



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

Meeting 11th of May 2011

REVIEW OF AFAG LEAFLETS

1 Background

1.1 HSE is currently reviewing all its published guidance including the AFAG suite of guidance leaflets. Although at an early stage, the review process aims:

- a. To reduce the duplication of guidance;
- b. To rationalise the amount of guidance produced by HSE and in particular to ensure that there is a real need for individual pieces of guidance;
- c. To ensure that published guidance focuses on what businesses/duty holders need to do to comply with health and safety legislation; and
- d. To identify and determine the scope for charging for multiple copies of leaflets.

2 Issues

2.1 The AFAG suite of leaflets comprises 39 leaflets and represents a significant proportion of all the agricultural guidance produced by HSE (See Annex 1 for the full list of AFAG leaflets as at May 2011). Although many of the leaflets are widely used, both by businesses and training organisations, a significant number are downloaded or purchased in very low numbers. Many of these leaflets relate to 'niche' areas of forestry work.

2.2 There is also significant duplication between some AFAG leaflets and other HSE guidance. For example, AFAG 701 "ATV Quad Bikes" and AFAG 702 "All Terrain Vehicles" provide almost the same information as Agricultural Information Sheet 33 "ATVS in Agriculture". In addition, there is a significant overlap between the AFAG leaflets dealing with basic chainsaw work and HSE IND317 "Chainsaws at Work."

2.3 Each AFAG leaflet will be considered individually during the review. Without pre-empting the outcome, it is likely that HSE will place more value on some leaflets than others. Therefore, it is probable that the number of leaflets, which satisfy HSE's criteria and will therefore continue to be published, will be reduced. Those that fail to meet the criteria and which otherwise would no

longer be published could possibly be transferred to another organisation. This would almost certainly result in the fragmentation of the AFAG suite of leaflets. A possible alternative would therefore be to explore the scope for another organisation taking over responsibility for publishing the current suite of AFAG leaflets in its entirety.

2.4 It is important to reassure Members that the review of publications is not specifically targeted at AFAG leaflets nor does it represent any diminution of HSE's commitment to AFAG in the future.

3 Recommendations

3.1 Members are asked:

- a. To consider whether it would be better to maintain the current suite of AFAG leaflets in its entirety, if need be by transferring responsibility for publishing them to another (appropriate) organisation.
- b. If HSE is to publish a more limited range of leaflets following the review:
 - i. To identify those leaflets where guidance is no longer necessary; and
 - ii. To identify those leaflets that could be either be withdrawn or transferred to another organisation because they deal with niche areas of the tree work industry and/or where the removal of AFAG guidance is unlikely to contribute to an increase in accidents.
- c. To consider whether those AFAG leaflets that will continue to be published following the review should be collated into a single document to form a tree work version of "Farmwise".

FORESTRY	
AFAG 102	Pre-planting spraying of container –grown seeds
AFAG 103	Planting
AFAG 104	Fencing
AFAG 105	Hand-held power posthole borer
AFAG 202	Application of pesticides by hand
AFAG 204	Flails and mulchers in tree work
AFAG 501	Tractor units in tree work
AFAG 502	Extraction by skidder
AFAG 503	Extraction by forwarder
AFAG 504	Extraction by cable crane
AFAG 506	Extraction by horse
AFAG 601	Mobile circular saw bench
AFAG 602	Mobile peeling machine
AFAG 603	Mechanical Harvesting
AFAG 605	Mechanical roadside processing
AFAG 701	ATV Quad bikes
AFAG 702	All terrain vehicles
AFAG 703	Debogging and recovery of forestry machines
AFAG 704	Excavators in tree work
AFAG 705	Steep slope working in forestry
AFAG 803	Fire fighting
ARBORICULTURE	
AFAG 308	Top-handled chainsaws
AFAG 401	Tree-climbing operations
AFAG 402	Aerial tree rescue
AFAG 403	MEWPS for tree work
AFAG 606	Mobile Stump Grinders
TREE WORK	
AFAG 201	Hand tool weeding, brashing and pruning
AFAG 203	Clearing saw
AFAG 301	Using petrol driven chainsaws
AFAG 302	Basic chainsaw felling and manual takedown
AFAG 303	Chainsaw snedding
AFAG 304	Chainsaw cross-cutting and manual stacking
AFAG 306	Chainsaw clearance of windblow
AFAG 307	Chainsaw felling of large trees
AFAG 310	Use of winches in directional felling and takedown
AFAG 604	Wood chippers
AFAG 802	Emergency planning

AFAG 804	Electricity at Work : Forestry and arboriculture
AFAG 805	Training and certification