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UKFCG E-NEWS

NOVEMBER 2017

EMERGENCY PLANNING

In the last year we have been made aware of two life threatening accidents which occurred in UKFCG member's forests. We are pleased to report that individuals involved in both, separate, incidents have recovered from their injuries and are back at work.

Both incidents were reportable and were subject of Health and Safety Executive investigations which found no failings on the part of the Managing Health and Safety in the Forest hierarchy. All relevant documentation and emergency plans were in place and defined procedures to deal with accidents worked well within the remote forest environments.

The two incidents arose during motor manual (chainsaw) felling operations and chain-shot which penetrated the windscreen of a harvester.

We would like to take this opportunity of reminding all members of the key actions which can help to minimise the risk of accidents, and essential procedures which, as proven, can improve the likelihood of a satisfactory conclusion to serious incidents of this nature.

- Ensure that all operational activity is covered by appropriate contracts which clearly define responsibilities for site safety and safety monitoring
- Complete a UKFCG pre-commencement checklist which aims to remind you of safety related documents which should be obtained prior to work starting. The following documents should be available to all workers on site
- Operational Risk Assessment / Site Safety Rules – provided by contractor
- Site Hazard Details and Hazard / Location map – provided by owner/manager
- Emergency Response Plan – Accidents.
 - *held in the machine operators cab, or in the workers vehicle at all times*
- Lone Working Policy and Procedure – if there is lone working at any time
- Is there a good mobile phone signal or other means of communication?
 - *If NO, what arrangements are in place for worker communication?*
- Have all workers received appropriate safety training for the assigned work?
 - *Make sure you have a copy of the relevant certificates of competence*
- Have workers received First Aid training [preferably with + F]?
 - *Make sure you have a copy of the First Aid training certificate*
- Is there adequate first aid equipment on site and immediately accessible [with every worker – not left in the van!]
- Are all certificates up to date with evidence of refresher training to industry standards?
- Has appropriate PPE for the assigned work been issued to all workers and in use?
 - *Any equipment with expiry dates should be replaced at the appropriate time*
- Is all machinery and equipment in good working order, maintained to manufacturer's schedules and fit for purpose – the right machine for the job?
- Ensure you undertake operational monitoring to check ongoing compliance with site safety and keep a written record of your visits and the subjects monitored
- Check that Employers Liability and Public Liability insurance is in place, copy of the certificates is held on file. In the event of expiry during the contract, ensure you obtain an up to date copy of the certificate at the appropriate time.

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The mark of
responsible forestry

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Investigation of the incidents has highlighted some key factors which had potential to lead to less desirable outcomes:

- Can the emergency services find you? Call centres are unlikely to have local knowledge
- There may be over reliance on sat-nav/postcodes which rarely bring responders to the forest gate in remote areas, let alone the location in the forest
- If there are sufficient personnel on site, and the casualty cannot be moved, send someone to an agreed RV point to meet the emergency services and escort them to the incident location. Summon additional help if you can to assist in this role.
- Make sure none of the emergency services road vehicles park in an area which might prevent the air ambulance from landing safely (this happened!!)
- In the event of Lone Working, ensure the appointed contact person is aware of a procedure to follow in the event of planned contact times not being fulfilled.

In the unfortunate event of an accident there are a number of important actions which all workers can undertake to assist with a successful outcome:

- Make sure the incident location is safe and further injury to any worker is avoided
- Switch off all machinery if it is safe to do so and secure mobile machinery
- Administer first aid to casualties and summon help, ensuring the emergency services have clear instructions to be able to locate you
- Ensure that emergency services have a clear understanding of the remote nature of the site and road/track conditions to access the incident – despatch of air ambulance, 4x4/mountain rescue at an early stage could save time later.
- Evacuate casualties if further injury can be avoided and it is safe to do so
- Preserve the scene for accident investigation – outcomes may lead to a safer working environment for all
- Notify owner/manager and assist with completion of accident report

CONSIDER RUNNING ON-SITE INCIDENT RESPONSE TRAINING TO TEST EXTREME SCENARIOS AND PREPAREDNESS OF SITE PERSONNEL TO REACT APPROPRIATELY. INCIDENT TRAINING COULD BE ORGANISED IN ASSOCIATION WITH EMERGENCY SERVICES AND/OR SPECIALIST FIRST AID TRAINERS

UKWAS v4 Emergency Planning requirements are defined in section 2.12.2 as follows:

There shall be an emergency response plan appropriate to the level of risk.

UKWAS guidance on this subject states:

Incidents may include:

- *Fire*
- *Extreme weather events*
- *Outbreaks of pests, diseases or invasive species*
- *Accidents*
- *Chemical spills and other pollution.*

Where appropriate, plans may be as simple as a reference card, but as a minimum should include:

- *Responsibilities for action*
- *Contact details*
- *Emergency procedures.*

Plans should take into account FISA best practice guidance and issues such as the remoteness of some WMUs, which may affect both communication and the ability of emergency services to reach sites in timely manner.

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Auditors will seek evidence drawn from the following example verifiers:

- Discussion with the owner/manager
 - Emergency response plans [preferably documented and copy with map held by all site personnel]
 - In sites with high risk of fire, evidence of contact with the fire and rescue service and that their advice has been taken into consideration.
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To assist with emergency planning UKFCG has prepared a number of template documents, please use these to enhance worker safety and help with collating evidence for verification of compliance with certification standards during annual audits

- Harvesting contract
- Simple Works contract
- Pre-commencement checklist
- Emergency Plan
- Operational Monitoring checklist

Other reference documents include:

Example Lone Working Risk Assessment / Procedure
FISA Guide 802 Emergency Planning
FISA Information Leaflet 004-0415 – Lone Working

PLEASE CONTACT UKFCG IF YOU WOULD LIKE COPIES OF ANY OF THE ABOVE DOCUMENTS

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