

Further reading

<i>Tractor units in tree work</i>	AFAG501
<i>Emergency planning</i>	AFAG802
<i>Training and certification</i>	AFAG805
<i>First aid at work: Your questions answered</i>	INDG214
<i>Management of health and safety in forestry</i>	INDG294
<i>Protect your hearing or lose it!</i>	INDG363
<i>PUWER 98: Retrofitting of braking to woodworking machines</i>	WIS38
<i>Power take-offs and power take-off drive shafts</i>	AS24

These publications are available from HSE Books - see 'Further information'.

Notes

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Further information

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This leaflet contains notes on good practice which are not compulsory but which you may find helpful in considering what you need to do.

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AFAG601 04/03 C75

Printed and published by the Health and Safety Executive



Mobile circular saw bench



AFAG
 Arboriculture and Forestry Advisory Group

Introduction

This leaflet covers the safe working practices to be followed when using mobile circular saw benches in forestry.

You can use this leaflet, along with the machine manufacturer's handbook, as part of the risk assessment process to help identify the controls to put in place when using a ripping or cross-cut circular saw.

You must also assess the effect of the site and the weather as well as following this guidance.

When using a tractor as a power source also see AFAG leaflet 501 *Tractor units in tree work*.

All operators must have had appropriate training in how to operate the machine and how to carry out the tasks required (see AFAG leaflet 805 *Training and certification*). No person under school leaving age should operate a circular saw. Those who have reached school leaving age but are below the age of 18 may operate a circular saw if supervised by a competent person of 18 years or over.

Personal protective equipment (PPE)

1 Use the following PPE:

- Suitable head protection, complying with EN 397, if identified as required in the risk assessment.
- Suitable hearing protection (complying with EN 352) where the noise level exceeds 85 dB(A) (see HSE pocket card INDG363 *Protect your hearing or lose it!*).
- Eye protection (safety glasses complying with EN 166).
- Protective boots with good grip and ankle support (complying with EN 345-1).
- Non-slag outer clothing appropriate to the prevailing weather conditions. High-visibility clothing (complying with EN 471) should be worn when the risk assessment identifies that it is needed.

2 Each person should carry a personal first-aid kit including a large wound dressing (see HSE leaflet INDG214 *First aid at work: Your questions answered*).

3 Hand-cleaning material such as waterless skin cleanser or soap, water and paper towels should be readily available.

The machine



Figure 1 Cross-cut saw with log gripper

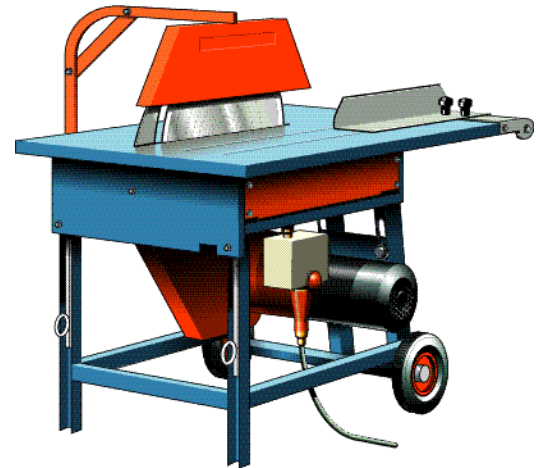


Figure 2 Ripping saw

- 4 All pulleys, belts, drive shafts and fan blades must be guarded.
- 5 There **must** be a clearly marked stopping device accessible from the working position(s).
- 6 Make sure a suitable fire extinguisher and tool kit are readily available.
- 7 From 5 December 2003 the run-down time of the saw blade **must** be 10 seconds or less. Where practical, this should be achieved by fitting a braking system which operates automatically when the stop control is applied (see HSE's Woodworking Information Sheet WIS38 *PUWER: Retrofitting of braking to woodworking machines*).

Maintenance

- ❑ 8 Ensure the machine is maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's handbook.
- ❑ 9 Check the structure of the saw bench for visible defects.
- ❑ 10 Make sure the blade is not cracked and no teeth are missing.
- ❑ 11 Ensure the saw teeth are correctly sharpened and set (wear goggles when filing).

Insert tooth blade

- ❑ 12 Tooth inserts must be stored in their original boxes and clearly labelled.
- ❑ 13 Only use recommended replacement parts.
- ❑ 14 Replace damaged teeth and/or holders at once, and sharpen down to the same length as the rest of the teeth in the blade.
- ❑ 15 Check each tooth for tightness on fitting.
- ❑ 16 When replacing insert-teeth, deal with one tooth at a time.

Fuelling

- ❑ 17 Stop the engine.
- ❑ 18 Petrol vapour is invisible and can travel considerable distances from spillage or fuelling sites. Maintain a safe distance from all sources of ignition at all times.
- ❑ 19 Store fuel to avoid vapour ignition from any source such as fires, people smoking or the circular saw. Select a site shaded from direct sunlight and away from watercourses and drains.
- ❑ 20 Containers must be clearly labelled and have securely fitting caps. Plastic containers must be designed and approved for use with petrol or diesel fuel.
- ❑ 21 Replace the fuel cap securely.
- ❑ 22 Keep fuel from contacting the skin. If fuel gets into the eyes wash out with sterile water immediately and seek medical advice as soon as possible.

Preparing to work

- ❑ 23 Set up the machine on a firm surface which is free from stumps, boulders and other obstructions.
- ❑ 24 Make sure all guards and the riving knife (on ripping saws) are fitted and adjusted correctly and that the engine-stopping device is functioning correctly.
- ❑ 25 Check the blade packings are undamaged and flush with the top of the bench.
- ❑ 26 Ensure ventilation is adequate and any exhaust fumes are vented into open air if working in an enclosed space.

- ❑ 27 For machines driven by a power take-off (PTO) shaft, before starting ensure:
 - the PTO shaft is fitted with a suitable guard, complying with EN 1152, that encloses the shaft along its full length from tractor to machine;
 - the guard is correctly fitted and in effective working order (see HSE leaflet AS24(rev) *Power take-offs and power take-off drive shafts*);
 - the PTO speed is suitable for the machine.

Emergency procedures

- ❑ 28 Ensure a designated and responsible person knows the daily work programme and agree with them a suitable emergency contact procedure. Where reasonably practicable use a mobile phone or radio and a pre-arranged call-in system.
- ❑ 29 Ensure the operators can provide the emergency services with enough detail for them to be found in the event of an accident, eg the grid reference, the distance from the main road, the type of access (suitable for car/four-wheel drive/emergency service vehicles). In urban areas street names are essential. Know the location details before they are needed in an emergency. (Also see AFAG leaflet 802 *Emergency planning*.)

Operating the machine

- ❑ 30 Ensure the bench and working area are kept free of hazards such as off-cuts, unstacked produce and excess sawdust.
- ❑ 31 Keep hands well clear of the blade. Do not clear debris from the bench table with the hands.
- ❑ 32 Use extreme care when handling wet, freshly peeled or bent material.
- ❑ 33 Do not make any adjustments to the engine, blade, packings or guards while the engine is running and the blade is in motion. Stop the engine with the approved stopping device.
- ❑ 34 Do not interfere with any guarding device while the engine is running and the blade is in motion.
- ❑ 35 Do not leave the machine running unattended.
- ❑ 36 Stop work whenever a fault is noticed and report any defects.

Cross-cutting

- ❑ 37 Do not use insert tooth or rip-toothed saw blades for this operation.
- ❑ 38 Log grippers **must** be used to control the material being cut.
- ❑ 39 Use a roller-topped table to support long poles.
- ❑ 40 Do not throw cross-cut material across the machine.

