HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMISSION
ARBORICULTURE AND FORESTRY ADVISORY GROUP

Update on delivery of AFAG Workplan and Project Groups

Paper for AFAG Meeting: 25-26 September 2007

1. ISSUES

1.1. This paper is provided to:

i. Update and inform Members of the status of current AFAG Projects;

ii. Identify specific AFAG Projects that will need to continue into the next workplan period (2008-09+) in order to be completed and to consider any potential requirements for resources in-year and beyond (i.e. publications, research, etc.)

iii. Identify current AFAG Projects where the requirement for industry guidance is highlighted, for potential inclusion in the HSE Agriculture Sector’s Communication bid for 2008 –09.

iv. Identify current AFAG Projects which can be discussed and progressed at this meeting.

v. To agree an action plan for the delivery of any out-standing or proposed AFAG Projects.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1. At the last meeting (19 April 2007) AFAG reviewed its activities, agreed minor revisions to the Terms of Reference and confirmed the priority needs for the arboriculture and forestry industries. To deliver its objectives, AFAG has established a number of specific ‘task-and-finish’ Project Groups, some of which have been able to progress their work more than others. The updated AFAG Terms Of Reference, Workplan and Report on Progress were presented to AIAC (in paper AIAC 070501) on 2 May 2007 and accepted by AIAC members, who congratulated AFAG on the progress made and recognised the valuable input of the many individuals from industry and other organisations.
2.2 For convenience, Appendix 2 of the AFAG Workplan, which contains the detailed Plans describing each Project, is attached. These have been updated, but members of each Group are asked to review them. Also attached is a summary of progress achieved so far, to initiate discussion and help decide what we can focus on and achieve during the AFAG meeting.

2.3 There are a number of high-profile projects which have reached fruition (e.g. steep ground working), or are well-advanced, (e.g. reviews of training and certification arrangements for the tree work industry, communications strategy, and availability and production of guidance and publications). Some are being progressed in other ways to that initially proposed while a few need to be ‘kick-started’ urgently.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 AFAG Members are invited to:

i. Note the information given in Table 1 and agree each Project’s status / traffic lighting (ie red, amber, green).

ii. Comment on the proposals included in Table 1;

iii. Identify the appropriate Projects for

- consideration at the current meeting, and/or
- progression through the AFAG Communities website, and
- to be carried forward into the future AFAG workplan;

iv. Update AFAG Workplan Appendix 2 - Project Plans (milestones, outputs, etc)

v. Provide suggestions on ‘new’ issues/topics for inclusion in the future AFAG workplan.

vi. Identify future needs for guidance including that resulting from current AFAG projects and research and in ‘new’ areas (such as lone working and the role of the Site Safety Co-ordinator).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AFAG Project + Project Leader</th>
<th>Project Priority + Status</th>
<th>Outcomes remaining</th>
<th>Risk to delivery</th>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>Proposed Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1. Examination of the underlying and root causes of serious accidents and develop strategies for risk reduction – Emily Ramsay</td>
<td>(Priority A) Green</td>
<td>Communications plan needed to publicise results of research in the tree work industry. Identification of potential issues for inclusion as Projects in the future AFAG Workplan (2008+).</td>
<td>Delays in publication of Bomel report</td>
<td>The full/final report of Bomel’s research has not yet been approved, but an interim summary will be provided for the meeting. This should enable the communication plan to be developed.</td>
<td>Project Group could identify outcomes during the AFAG meeting. Possibly complete work via new AFAG Communities website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2. Training and Certification - Simon Richmond</td>
<td>(B) Green</td>
<td>Results of consultation exercise and of previous Project group meetings available for discussion/development into potential T&amp;C frameworks for tree work. Decision required on issue of separate systems for arb and forestry. Communications plan for Project Group</td>
<td>Compromise not possible because of conflicting requirements. Ability of relevant organisations to support a proposed framework. Practical administration of in-house training.</td>
<td>A thorough evaluation and assessment of the current system of training and certification has been carried out. Procedures used in other industries have also been evaluated. Members of the project group are aware of the range of views and opinions held both by Project group Members and by those contributing to the industry consultation. Project Group must now consider how the concerns and criticisms of the current system can be addressed by proposing a new framework of T&amp;C. Need to carry out further consultation on models with specific industry groups and feed views into NPTC’s Review of CS CoC structure (to be completed by 4/08.) [Urgent action needed]</td>
<td>Project Group could identify necessary actions and remaining outcomes during AFAG meeting.</td>
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<td>B1. Steep Ground Working – Neil McKay</td>
<td>(A) Green - Complete</td>
<td>Monitoring of industry comments by Sector</td>
<td>AFAG guidance produced. Now need to monitor and assess uptake by industry and any further work needed.</td>
<td>Project Group could identify any further communications needs and methods to monitor/evaluate impact.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2. Work at Height - Paul Elcoat</td>
<td>(A) Amber/Green</td>
<td>Identification of potential issues in addition to those being covered by AA MEWPs WG. Communications plan for Project Group</td>
<td>AFAG 401 in need of revision</td>
<td>Project Group could deliver remaining outcomes during AFAG meeting.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B3. Welfare on Forestry sites - J Liggins</td>
<td>(C ) Green</td>
<td>No Project Plan produced as low priority</td>
<td>Project was unassigned – AFAG agreed to merge with/cover under Project C4 – Reducing Exposure to Pesticides in tree planting</td>
<td>Consider further under Project C4 at AFAG 13.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B4. Rigging and dismantling techniques in arboriculture - Frances Hirst</td>
<td>(A) Green</td>
<td>Production of AFAG leaflet and Guide to Good Rigging Practice. Industry. Workshop(s) to discuss findings</td>
<td>Delay in publication of final report</td>
<td>Final report now due end 10/07</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B5. Machine Assisted Takedown of Trees – Jim Burns (replaces J Dewar</td>
<td>(B) Green /Amber</td>
<td>Phase II of research outstanding. Communications plan for Project Group – (To draft guidance by end of Q4 07/08)</td>
<td>Funds delayed or not released by HSE Matched funds not available from FC</td>
<td>Phase II of research ready to be initiated. If begun before end of Dec 07 the project group may be able to finish within timescale, or more likely in Q1 08/09. Manage through Sector and others in HSE management chain to minimise disruption.</td>
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<td>AFAF Project + Project Leader</td>
<td>Project Priority + Status</td>
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<td>B6. Chainsaw PPE - Jim Brown</td>
<td>(B) – Amber/Green (ongoing)</td>
<td>VAT (on PPE spares) and other issues re inadequate chain saw boots and trousers (Type A vs C) to be resolved. No Project Plan produced</td>
<td>Complainants advised to pursue U/S PPE via local Trading Standards Depts.</td>
<td>Project Group to consider issues re CEN standards. To produce Project Plan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1. Promotion of Rehabilitation Services</td>
<td>(B) - Red/Amber -</td>
<td>Multi-agency approach needed. Partnership agreements confirmed by other relevant organisations (eg NHS, Safe and Healthy Working, PHASS) to deliver this project in Scotland. Poor planning and co-ordination is likely to lead to a reduction in the potential impact of this Project.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Propose to include this project in future AFAG workplan 2008-</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>C2. Musculo-Skeletal Disorders - Bruce Hatton</td>
<td>(A) - Red</td>
<td>No Project Plan produced - Group/meeting not convened.</td>
<td>Awaiting detailed accident analysis (by Bomel).</td>
<td>AFAG 13 to decide how to progress this work.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>C3.1 Whole Body Vibration - Colin Saunders (replaced J Dewar)</td>
<td>(A) - Green</td>
<td>Discussion of Phase II of the WBV research required. Drafting of guidance Communication plan</td>
<td>Failure to secure funding/approval for publication. Draft guidance prepared following Phase I of research. Analysis of Phase II of research required to identify additional content. Communication plan required to publicise guidance and information to 'hard-to-reach' parts of the sector.</td>
<td>Project Group could deliver remaining outcomes during AFAG meeting</td>
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<td><strong>C3.2 Hand Arm Vibration</strong> - Not assigned?</td>
<td>(A) - Green</td>
<td>Communication plan including the identification and production of appropriate guidance and through trade and industry press.</td>
<td>Failure to secure funding/approval for publication.</td>
<td>Good practice guidance on management of HAVs in forestry to be developed in line with guidance developed by FC and HSE. Considerable work ongoing (by HSE) through HAV ‘Clubs’ (eg with LAs and amenity sector) and in industry organisations – to consider possible links/read across to arb/forestry. Propose to include this project in future 2008- AFAG workplan.</td>
<td>Remaining outcomes could be delivered via AFAG Members Community site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C3.3 Noise</strong> - Not assigned</td>
<td>(A) - Green</td>
<td>Communication plan including dissemination of research results to the industry. Initiate discussions with manufacturers and suppliers of wood chippers to ensure they adopt low-noise engineering solutions to reduce noise exposure at source.</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Report on HSLs Woodchipper research – awaiting approval for publication. Propose to include this project in future 08- AFAG workplan.</td>
<td>Remaining outcomes could be delivered via AFAG Members Community site following publication of research report.</td>
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<tr>
<td>C4. Reduce Exposure to Pesticides Used in Tree Planting - Emily Ramsay</td>
<td>(B) - Green NB. Propose to merge with Welfare Project (B3).</td>
<td>Review research. Identify appropriate control/welfare measures. To produce communications plan to disseminate findings to industry.</td>
<td>Insufficient Resource.</td>
<td>The HSE Specialist Report is now available. Summary produced as paper for AFAG Project Group. Recommendations are in line with AFAG 105 Planting. However, strategy required to ensure control measures are put in place on site including Communication plan required</td>
<td>Project Group could deliver remaining outcomes during AFAG meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D1. Promotion of best practice in arboriculture and forestry. - Bruce Hatton (resigned, not reallocated)</td>
<td>(A) - Green</td>
<td>Identification of outstanding guidance resulting from the current AFAG Project Groups for inclusion in Sector Comms bid 08-11. Decision on whether to bid for future guidance on lone working and the role of site safety co-ordinator in ’08.</td>
<td>HSE reduces publication resource.</td>
<td>Outstanding guidance to be identified by Project Group Members /Project Leaders. Future publication needs to be addressed by all AFAG Members.</td>
<td>Agreement by all AFAG Members that guidance is needed in relation to lone working and the role of site safety supervisor. Propose to include this project in future 08- AFAG workplan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D2. Production, review and maintenance of AFAG, HSE and industry guidance - Bruce Hatton (resigned, not reallocated)</td>
<td>(A) - Green</td>
<td>Communication plan agreed by Members to be continued into 2008+ AFAG and HSE WorkPlan. Insufficient resources applied.</td>
<td>AFAG Community websites launched on HSE website. ‘Arb News’ re-badged ‘Treework News’ and HSE Tree Work Website under development. Communication plans for individual Project Groups to be agreed.</td>
<td>Communication plans for individual Project Groups to be agreed. Propose to include this project in future 2008- AFAG workplan.</td>
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<td>A number of outstanding issues are being progressed by Sector. Propose that an action plan is developed to co-ordinate communication of AFAG Project Work in the future 2008+- AFAG Workplan.</td>
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</table>
AFAG WORKPLAN 2005-2008 APPENDIX 2

AFAG PROJECT PLANS

Draft v8 attached - to be reviewed/revised/finalised at AFAG 13
on 25-26 September 2007

[nb. Updates and comments in italics.]
AFAG Project A1 – Examination of the underlying and root causes of serious accidents and develop strategies for risk reduction (revised 9/07)

| PROJECT STATUS: GREEN | I am trying to have an executive summary agreed for release by Liz Gibby by the meeting. We can present this. Suggest tackle outside meeting using AFAG Communities page |

Background:
- To contribute more effectively to HSE’s PSA targets by reducing the incidence of fatal and major injuries in the forestry industry, further information and a more detailed analysis of relevant accidents is needed.
- The Forest /Arboriculture industry comprises many small and medium sized enterprises working in remote areas. Tree work is a high-risk industry: in the ten years 1995 – 2005 there have been 50 fatal accidents associated with tree felling and timber extraction and 138 major specified reported under RIDDOR in 2004/05 alone. However, we also know that there is significant under reporting, particularly of over 3-day accidents.

Objectives:
1. To examine the underlying and root causes of serious accidents in forestry and arboriculture over the past 5 years;
2. To identify cultural and behavioural implications;
3. To identify strategies to reduce risk.

The above objectives have good correlation with the HSE’s Forestry Project:
- Improve awareness of health and safety issues and facilitate changes in behaviour within the industry, particularly in relation to forestry works managers.
- To continue improvements in the standards of health and safety management on forestry sites.
- Gain agreements with stakeholders to promote good practice
- The number of accidents with the forestry process code are reduced together with a reduction in fatal incidence rate based on a 1999/00 -2000/01 baseline
- Forestry business are aware of the guidance available from HSE and industry
- The AFAG guidance series is relevant, more complete, up to date and of high quality.

Resources:
To be defined:
- HSE funding needed for consultants and research; holding meetings with industry and dissemination, eg through shows, articles, guidance, etc.
- Support in kind from the forest and arb industries

Milestones:
- Research commissioned by HSE and initial meeting held in Q4 05/06, with consultants (Bomel).
- Report back to AFAG 7/3/06 – for steer on future work. Preliminary report of accident analysis to AFAG 11/06
- Workshop held for HSE Inspectors (England/Scotland/Wales/) EMAS, FOD Scotland Office (also representing PHASS) and FE/FC on potential interventions held 11/06.
- Bomel report completed by Q4 06-07. Report released and published by Q1 07-08
- Result report published and disseminated to industry Q1 07-08
- Group meeting to be arranged Q1 07/08 to discuss implications of
- Research on risk reduction strategies.
  - *Executive summary of results available to AFAG 13 in 9/07*

| Output: | Multifactor risk analysis of accident causation in tree work and identification of high risk areas and key influences for targeting future AFAG and Industry projects and guidance. – *complete + in publication system*
| | Evidence-based identification of potential intervention strategies to reduce the number of accidents and levels of ill health in tree work for adoption by AFAG and Sector – *almost but action via AFAG Communities site by*
| | Identification of key communication messages, communication approaches and target audiences for future articles, etc (to be determined). Information used for development of articles in trade journals, etc - *as above*

| Members of Working Group | Emily Ramsay - Forestry Commission/AFAG
| | Hans Fairley - AEA/AFAG
| | Paul Smith - AA
| | Jason Liggins - HSE
| | Frances Hirst - HSE
| | Nick Sangha - HSE |
AFAG Project A2 – Training and Certification (revd 5/4/07)

**PROJECT STATUS: GREEN**

| Background: | • The current arrangements and relevant standards for training and certification of operators of machines (in particular chain saws), for use in forestry, arboriculture (and casual users, eg in agriculture, construction, etc) have developed over the last 15 years. These arrangements were amalgamated in 2002 into a common scheme of training provided by Lantra Awards, and Certificates of Competence (CoCs) awarded by the NPTC. This structure also encompasses Aerial Tree Work skills including tree climbing, pruning and dismantling at a basic level.  
• A relevant NPTC-assessed CoC is regarded as the starting point for employed operators and is the minimum accepted by HSE. However, NPTC CoCs have no expiry date. Members feel it is necessary to formalise HSE’s guidance in the Code of Practice on Use of Chainsaws, ie that “full-time” users should receive refresher training at least every 5 years, occasional users within 2-3 years. The cost implications of straight refresher training and re-certification are seen as a barrier, however, and the perceived benefits are limited. Another important factor is that industry employers appear to be mis-interpreting the standard of the CoC as representing “employability”.  
• It is therefore proposed to develop a system that addresses all these issues by incorporating the need for refresher training with a record of experience, updating and other CPD. A cultural change will be required for industry to accept such a system voluntarily, and it is therefore proposed that any draft system is offered to the industry for consultation in order to gain industry ownership and engagement. |
| --- | --- |
| **Objectives:** | 1. Identify existing training and certification routes, HSE guidelines and level of current uptake.  
2. Examine other, existing models of career progression routes and registration schemes (outwith forestry / arboriculture)  
3. Compile list of options for alternative refresher / progression structure  
4. Carry out industry consultation to establish level of industry support for revised system  
5. Present findings of consultation to key stakeholders  
6. Support implementation and establishment of agreed system – [We need to agree a method to consult/collect comment from now until Feb '08.] |
| **Resources:** |  
• Group consists of AFAG members, co-opted members from industry and staff from HSE (Ag sector).  
• HSE funding – Research / Hosting meetings / Dissemination / Consultation |
### Milestones:
- Initial meeting: 07/12/05
- Second meeting: 24/01/06
- Report back to AFAG: 7/3/06
- Third meeting: 25/04/06
- Fourth meeting: 25/07/06
- Report options to AFAG 16/8/06 - Done
- Proposed industry consultation exercise launched at APF: 24/9/06 - Done. Also on new HSE webpage end of Q3 06/07.
- 3 month consultation period – extended from 1/1/07 to 1/3/07 due to delay getting Discussion Forum set up.
- Proposals to be presented to AFAG - 4/07
- Next steps to be decided by AFAG 4/07, but during 2007/08 it is proposed to:
  - Identify models for recording CPD/operators logs/experience suitable for each industry.
  - Carry out further consultation on models.
  - Feed views into NPTC’s Review of CS CoC structure (to be completed by 4/08.)
  - Contribute to development of Lantra SSC’s On-line Competency Framework and NoS.

### Outputs:
- Minutes of meetings available to all AFAG members
- Dissemination of all research / consultation to members and industry - Done
- Production of industry-agreed revised structure for re-training / refresher training / re-certification
- Possible launch / promotion of consultation exercise at APF 9/06 - Done

### Membership of Working Group/Consultees
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Simon Richmond (Leader)</th>
<th>Lantra Awards</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jim Dewar/Graeme Munford</td>
<td>FC/FE</td>
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<td>Jim Brown</td>
<td>FTA</td>
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<td>Brendan Burns</td>
<td>FCA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Graeme Hodgson</td>
<td>Forestry Consultant/Trainer</td>
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<td>Gerald Bonner</td>
<td>TCI</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bruce Hatton (resigned)</td>
<td>AA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Liam McKeown</td>
<td>AA / Lantra Awards - Trainer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paul Smith</td>
<td>AA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nick Eden</td>
<td>AA (papers only)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chris Cooper-Abbs</td>
<td>European Arb Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joe Jarvis/Steve Hewitt</td>
<td>NPTC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jack Kenyon</td>
<td>AA Education Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robert Beaney</td>
<td>TGWU</td>
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<tr>
<td>Madge Moore</td>
<td>Lantra SSC (papers only)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Campbell Logue</td>
<td>Go4 Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joe Bradley</td>
<td>DARDNI (papers only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keith Leech</td>
<td>ex-UKFPA (resigned)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ruth Jennings</td>
<td>BALI</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adrian Kingsbury (resigned)/Mike Volp/John Price/John Murphy/Frances Hirst/Jason Liggins/Alan Plom (Sec)</td>
<td>Local Authority/NATO/NATO/Local Govt Employers (LGE)/Milton Keynes Council/LGE/ London Borough of Merton (LAs’ Contractors H&amp;S Scheme - CHAS)/HSE/HSE/HSE</td>
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AFAG Project B1 – Steep Ground Working (revd 3/07)

PROJECT STATUS: GREEN/ COMPLETE

Background:

- As areas to be harvested become more inaccessible by traditional harvesting methods an increasing number of machines are being manufactured or adapted to have greater climbing ability than previously experienced in the forest industry. Both supervisors and operators are expressing concerns about the lack of information on which to base their decision-making and risk assessments.
- As the number of these machines in use continues to increase, the provision of high quality, practical guidance is essential to prevent an increase in the number of serious incidents occurring on sloping ground. Furthermore, this project will consider all types of forestry work on slopes and provide guidance and advice where necessary.
- This work will contribute to the ongoing reduction in the number of reported accidents in forestry and continue the work of both HSE and the forestry industry to improve H&S management systems in forestry. In particular, it has the potential to contribute to HSE’s Injury Reduction Programme (Workplace Transport).

Objectives:

1. Work on Slopes Group to establish good practice, appropriate standards and prepare draft guidance in consultation with the forestry industry.
2. Production / publication of new AFAG leaflet for working on slopes included in Agriculture Communications Strategy.
3. HSE to produce AFAG leaflet in line with Communications Strategy. Final version of guidance approved by AFAG members prior to publishing.
4. Presentations by Sector and AFAG Group on guidance to industry groups.
5. Promote guidance and communicate risk management and project messages directly through the Forestry Commission, industry associations and exhibitions/demonstration events, as well as via specialist trade publications.

Resources:

- Group to consist of AFAG members, co-opted members from industry and staff from HSE (Ag Sector), as required.
- Research needs and sources of funding to be identified.
- Cost of production and publishing guidance from Communications budget – to be determined.

Milestones:

- Business Case for new publication included in HSE Comms Strategy 01/02/2006.
- Report back to AFAG 7 March 2006.-- - Done
- Guidance completed, launched at APF 2006 and currently available from HSE Books and via HSE website
- Guidance already widely incorporated into industry training/good practice.

Output:

- Minutes of meetings circulated to all AFAG members
- Dissemination of all research to members and industry
- Production of AFAG Safety guide – ref AFAG ????
- Dissemination of information at APF 2006, leaflet announced and available on HSE Website.

**Project Completed** - Further monitoring/evaluation work needed?

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<tr>
<th>Members of Working Group</th>
<th>Neil McKay (Leader)</th>
<th>Keith Leech (resigned from AFAG 2006)</th>
<th>Emily Ramsay</th>
<th>Jason Liggins (Sec)</th>
<th>ICF/AFAG</th>
<th>UKFPA/AFAG</th>
<th>FC/AFAG</th>
<th>HSE</th>
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# AFAG Project B2 – Work at Height (revised 9/07)

**PROJECT STATUS: AMBER/GREEN**

| Background | • Falls from height are the most common cause of fatal injury and one of the most common cause of major injury to employees, accounting for around 15% of all such injuries. As a result, Falls from Height are a key priority in the HSE’s Injury Reduction Programme.  
  • In arboriculture over 20% of injuries are falls from height related. |
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objectives</td>
<td>• Improving management of work at height, including implementation of the Work at Height Regulations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Resources</td>
<td>• Group to consist of AFAG members, co-opted members from industry and staff from HSE (Ag Sector), as required.</td>
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| Milestones | • 1st meeting Q4 05/06 – Deferred as work being carried out through the AA’s MEWP’s Working Group.  
  Draft (AA) guidance for industry consultation due Q3. Next meeting being held on 25/9/07  
  • Articles produced and published in relevant journals, HSE Arb News, etc – Done and ongoing. |
| Output | • Arboricultural MEWP Operators Guide due for publication Q4 07/08 (this is likely to be delayed as draft has not yet gone out for consultation). |
| Members of Working Group | **Paul Elcoat**  
Emily Ramsay  
Paul Smith  
Frances Hirst | ISIA  
FC  
AA  
HSE |
AFAG Project B4 – Rigging and dismantling techniques in arboriculture  
(revd 9/07)

**PROJECT STATUS: GREEN**

| Background: | • Rigging techniques in arboriculture vary, ranging from a single rope wrapped round the trunk (adding friction to control the descent of a cut section) to complex solutions and specialist devices. Concern has been expressed that some people in the industry are using equipment and techniques without a full appreciation of the forces generated and the limitations of the hardware and tree. In addition, loads are not easy to quantify and are known to vary dramatically depending on tree species and tree condition.  
• There is a history of reported accidents where control of cut sections is lost and where anchor points have failed. There is also anecdotal evidence that equipment has been overloaded, resulting in near-miss incidents.  
• Falls from height are the most common cause of fatal injury and one of the most common cause of major injury to employees, accounting for around 15% of all such injuries. As a result, Falls from Height are a key priority in the HSE’s Injury Reduction Programme. The level of incidence varies considerably between industries, but this is obviously relevant to arb due to the nature of the industry. |

| Objectives: | 1. The Falls from Height Programme’s objective is to reduce injuries by 10% by 2010, against a 1999/00 baseline.  
2. To help in the production of reasonably practical industry guidance based on the findings of research to evaluate current rigging and dismantling practices used in arboriculture. |

| Resources: | • Project Group to consist of AFAG members, co-opted members from industry and staff from HSE (Ag Sector), as required.  
• Research being jointly funded by HSE and FC  
• Guidance to be published by the Arboriculture Association |

| Milestones: | • Research tender Board meets 2/3/06 – Research delayed, commissioned 10 May 2006  
• Research complete by end 8/07  
• Final report now to be completed by end 10/07  
• Guidance by Q4 2008/09 (prov)  
• Report back to AFAG 7/3/06, 19/4/07, 25/9/07 |

| Outputs: | • Minutes of AFAG meetings circulated to all members  
• Dissemination of research findings and recommendations to members and industry.  
• Production of Industry guide to good rigging and dismantling techniques.  
• Widespread adoption by the industry. |
| Members of Working Group | Frances Hirst  
Simon Richmond  
Jim Dewar  
L McKeown  
Other industry reps TBC | HSE (Project Leader)  
Lantra Awards/AFAG  
FC/AFAG  
Research Contractors  
Treevolution Ltd |
AFAG Project B5 – Machine Assisted Takedown of Trees (revd 9/07)

PROJECT STATUS: GREEN/AMBER

| Background: | • Accidents have been occurring during a range of activities involving machines assisting in the takedown of large edge trees and hung up or leaning trees.  
| | • AFAG have produced guidance for the industry in suitable methods to use machinery in the takedown process based on using skidders and hand winches.  
| | • Due to changes in machinery holdings and the lack of ergonomically suitable equipment it was agreed to revisit the issue in order to provide the industry with updated and improved guidance on suitable systems, equipment and techniques.  |
| Objectives: | 1. Identify current systems and shortfalls in suitability and uptake.  
| | 2. Review research funded by Forestry Commission and it’s applicability for industry uptake.  
| | 3. Identify new systems, equipment and techniques.  
| | 4. Propose research to examine suitability of new systems, equipment and techniques.  
| | 5. Disseminate findings to industry.  |
| Resources: | To be defined:  
| | • Members of Group drawn from AFAG and coopted from industry.  
| | • Joint FC/HSE funding - Research/hosting meetings/ dissemination.  
| | • Industry support – financial and in-kind contributions  |
| Milestones: | • Initial Meeting planned 2 February 2006 with feedback on Phase I of research project (funded by FC) - **Done**  
| | • Report back to AFAG 7 March 2006 – Stoneleigh - **Done**  
| | • Production and launch of industry guidance at APF Sept 2006 – **Postponed.**  
| | • Identified need for further research. HSE and FC to develop protocol for Phase II of research Q4 07-08- **Done,**  
| | • Phase II research planned for Q1 07-08 – **Bid for HSE funding submitted (again) in Aug/Sept 07 - needs to be approved asap to obtain match-funding from FC.**  
| | • Production and launch of industry guidance by Dec 07 - **Will be delayed, possibly to Q1 08/09.**  |
| Output: | • Minutes of meetings circulated to all AFAG members  
| | • Dissemination of all research to members and industry – articles etc.  
| | • Production of AFAG / Industry Safety guide  |
| Members of Working Group | Jim Dewar (Leader)  
| | Colin Saunders  
| | Dave Clark  
| | Donald MacLean  
| | Graeme Hodgson  
| | Jason Liggins  
| | Jim Burns  
| | Joe Bradley + Area Ops Manager  
| | John Graves  
| | Michael Grieve  
| | Neil McKay | Forestry Commission/AFAG  
| | Forest Research  
| | Forestry Training Services  
| | FCA  
| | Private Contractor  
| | HSE  
| | Forestry Commission  
| | DARDNI/AFAG  
| | Forestry Training Services  
| | Private Contractor  
<p>| | ICF/AFAG  |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Neil Murray</th>
<th>Forest Enterprise</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peter Bowsher</td>
<td>Contractor</td>
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<td>James Brown</td>
<td>FTA/AFAG</td>
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AFAG Project C1 – Promotion of Rehabilitation Services (revd 3/07)

PROJECT STATUS: GREEN/AMBER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Background:</th>
<th>Workers in both the forestry and arboriculture industries are particularly at risk from occupational illnesses such as musculoskeletal Disease and Work Related Upper Limb Disorders. The provision of rehabilitation services is seen as a key element in managing these illnesses and in reducing both their incidence and the number of work days lost resulting from occupational illness.</th>
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<td>This project aims to examine the existing provision of rehabilitation services and assess how well this provision matches with the needs of the forestry and arboriculture industries. The group will then work with rehabilitation service providers to increase their awareness of both the nature of forestry/arboriculture work and to facilitate the provision of specific services for those in these industries. The project will contribute to the ill health reduction programme.</td>
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<td>The group will initially focus on rehabilitation services in Scotland where a number of organisations, such as Safe and Healthy Working Lives, already provide occupational health support. It will also aim to work with HSE’s Partnership on Health and Safety in Scotland which brings together a wide range of governmental and non-governmental bodies interested in occupational health support. Work carried out in Scotland will then be replicated across England and Wales.</td>
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| Objectives: | 1. Identify existing provision of occupational health support  
2. Identify shortfalls in suitability of provision in relation to the needs forestry/arboriculture workers  
3. Facilitate partnerships between occupational health service providers and industry bodies to improve support to the forestry/arboriculture sectors  
4. Increase uptake of occupational health support in forestry/arboriculture industries through communication in trade press etc.  
5. Reduce incidence of ill health and promote rehabilitation of those suffering from occupational illnesses |

| Resources: | To be defined:  
- HSE funding– Research/Hosting meetings/Dissemination  
- Industry support – financial and in-kind contributions  
- Occupational health service providers - Research/Hosting meetings/Dissemination |

| Milestones: | Project Group established Q1 06/07 – delayed.  
Report back to AFAG 7th March 2006 – Stoneleigh. Delayed due to discussion with PHASS. Establish Project Group Q1 07-08  
Rehabilitation project supported in PHASS workplan 07-08 |

| Output: | Minutes of meetings circulated to all AFAG members.  
Dissemination of all research to members and industry.  
Partnerships between occupational health providers and industry bodies.  
Initial project report and Scotland multi-agency action plan by Feb 08? |
- *We should consider carrying this over as a priority A for 2008+ workplan*
  - Increase in uptake of occupational health support in forestry / arboriculture industries.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Members of Working Group</th>
<th>J Liggins (Project Leader)</th>
<th>Others TBC</th>
<th>HSE</th>
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AFAG Project C3.1 – Whole Body Vibration (revd 9/07)

**PROJECT STATUS: GREEN**

**Background:**
- The European Physical Agents (Vibration) Directive (Directive 2002/44) deals with the control of diseases caused by vibration at work from equipment, vehicles and machines and new regulations that will help both employers and employees to take preventive action from vibration risks in the workplace came into force on 6 July 2005.
- Mobile machine operators and drivers often report back pain. This can have many causes, not all related to work. But back pain may be made worse by driving for a long time in a poorly adjusted seat, jolting and jarring from rough roads (whole-body vibration) and by manual handling.

**Objectives:**
1. It is intended to produce practical guidance to help manage exposure to reduce back pain and injuries.
2. This group will work towards the identification of sources of vibration exposure in harvesting, ground preparation and other operations in forestry and arb.
3. To produce guidance for managers, supervisors and operators on best practice to follow to minimise the impact of vibration and the associated issues causing back pain.

**Resources:** To be defined:
- FC funding – Research/hosting meetings/dissemination
- HSE funding - Research/hosting meetings/dissemination/APF show.
- Industry support – financial and in-kind contributions

**Milestones:**
- Initial Meeting planned 2/2/06 at HSL Buxton – Research reviewed/work planned.
- Report back to AFAG 7/3/06 - Done
- Production of articles for Forestry journals March/April 06 – Done and ongoing.
- Draft guidance by 7/06 - Completed
- Launch guidance at APF Show 22/9/06 - Results of WBV research promoted at APF 2006.
- Further research carried out on WBV in forestry. *Completed Q4 06-07.*
- Draft guidance to be amended to include latest research and awaiting agreement for publication.

**Outputs:**
- Minutes of meetings circulated to all AFAG members - *Done*
- Dissemination of research findings/recommendations to members and industry - *Done*
- Production of Forestry Press articles - *Done*
- Production of AFAG/ AIS Safety guide
- Dissemination of research findings at APF Show 2006 – *Done*
- *Draft report of second stage of WBV research and communications plan to support guidance and other outcomes to be considered (at AFAG 26/9/07).*
| Members of Working Group | **Jim Dewar (Chair)**  
Emily Ramsay  
Russell Ackroyd  
Colin Saunders  
Jason Liggins  
Neil McKay  
Alan Plom  
Paul Brereton  
Paul Pitts | **Forestry Commission/AFAG**  
**FE/AFAG**  
**FCA**  
**Forest Research**  
**HSE**  
**ICF/AFAG**  
**HSE**  
**HSE**  
**HSL** |
AFAG Project C3.2 – Hand Arm Vibration (revd 9/07)

PROJECT STATUS: GREEN

| Background: | • The European Physical Agents (Vibration) Directive (Directive 2002/44) deals with the control of diseases caused by vibration at work from equipment, vehicles and machines. The Control of Vibration at Work Hand-Arm Vibration Regulation came into force July 2005. There are no exceptions for forestry or agricultural industries.  

• Hand-arm vibration is vibration transmitted from work machinery into workers’ hands and arms. It can be caused by operating any hand-held power tools that vibrates. In forestry and arboriculture the main risks will come from the use of chainsaws any other forestry machinery that vibrates, such as brashers or strimmers, also present a potential risk. Although occasional use of this type of machinery is unlikely to cause any problems, regular and frequent exposure to hand-arm vibration can lead to permanent health effects.  

• Hand-arm vibration can cause a range of conditions collectively known as hand-arm vibration syndrome (HAVS), as well as specific diseases such as carpal tunnel syndrome and Vibration White Finger. |
| --- | --- |

| Objectives: | 1. It is intended to produce practical guidance to help manage exposure to reduce HAVs.  
2. This group will work towards the identification of sources of hand arm vibration exposure in forestry and arb operations and identify areas where cross overs to other industry sectors occur.  
3. To produce guidance for managers, supervisors and operators on best practice to follow to control the risks association with hand arm vibration. |
| Resources: | To be defined:  
• FC funding – Research/hosting meetings/dissemination  
• HSE funding - Research/hosting meetings/dissemination.  
• Industry support – financial and in-kind contributions |
| Milestones: | • Initial Meeting held between FC and HSE 03/07 - Done  
• Identify and use opportunities for publicity – Articles written by HSE/Sector for journals. Ongoing.  
• Examine how FC (in collaboration with HSE Specialists) can develop good practice guidance for managing risks for HAVs in forestry Q1-Q2 07/08 – E Ramsay/J Liggins  
• FC agreed to fund further research on trigger times for a range of forestry and arboriculture equipment that will be of use across a range of other industries. Supported and encouraged by HSE Noise and Vibration Pool. Ready Q1 07/08. |
| Outputs: | • Minutes of meetings circulated to all AFAG members |
- Dissemination of research findings/recommendations to members and industry – Q2 07-08
- Production of Forestry/Arb Press articles – ongoing
- Production of good practice guidance for managing risks for HAVs in forestry/arboriculture - Q4 07-08
  - FC Good practice completed and being rolled out. HSE SHADs to introduce key messages from September ’07 onwards.

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<th>Members of Working Group</th>
<th>Jim Dewar (Chair)</th>
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<td>Paul Pitts</td>
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AFAG Project C3.3 – Noise (revised 3/07)

PROJECT STATUS: GREEN

Background:
- The Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005 Regulations came into force on the 6th April 2006 and replaced the Noise at Work Regulations 1989. These regulations have been designed to both protect employees and the self-employed from hearing loss and to provide a framework for employers to use to help them control the risk associated with noise exposure. There are no exceptions for forestry or agricultural industries.
- HSE aims that by 2030 there should be no new cases of noise-induced hearing loss through noise at work.

Objectives:
1. Produce Noise research reports, specifically work on noise exposure to operators of mobile wood chippers and comparison with manufacturers guidance, production expected in Q1 07-08 - consider conclusions & produce guidance by end of Dec 07
2. Highlight any issues with manufacturers resulting from research.
3. Identify and use opportunities for publicity – Articles written by HSE/Sector for journals. Number completed but works ongoing.
4. HSL requested extension for noise research on chippers. New completion date for HSL research and production of report now Q1 07/08.
5. Consider scope for new/revised guidance and raising awareness of findings during Q1-Q2 07/08.

Resources:
To be defined:
- FC funding – Research/hosting meetings/dissemination – co-funding of research project agreed and actioned. Co-ordination and provision of test site and test materials.
- HSE funding - Research/hosting meetings/dissemination – agreed co-funding with FC
- Industry support – financial and in-kind contributions. Provision of a range of mobile woodchippers for research project financed and supplied by Till Hill.

Milestones:
- Identify and use opportunities for publicity – Articles written by HSE/Sector for journals. Ongoing.
- Examine how FC (in collaboration with HSE Specialists) can further develop good practice guidance for managing risks associated with noise exposure in forestry Q1-Q2 07/03.
- Complete research project and publish research into noise exposure of operators of mobile woodchippers. Q1 07-08
- Discuss with manufacturers any discrepancies between research data and manufacturers data.

Outputs:
- Minutes of meetings circulated to all AFAG members
- Disseminate results of noise exposure to operators of mobile wood chippers to inform risk assessments and improve control/management measures to reduce noise exposure and risk of NIHL - Comments just received from Tim Ward (HSE N&V Specialist) on findings of HSL
chipper research. Draft report complete and under consideration by Liz Gibby for approval.

- Production of Forestry Press articles
- Review of current Forestry/arb guidance
- Dissemination of information via HSE web site

*Business case for draft guidance to be included in ‘08 Comms plan*

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**AFAG Project C4 – Reduce Exposure to Pesticides Used in Tree Planting**  
(revd 3/07)

**PROJECT STATUS: GREEN/AMBER**

### Background:
- There have been several reports of ill health caused by exposure to alpha cypermethrin, a pyrethroid insecticide used to protect saplings/transplants against large pine weevil (hyllobius abietis). A number of those involved in planting operations have complained of various ill effects (facial tingling/burning, headaches and nose bleeds) allegedly attributed to exposure to the pesticide.
- HSE specialists have investigated the level and pattern of exposure in those treating plants and those handling the treating saplings. A report is in preparation. This Project Group will examine the issues raised by the report and comprehensively review all aspects of planting operations to develop realistic and practicable solutions to ensure those involved in planting pesticide-treated saplings are not exposed to risks to their health.

### Objectives:
1. Identify health risks, current systems of work and likely patterns of exposure.
2. Review HSE research into reports of ill health / patterns of exposure.
3. Identify suitable control measures to reduce exposure as far as reasonably practicable.
4. Disseminate findings to industry and HSE.

### Resources:
To be defined:
- HSE funding – Research/Hosting meetings/Dissemination
- FC support – Hosting meetings/Field work / Dissemination
- Industry support –in-kind contributions

### Milestones:
- HSE Pesticide Exposure Report to be completed by 1/3/06 - Production delayed. Now complete and group to convene in Q1 07/08.
- Information gathered by field inspections (06/07 blitzes following Forestry SHADs ) analysed and will be fed into the Group

### Output:
- Minutes of meetings circulated to all AFAG members.
- Dissemination of all research to members and industry.
- Production of Guidance.
- Dissemination of information throughout the industry.
  - *Look at report at AFAG13 meeting to decide outputs*

### Members of Working Group
| **Jason Liggins**  
Emily Ramsay  
Robert Beaney  
Other Reps TBC at AFAG 19/4/07 | HSE (Project Leader)  
FC/AFAG  
FC (TGWU)/AFAG |
D1. Promotion of best practice in arboriculture and forestry (v1 3/07).

**PROJECT STATUS: GREEN**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Background:</th>
<th>• AFAG Project Group D1 was charged with producing an effective communication strategy for the promotion and adoption of good practice in the arboriculture and forestry industries, to help reduce fatalities, injuries and ill health in these and associated industries</th>
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<tr>
<td>Objectives:</td>
<td>1. To build on the success of the ‘Management of H&amp;S in Forestry’ initiative in forestry and extend this approach into arboriculture, through provision of guidance and effective communications.</td>
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<td>2. To develop and implement an effective communication strategy for the promotion and adoption of good practice in the arboriculture and forestry industries.</td>
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<td>3. To 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.</td>
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<td>4. To develop, implement and evaluate innovative and cost-effective intervention methodologies to contribute to HSE’s Strategic Programmes and HSE’s PSA targets, eg using Safety and Health Awareness Days (SHADs) aimed at Forestry Works Managers and contractors, and key client groups in arboriculture.</td>
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<td>Resources:</td>
<td>To be defined:</td>
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<tr>
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<td>• HSE funding–/Hosting meetings/Dissemination</td>
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<td>• FC support – Hosting meetings/Field work / Dissemination</td>
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<td>• Industry support –in-kind contributions</td>
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<td>Milestones:</td>
<td>• Strategic review of communications presented at AFAG 04/07</td>
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<td>• Group convene Q1 07/08</td>
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<td>• 2 x AFAG Communities sites launched. One with restricted access for members and those contributing to Projects and a sister website for public access.</td>
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<td>Output:</td>
<td>• Minutes of meetings circulated to all AFAG members.</td>
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<td>• Dissemination of all outcomes to members and industry.</td>
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<td>• Production of Guidance.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Members of Working Group</td>
<td><strong>Bruce Hatton (resigned)</strong></td>
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<td>Other Reps TBC</td>
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<td>AA (Project Leader)</td>
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AFAG Project D2 - Production, review and maintenance of AFAG, HSE and industry guidance (v1 3/07)

**PROJECT STATUS: GREEN**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Background:</th>
<th>Effective communications are essential to AFAG and HSE’s Workplan. AFAG guidance supports HSC’s ‘Strategy for Workplace Safety to 2010 and Beyond’ and is used widely by HSE and the industry to help deliver improved health and safety awareness and outcomes. Given the reductions in HSE’s operational resource allocated to tree work in recent years (particularly those for forestry and arboriculture), communication plays an increasingly important role in addressing the industry’s poor accident and ill health record.</th>
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<td>The production of guidance for the tree work sector was previously supported financially by the industry through the now defunct FASTCo, and the Forestry Commission (FC) in particular, before falling to HSE to publish. HSE’s publications policy now dictates that HSE’s communications - whether printed publications or other methods - require a ‘business case’ to ensure that HSE makes cost-effective use of its resources and produces appropriate guidance which will contribute towards meeting its PSA targets.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Objectives:</td>
<td>1. To maintain credibility and reinforce awareness of the industry working with HSE through AFAG; 2. To present a strong and consistent identity in its publications; 3. To produce clear, concise, accurate, relevant and authoritative guidance; 4. To focus on HSE’s priority topics, whilst also identifying good practice and producing practical guidance relevant to the industry; 5. To ensure that information is targeted and readily accessible to those working in the industry, and that it is easy to understand by all involved, i.e. written in appropriate language and where necessary, multi-lingual; 6. To ensure that AFAG and HSE’s publications are planned, managed and regularly reviewed; 7. To make every effort to evaluate and get critical feedback on its publications.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Resources: | To be defined:  
HSE funding – Research/Hosting meetings/Dissemination  
FC support – Hosting meetings/Field work / Dissemination  
Industry support – in-kind contributions |
| Milestones: | HSE Report completed by 4/07  
Project Group convened Q1 07/08  
Report back to AFAG Q3/4 07/08  
Identify potential publications for inclusion in HSE ’08-Communication Plan |
| Output: | Minutes of meetings circulated to all AFAG members.  
Dissemination of all research to members and industry.  
Production of Guidance - TBC. |
- Dissemination of information throughout the industry.

| Members of Working Group | Bruce Hatton *(resigned)*  
|--------------------------|-------------------------------
|                          | Simon Richmond  
|                          | Jim Dewar - Jason Liggins -  
|                          | Frances Hirst-  
|                          | AA (Project Leader)  
|                          | Lantra Awards  
|                          | FC  
|                          | HSE  
|                          | HSE  
|                          | Others TBC AFAG April 07 |