



# Guidance on Managing Health and Safety in Forestry

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## Industry Guidance for Workers

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 General introduction

This guide is based on sound industry practice and will particularly help small businesses and organisations to deliver forestry operations in a way to help avoid injury and ill health.

There are five guides – one for each of the main roles that may be involved in forestry operations. These guides seek to help everyone better understand what they and others need to do to work well together, to comply with safety law and to conduct forestry work in a safe and healthy manner.

#### The five guides are:

- Landowner (including Agent)
- Forestry Works Manager (FWM)
- Contractor
- Sub-contractor
- Worker

These guides should help you better understand your role and the roles of other parties involved in forestry operations. A summary of all the main forestry work roles can be found in **Annex A**.

### 1.2 Who is a Worker?

While you are at work you must take reasonable care for:

- your own health and safety
- the health and safety of others who may be affected by your actions at work.

All workers need to comply with any reasonable instructions, policies and procedures set out by their employer.

## 2. What do you have to do?

### 2.1 Meet health and safety regulations and responsibilities

When at work you must:

- contribute your knowledge and experience to your employer's risk assessments when required
- read, understand and comply with any risk controls and site safety rules
- give constructive feedback on site practice
- provide evidence of training and experience relevant to the work you are to undertake, e.g. in a logbook

- follow the training you have received for your tasks/operation
- co-operate with your employer and co-workers to help everyone meet their legal obligations
- stop work and report to your employer if you think that the work (or inadequate precautions) are putting anyone's health and safety at serious risk.
- report all near misses and injuries to your employer

### 2.2 What should you expect at work?

Your employer must provide the following:

- a safe place to work
- an explanation of how the various risks will be controlled and who is responsible for doing that (Risk Assessment)
- toilets, washing facilities (clean, hot and cold or warm running water) and drinking water.

## 3. What information do you need?

As a worker, you should receive all relevant information before and during your time on site, and you should give feedback to your employer to help them keep you and others safe.

### 3.1 Before starting work on site

Your employer (or you if you are self-employed) should co-ordinate with the FWM and the contractor to make sure you have the right information before you start work. You should expect to be given the following details:

- any unusual or significant hazards that may impact on the operation
- any constraints on the timing or the order of work
- the risk controls and safety arrangements relating to the site, including your access to it and how work is to be co-ordinated
- the site-specific health and safety risks of the work, including the impacts and implications of other people working nearby
- the site rules that you must follow
- the contact details of the person who supervises or co-ordinates the health and safety arrangements on site
- the arrangements for reporting unsafe behaviours or dangerous situations
- the arrangements for first aid

- the location of welfare facilities
- lone working arrangements (if permitted)
- the emergency procedures for that site.

This, and any additional or updated information, must be provided on an ongoing basis if the situation or plans change. If you are in doubt over anything that you feel will affect your safety at work, you should ask.

### 3.2 Reporting incidents and near misses

You will be informed about how to report incidents, injuries and near misses, and who to report them to. It is very important to report near misses and injuries because everyone can then learn from what has happened and can work together to help resolve the problem before a more serious incident happens.

Learning from incidents makes the work site safer and, as it improves everyone's knowledge, it will help make all future work sites safer too.

### 3.3 Serious and imminent danger

Serious and imminent danger means that the circumstances at work have become dangerous and there is an immediate risk of death or serious injury or harm. This includes circumstances where the conditions on the worksite mean that the danger will appear as soon as work begins.

If you believe that there is a serious or imminent danger at your worksite, you should stop work, alert others and immediately go to a safe place until the danger can be eliminated. You should refer to your instructions on the worksite procedures for dealing with dangerous situations.

## 4. Skills, knowledge, training and experience

To work safely, everyone on site needs to be competent in the work they are employed to do, or they need to be supervised closely by someone who is.

As a forestry worker you must ensure that you have obtained, or are in the process of obtaining, the necessary skills, knowledge, training and experience to carry out the forestry work assigned to you. The FWM and/or the contractor will want to see evidence of this before you start work.

'Competence' relies on undertaking the appropriate training, but simply being trained to do a job is not the same thing as being competent. Competence comes when you have developed your skills, knowledge and experience of the work so that you can perform the work safely, professionally and efficiently.

## Annex A: Forestry work roles summarised

Role	Definition	Examples of who may take on this role	Summary of duties and responsibilities
<b>Landowner</b>	Person or Organisation in control of the land on which forestry work takes place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Estate owners or farmers.</li> <li>• State forest organisations or other public bodies, such as the Crown Estate and local authorities.</li> <li>• Forestry management companies.</li> <li>• Land agents working on behalf of private and public owners.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-ordinate the activities of the overall forest environment for health and safety purposes.</li> <li>• Gather information about hazards on and around forestry worksites and communicate these to the FWM.</li> <li>• Ensure that the work on a particular site does not affect the health and safety of other people.</li> <li>• Take advice from a competent specialist or agent on any aspect where they are not sufficiently knowledgeable.</li> </ul>
<b>Forestry Works Manager (FWM)</b>	Person or Organisation who commissions the work on a forestry site.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anyone in the Landowner role directly engaging forestry contractors as part of their business.</li> <li>• Anyone engaged by the Landowner to manage and carry out the forestry operation on their behalf.</li> <li>• Forestry management company directly engaging contractors to work on their client's land.</li> <li>• Land agent company directly engaging contractors to work on their client's land.</li> <li>• Timber purchasers (merchants, processors or contractors).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use information from the Landowner to prepare an outline risk assessment for work on the site and for haulage of timber away from site (where applicable).</li> <li>• Select competent contractors who make adequate provision for health and safety.</li> <li>• Specify health and safety measures for contractors working on the site and anyone else who may be affected by the work activity.</li> <li>• Liaise with the Landowner.</li> <li>• Supervise health and safety on site.</li> <li>• Make arrangements for the reporting of incidents, unsafe practices or dangerous occurrences.</li> </ul>
<b>Contractor</b>	Provider of a forestry service.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contracting companies with their own employees or who take on Sub-contractors.</li> <li>• Owner-operators.</li> <li>• Hauliers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with the FWM to ensure health and safety standards are met.</li> <li>• Select sub-contractors who are skilled and experienced, competent and have made adequate provision for health and safety.</li> <li>• Manage employees and sub-contractors and ensure they work safely.</li> <li>• Ensure effective supervision is in place so that safe systems of work are maintained if the owner/controller of the contractor's business is absent.</li> <li>• Report any unsafe practices or occurrences.</li> </ul>
<b>Sub-contractor</b>	Anyone engaged by a contractor other than by direct employment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anyone working under contract to a contractor.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-operate with the arrangements for health and safety on the site.</li> <li>• Manage personal health and safety.</li> <li>• Report any unsafe practices or occurrences.</li> <li>• Carry out site-specific risk assessments.</li> <li>• Provide adequate supervision of their employees.</li> </ul>
<b>Worker</b>	Anyone working in the forestry industry.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anyone working within the forestry industry or undertaking a related task.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take care of their own health and safety and that of people who may be affected by what they do (or do not do).</li> <li>• Co-operate with others on health and safety, and do not interfere with, or misuse, anything provided for their health, safety or welfare.</li> <li>• Follow the training they have received when using any work items their employer has given them.</li> <li>• Report any injuries, unsafe practices or occurrence to the contractor or their employer.</li> </ul>

## Further information

This guide is one of a series produced by the Forestry Industry Safety Accord (FISA). Copies of this guide are available as electronic or hard copy via the UKFISA website shown below. There is also a wide range of additional safety information in relation to forestry on the FISA website, and in relation to arboriculture on the Arboricultural Association (AA) website.

For more general information about health and safety related to tree work, please visit the Health and Safety Executive website: [www.hse.gov.uk/treework/index.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/treework/index.htm)

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