

**ARBORICULTURE AND FORESTRY ADVISORY GROUP (AFAG)
NOTES of 29th MEETING**

Date	Tuesday 14th November 2016	Location	Silvan House, 231 Corstorphine Road, Edinburgh, EH12 7AT	Taken by	Iain Sutherland	Action	
		HSE	AFAG MEMBERS				
	Rick Brunt (Chair) - RB Andrew Turner (Secretary) - AT Iain Sutherland - IS	Stuart Phillips, Lantra - SP Donald MacLean (FCA) – DM Emily Ramsay (FC) – ER Phil Mostyn NRW (PM) Robin Jackson NPTC C&G (RJ) Paul Smith (Arb Assoc) – PS David Sulman (UKFPA) – DS James Brown (CONFOR) – JB Simon Richmond (AA) – SR	Keith Paterson (FC) - KP Martin Lennon (BALI) – ML Gillian Clarke (FISA) – GC Poalo Bavaresco (ICF) – PB Hans Fairley (Stihl) - HF				
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 29th AFAG meeting.</p> <p>1.2 Apologies were received from Karl Lee (UAG), Steve Dresser (FISA), Bruce Hamilton (PCS) Des Campbell (DARDNI)</p>						
2	<p>Action Notes of 28th Meeting (May 2016)</p> <p>No amendments or corrections requested.</p>						
3	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>Action Note 9 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. Not completed keep action on minutes. KP</p> <p>Action Note 9.3 It was agreed that copies of revised drafts of FISA guides would be circulated to members for comment. In the interim all existing GC</p>						

	<p>guides were considered to be fit for purpose. Not completed keep action on minutes.</p> <p>Action Note 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. Not completed keep action on minutes. ML to report to group at next meeting</p> <p>Action Note 10.3 Ongoing discussions regarding the definition of professional use in regard to top-handled chainsaws. Action discharged from agenda but will be raised as necessary.</p> <p>Action Note 11.1 DM clarification for training re FC for handling pesticide treated plant. FC discussions with contractors. Lantra developed specific course to be rolled out shortly. Action closed.</p>	ML
4	<p>FISA Update</p> <p>GC provided an update for FISA and its working groups, expressing her gratitude to the FISA working group members who volunteered their time to participate.</p> <p>Working Group updates: Safety Documents. Hans Fairley is the new Chair. Redrafting safety documents. Pulling together drafts targeting chainsaw and planting guides first . GC will forward drafts to AFAG when ready.</p> <p>Communications: Updating the Website. The draft strategic plan is ready for circulation. Exploring options for use of social media.</p> <p>Learning and Behavioural Change: Circulating details for collecting industry accident/incident statistics from members. Consideration being given to developing topical toolbox talks.</p> <p>Safety Skills and Development Group: Working closely with Lantra and City & Guilds on future training and the quality of content training. View remains that FISA does not intend to be a training provider where suitable training is available from external providers.</p> <p>Forestry Haulage: Group is involved with Ireland to ensure consistent information.</p> <p>Work site management: Activities include FISA 802 Emergency Planning rewrite and looking for better spray suit for planters more suited for work in forests. Also looking at practical welfare provision.</p> <p>Machinery, Plant and Equipment: New group in the process of identifying priorities.</p> <p>RB asked GC to pass on the groups best wishes to Steve Dresser.</p>	GC

<p>5</p>	<p>European Chainsaw Certificates</p> <p>Currently two schemes (EFESC & ABA) claiming to represent separate halves of Europe. Difficulties still exists regarding certificates issued under either scheme brought into the UK. Challenges since Tony Davies moved on. Work done on behalf of NPTC to establish that EFESC and ABA standards similar to Lantra and NPTC standards. Tony was satisfied that EFESC's arrangements for QA were suitable and robust. He was in the process of undertaking a similar assessment of ABA. RJ and Chris Hughes have picked up the process. No evidence yet that ABA has the suitable arrangements re QA to match EFESC's. There are issues concerning their national awarding bodies, which are not necessarily recognised training or awarding bodies. This is a challenge for AFAG to avoid being in the position of saying yes to ABA now when in a few years' time arrangements are not robust enough to guarantee continuity. There needs to be evidence of a robust internal verification process across Europe. As yet there has been nothing that describes ABA's processes for ensuring this. RJ and AT to pursue</p> <p>DM expressed frustration that this issue had not been resolved and asked how is the issue going to be resolved? RJ stated that the next steps will be to continue work with ABA to better describe their current and future arrangements on issues around verification. Comparative assessments will be needed. Currently memorandum of understanding completed for both bodies which allows C&G to put their logos on C&G certificates, this is not a reciprocal arrangement as yet so ABA and EFESC certificates cannot be badged with the C&G logo.</p> <p>RB reminded AFAG that although the content may be equivalent, assurance is a concern but legal responsibly re competence still lies with employer. If a certificate is issued by ABA then UK employers require to be cautious because of differences in assurance practices.</p> <p>DM stated that he doesn't come across many but concerned that AFAG is being asked to comment on acceptability of European chainsaw certificates when information is not there. RB accepts that it is possible and probable that these Certificates will be presented but it's up to employer, to verify competence. ML stated issue not so much a problem for the larger organisation but rather SME's as he is aware that some operators are using these European Certs.</p> <p>AFAG's position remains that ABA/EFESC certificates should not be accepted as evidence of competence. Any change to this position will be based on a paper to AFAG providing the evidence to satisfy that these qualifications are the equivalent.</p> <p>JB concerned that that this issue will come back on AFAG if it hasn't done enough to tighten things up.</p> <p>RB stated that there needs to be a period for comparison of the schemes. AFAG has reservation regarding verification and assurance processes so collective position is to view the European certificates issued by EFESC and ABA as not quite the same as current national schemes.</p>	<p>RJ & AT</p>
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<p>6</p>	<p>Relationship between FCA and FISA</p> <p>RB - AIAC members raised concerns over the perception that FCA's behaviour as a FISA member was frustrating progress. AIAC members have questioned whether FCA's actions and its continued representation on AFAG had reputational issues for AFAG.</p> <p>GC –explained that the FISA steering group has wide industry representation. In context, the purpose of the steering group is to represent the whole industry. Considers it important FCA are represented along with other contractors. FISA has tried to bridge gap with FCA but so far has failed. FISA desperate to move on but feels it is buried by process with time, effort and resources being wasted. FISA sees no progress with FCA so has suspended FCA membership. GC to provide copy of press article provide more detail of its point of view and also a copy of proposed Articles and Rules.</p> <p>DM - FCA wishing FISA's failure s incorrect not a true perception and is surprised that people think this. There are two issues: Rules and Articles. FCA Worked with Colin Mann (FISA Chair) to resolve issues as hard as anyone. Could not agree on Articles as believes existing ones are adequate but Rules more important. FISA AGM vote meant Articles not changed but there was nothing to prevent rules being approved and FCA tried to encourage this with FISA but this wasn't put to the AGM. FCA are very keen to get on with safety if FISA an accepting the rules would enable everyone to move on. The FCA are open to suggestions and can provide group with existing and proposed articles. Both FCA and FISA have a differing stance so suspending the FCA and revisiting the issue at a later date is not helpful to FISA.</p> <p>RB – AIAC view is a perception only but it's a perception that has to be acted on. AFAG not intending to get involved in the argument. AIAC concern is that the relationship of the FCA and FISA may have impact on advice coming out of AFAG.</p> <p>DS - Concerned about AIAC's perception being recorded as it was and should be addressed at next AIAC meeting and should not go uncorrected. Contracting sector vital to FISA and employers want to get on with it. Anything HSE could do to tackle impasse would be helpful.</p> <p>RB – Will change way it's recorded. Contractors are still represented on FISA in absence of FCA. HSE will continue to support FISA. No concerns expressed that there is any impact on AFAG and will support a solution to resolve differences if it can.</p>	<p>GC</p> <p>RB</p>
<p>7</p>	<p>AFAG Plan of Work</p> <p>RB – Action from last meeting on HSE and members to put forward suggestions for inclusion in future AFAG plan of work received no responses. Many of the actions in the existing plan have been closed off so list diminished but still some are unresolved. Group needs to consider what HSE should be tackling in the future. HSE has a draft Sector Plan on how it will deal with agriculture. Broad brush description at the moment on what HSE needs to tackle and where to focus its resources.</p>	

	<p>AFAG members identified lack of guidance for supervisors, clients, landowners, intermediaries as issues which need to be addressed through existing and new guidance.</p> <p>Task and finish groups should be the cornerstone of future AFAG work, focussing on what can be achieved although there needs to be a focus on what is killing people. Some issues are best addressed through industry specific groups such as FISA and the AA</p> <p>AFAG members asked to consider suitable topics. Ideas and suggestions should be sent to IS and AT to bring back to next meeting with a plan.</p>	ALL
8	<p>Application of LOLER/PUWER to winching operations</p> <p>IS - Circulated HSE position paper explained and discussed. Suggested clarifications agreed concerning LOLER's application to Cable Cranes and the need to emphasize requirement for inspection record keeping under PUWER. Amended document to be distributed</p>	IS
9	<p>Reducing Accidents Involving Chainsaws</p> <p>Training and refresher training alone is not going to reduce accident rates, input is required during the early stages of a project if a race to the bottom at the tender stage is to be avoided. It needs to be recognised that there is a value to good practice, a particular problem in arboriculture..The working group believes roles and responsibilities described in Managing Health and Safety in Forestry could be clearer. It is also light on specifics during planning and the supervising and monitoring roles. The document circulated by ER for the meeting is a draft seeking to address these issues, for AFAG members to comment. Comments to AT/IS by end January 2017</p>	ALL
10	<p>UAG Update</p> <p>ML - Karl Lee has stood down as Chair of UAG.</p> <p>Approved Contractor Scheme almost ready to go. ML can be contacted for more information.</p>	
11	<p>Progress with AFAG projects and future work</p> <p>11.1 <i>Safe treework near overhead powerlines</i>. ML – Guidance complete and ready for publication. Task complete.</p> <p>11.2 <i>Small Scale self-propelled machinery in forestry</i>. ER confirmed that the FC had produced a report relevant to people who were potentially purchasing these types of machines and people awarding contracts. Outcome of guidance is that some machines not allowed on FC sites There was a suggestion that there might be operator guidance but this not started. ER to circulate report</p> <p>Concerns remain regarding operator protection. RB suggested AFAG needs to see what's been done, what needs to be done and create a package or work for next meeting. Concrete proposal needed to include forestry and arboriculture. AT/ML to do this</p>	ER AT/ML

	<p>11.3 <i>Felling Large Trees</i>. DM – the industry is receiving mixed messages as the issue is seen as double manning rather than methods for dealing with large trees. No agreed decisions have been made as yet on safe methods. FISA is continuing with the work suggest with oversight by AFAG. The project will be kept open with AFAG assisting by scoping out the question for FISA to consider</p> <p>11.4 <i>Promotion of Occupational Health Services</i>. IS – Scope of existing project too wide. Revisit the occupational health issues in forestry identify the main causes of concern to assist in development of new task and finish action and develop task and occupational health issues and come back as a task and finish group</p>	<p>AT/HSE</p> <p>IS</p>
12	<p>Communications</p> <p>12.1 <i>FISA/AFAG/AA leaflets update (incl FISA301)</i>. HF chairing FISA Managing Safety Documents Group. FISA301 has been reviewed and is ready for circulation in a A4 format. The review is straight forward regarding technical issues and will be suitable for both arboriculture and forestry.</p> <p>12.2 <i>AA Technical Guides</i></p> <p>SR – Production if AA technical guides will progress now that funding is secured thanks to Stihl, the Scottish Forestry Trust and the C& G/NPTC Fund. Currently writing out for expressions of interest to author and review guides. Early January first meeting. Five tech guides proposed including Tree Access, Working with Tools, Rigging, Working with MEWPs. Guides intended to work together in set but also as stand alone. Intended to be industry standard for operator and supervisor</p>	
13	<p>Standards Work</p> <p>13.1 <i>Verbal Update on Current work</i>. IS – Wood Chipper standard now at the CEN Enquiry stage. Comment back to the WG due 23rd Feb. Threat exists to the successful completion of the standard due to short timescales involved. Former standard BS EN 13525 has been withdrawn and can no longer be used to confer conformity with Machinery Directive.</p> <p>First meeting occurred on 1-2nd November 17 in Edinburgh of the WG proposing new standard for firewood processors. First draft standard produced.</p> <p>13.2 <i>By-passing emergency stop bar on Vermeer wood chippers</i>. Mistaken concern. Item can be closed.</p>	
14	<p>Members Items</p> <p>14.1 <i>Retention of risk assessments</i> ML – How long do operational risk assessments need ot be kept for? While it is not believed there is a regulatory requirement, because assessments may contain information relevant to the control of occupational health risks this will be confirmed.</p>	AT

