendance of Union representatives is to be raised through the AIAC.</p> <p>4.4 The AFAG workplan will be revised at the next meeting.</p> | RB |
| 5 | <p>FISA Update</p> <p>5.1 FISA currently has 759 members. It is in the process of finalising its Articles and Rules and its Strategic Plan.</p> <p>Working Groups</p> <p>5.2 There is increasing positive input into the WGs.</p> <p>5.3 Safety Documents Group – working with Arb Assoc - currently looking at use of ropes on edge trees. The existing guidance is on a three year review period.</p> <p>Timber haulage Group – new guide due to be published.</p> <p>Comms Group – the safety bulletins section of the website is very popular. The group are looking at ways of encouraging small companies to contribute. The group are also looking at next year’s AGM and regional contacts.</p> <p>Learning and Behaviour Group - looking at causes of accidents and have met with HSL.</p> <p>Skills and Development Group - looking at liaising with training providers to raise awareness. Now have estates managers attending the FWM course.</p> <p>Timber Haulage Group - new guidance aimed at drivers due to be published shortly. Further guidance to follow.</p> <p>Utilities Group - will be concentrating on gas line safety in the coming year.</p> <p>Worksite Group - now FWM guidance published will be looking at working with landowners to highlight the risks involved in forestry.</p> <p>Plant and Equipment Group - working with suppliers to ensure the safety of their employees during maintenance work.</p> | |
| 6 | <p>Progress with AFAG Projects and future work</p> <p>6.1 <i>European Chainsaw Certificates</i>. TD reported that City and Guilds are continuing their mapping exercise to ensure that both the EFSCA and ABA qualifications are equivalent to the existing UK qualifications. The exercise is due to completed in the 1st quarter of 2016 and it is likely that both European qualifications will be acceptable and jointly badged. It was agreed to keep this as an agenda item to enable AGAFG to track progress on this issue.</p> <p>6.2 AT advised members that once the European qualifications have been accepted AFAG will have to revise its position on the acceptability of non-UK qualifications and he had drafted a position paper. This will be revised following the meeting.</p> <p>6.3 Employers continue to need reminding that the certificate is just a starting point.</p> | <p>TD</p> <p>AT</p> |

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| | <p>They still need to satisfy themselves that the employee can work competently. RB suggested that this becomes a new work item for AFAG.</p> <p>6.4 SR reminded members that the Register of Treework Operatives (RTwo) is now in existence to record competency and the system was suitable for both arb and forestry.</p> <p>6.5 <i>Reducing accidents involving chainsaws.</i> The AFAG working had not met to progress this. It was agreed that the WG of ER, IS, DMC and HF would meet to decide what aspects of the root causes of chainsaw accident it would be most effective to concentrate on. The WG will report back at the next meeting.</p> <p>6.6 <i>Machine assisted take down of trees.</i> This topic has been taken over by the relevant FISA WG which will also be looking at felling of large tree (including the issue of double manning. They are looking at a number of techniques with a view to identifying a safety hierarchy. GC will email information to members.</p> <p>6.7 <i>Safe treework near overhead power lines.</i> KL reported that the UAG have been looking at incident data to identify the root causes. Their reporting system has been standardised and now includes Network Rail. The aim is to hold behavioural workshops based on the findings.</p> <p>6.8 Training for utility arborists is being reviewed with Lantra and City and Guilds and the surveying unit is being revised.</p> <p>6.9 The long term aim is to draft an ICOP for utility arb but there are funding issues at the moment. Guidance on the use of MEWPs and flails is being drafted. Regular safety bulletins are published by the comms group which are circulated to all members.</p> <p>6.10 As with all parts of the treework industry the challenge is engaging with small contractors.</p> <p>6.11 <i>Small-scale self-propelled machinery.</i> An FC guidance note has been drafted and this has been commented on by AFAG. The final document will be circulated to members.</p> <p>6.12 SW reported that guidance for contactors was being drafted in conjunction with Barony College. This will be circulated to members in due course and an update provided at the next meeting. If appropriate this may become a FISA safety guide.</p> <p>6.13 <i>Promotion of occupational health services.</i> IS reported that the original scope and resources needed for this project was huge. Healthy Working Lives (HWL) in Scotland is looking at high risk industries with poor conditions. They are able to identify a provider and training for small groups. He will provide information on treework to HWL.</p> <p>6.14 There is an English equivalent of HWL but this has not been approached. This may be a useful contact for the proposed utility arboriculture behavior workshops.</p> <p>6.15 IS will report back at the next meeting on the scope of what can be achieved.</p> <p>6.16 The provision of health surveillance is beginning to appear in the treework industry particularly in utility arboriculture.</p> | <p>ER/WG</p> <p>GC</p> <p>ER</p> <p>SW</p> <p>IS</p> |
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| | 6.17 New projects to be discussed the next meeting | Members |
| 8 | <p>Economics update</p> <p>8.1 AT reported that at the forestry summit the impression was given that the key industry incentive was output, which may have a negative impact on health and safety. As FISA was unable to take this forward it fell back to AFAG and AT requested HSE economists to look at what work had been done previously and what action could be taken. A copy of their report was circulated prior to the meeting.</p> <p>8.2 Insufficient accidents are reported to enable any cost effective empirical research to be done. Although some contractors feel they are treated unfairly others do not. To progress this individuals will need to be prepared to share information. In addition the information is that chainsaw operators are no longer paid at “piece-work” rates.</p> <p>8.3 Discussions around this issue indicated that members felt that how a job is priced and paid for may have a detrimental effect on health and safety. It was agreed that members would identify the gaps that still needed to be addressed and that these would form part of the wider discussions on the AFAG work plan which will be held at the next meeting.</p> | Members |
| 9 | <p>Communications</p> <p>9.1 <i>FISA safety guides</i>. GC reported that the review of FISA safety guides was underway and that this will be 3 year process. Some have already been identified as needing updating. The layout will also be revised to enable easier printing. Guides will remain free to download and hard copies may also be purchased.</p> <p>9.2 The level of revision is being considered as is the scope for amalgamation. Some funding will be required to enable the revision work to be done. The actual level of cost has still to be identified.</p> <p>9.3 It was agreed that copies of revised drafts would be circulated to members for comment. In the interim all existing guides were considered to be fit for purpose.</p> <p>9.4 Inserting a section in the guides concerning the nomination of an individual to be site lead for health and safety was discussed. It was agreed that some possible wording would be circulated for comment. It is important to remember that this to ensure that adequate arrangements are in place to ensure health and safety on the site not provide someone to blame.</p> <p>9.5 <i>Arboriculture and Forestry SHADs</i>. Bids are in to hold both arb and forestry SHADs this financial year. The final outcome should be known shortly.</p> | <p>GC</p> <p>ML??</p> |

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| <p>10</p> | <p>Standards work</p> <p>10.1 The revised BS EN 609-1: Agricultural and forestry machinery - Safety of log splitters - Part 1: Wedge splitters has been agreed and should be published before the end of 2016</p> <p>10.2 The revised BS EN 13525 Forestry machinery - Wood chippers is now in its 3rd draft. 2 UK manufacturers are represented on the WG. Key changes include a minimum chute height of 600mm and a chute length of 1.5m. The French are also looking at what requirements could be enforced retrospectively. IS will report back at next meeting.</p> <p>10.3 At the previous meeting members queried the lack of a definition of professional use for top-handled chainsaws. EN ISO 11681 – 2:2011 is currently under revision and the relevant section is being updated to bring the advice into line with that already available to suppliers in the UK. HF to find out what revised wording is proposed.</p> | <p>IS</p> <p>HF</p> |
| <p>11</p> | <p>Members items</p> <p>11.1. ML informed members that good practice guidelines on work near OHPLs, for members of the public are being drafted. A copy will be circulated to AFAG for comment.</p> <p>11.2 FISA safety alerts need to be checked to ensure they are giving out the correct message.</p> <p>11.3 DMC asked for further information on the FC training requirements for those handling pesticide treated plants. This is to be followed up.</p> | <p>ML</p> <p>FISA</p> <p>FC</p> |
| <p>12</p> | <p>AOB</p> <p>None</p> | |
| <p>13</p> | <p>Date & Venue of next meeting</p> <p>May 2016 Date TBC Venue TBC</p> | |