

Introduction

This leaflet covers the safe working practices to be adopted when carrying out mechanical roadside processing in forestry and other tree work.

You can use this leaflet, along with the manufacturer's handbook, as part of the risk assessment process to help identify the controls to put in place when carrying out extraction of whole trees or poles to roadside and subsequent mechanised conversion. During this process two or more machines may be working within each other's designated risk zones.

This guide **must** be read in conjunction with AFAG leaflet 501 *Tractor units in tree work*, and, depending on the operation, AFAG leaflets 502 *Extraction by skidder*, 503 *Extraction by forwarder*, 504 *Extraction by cable crane* and 603 *Mechanical harvesting*.

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

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*).

General advice

- 1 All operators must be protected either by machine guarding or by work position from hazards such as being injured by chainshot, hit by timber or crushed by the machinery.
- 2 You must take additional precautions to reduce the likelihood of chainshot. Pre-assembled chain loops must be used and more frequent inspection of the chain and bar undertaken than during normal processing within the wood (see AFAG leaflet 603 *Mechanical harvesting*).
- 3 An efficient form of communication must be in place between all operators working within the mechanised system. The use of horns or klaxons to warn all operators to stop work should be considered. Radios should only be used if they do not interfere with remote-controlled systems.
- 4 All personnel entering the site should wear high-visibility clothing and notify the operator before approaching the machine, always avoiding the risk zone.

Emergency procedures

- 5 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.
- 6 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*).

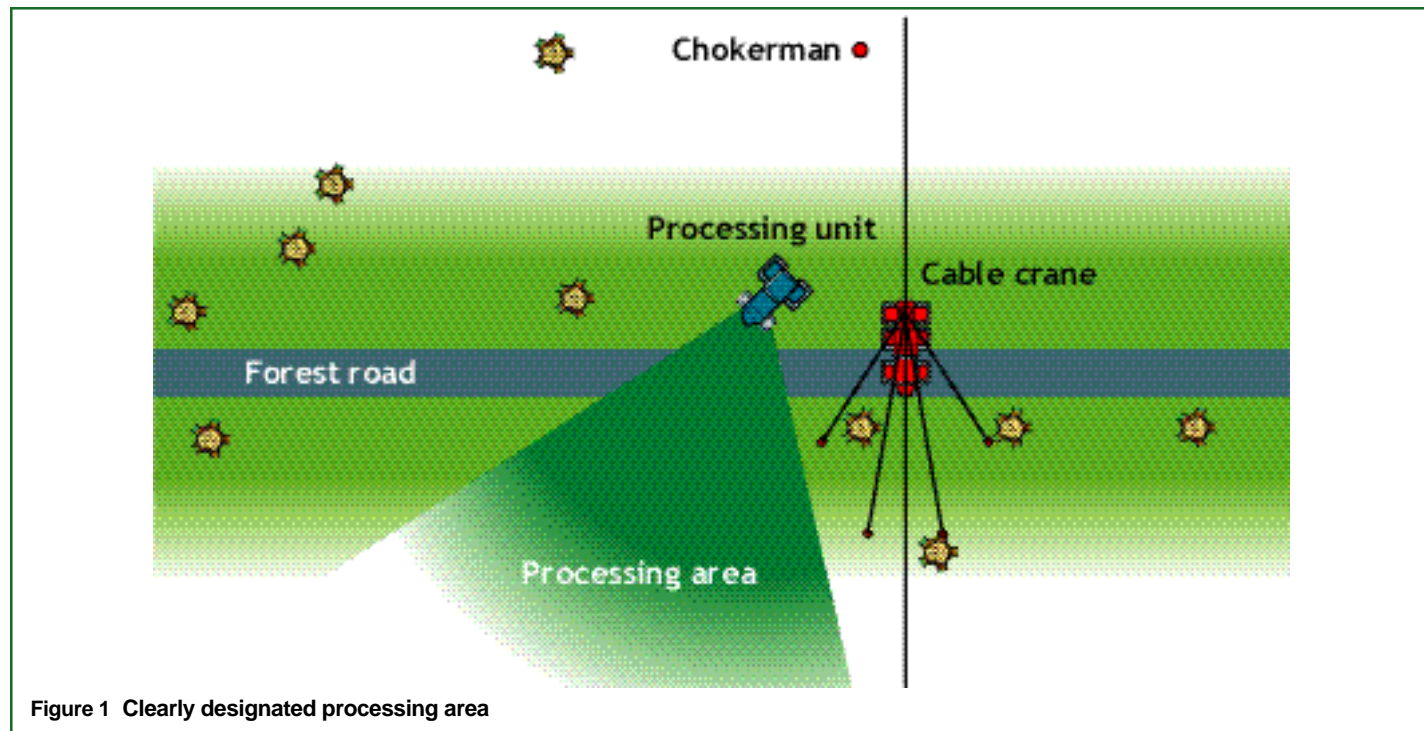


Figure 1 Clearly designated processing area

Site organisation

- 7 The operation must be planned to ensure all processing is carried out in a direction away from operators and machinery. A clearly designated processing area should be identified (see Figure 1).

Cable crane/processor

- 8 Processing must stop when the cable crane operator is outside the protected cab/guarding/agreed working position.
- 9 The processor must be positioned so that it does not work under any ropes.
- 10 The processing unit must not process in a way that obstructs either the view of the cable crane operator or the passage of timber.
- 11 The maximum achievable distance between the cable crane and processor units should be maintained at all times, taking into account the size and weight of produce being moved and the stability of the processing unit.

Clambunk/skidder/processor

- 12 The clambunk/skidder should use a separate offloading area from the processing area wherever possible.

- 13 No processing must be carried out while the skidder operator is out of the cab and is within the risk zone of the processor.
- 14 The maximum achievable distance between the clambunk/skidder and processor units should be maintained at all times, taking into account the size and weight of produce being moved and the stability of the processing unit.

- 15 The brush pile built by the processor should be kept as low as possible.
- 16 The extraction unit should not disturb the brush pile, as this may cause the processing unit to become unstable.

Secondary handling

- 17 The secondary handling equipment must not work under, or pass under, the moving ropes of any skyline operation.
- 18 All processing and extraction should stop if the secondary handling operator is outside the cab and within the risk zone of the machines.

Lorry loading

- 19 Lorries should not work under, or pass under, the moving ropes of any skyline operation.
- 20 No lorries should load within the risk zone of the processor.