

Safety and Assurance Bulletin



Return to Work

Welcome back! I hope you had a restful and enjoyable time over Christmas.

■ Last year was extremely busy for all of us, with the added pressure of working through various Covid restrictions.

I therefore wanted to start this year by reflecting on 2021, it's challenges and how together we overcame them.

2021 was a tricky year to navigate and work through due to the Covid pandemic. This brought many challenges as restrictions were lifted and reimposed at different times with differing requirements in each nation. There is no doubt that this has had an impact, to a greater or lesser extent, on our wellbeing.

Through the year our Mental Health First Aid team have worked behind the scenes supporting our staff and recognising both the annual Mental Health Awareness Week and Day by producing special Bulletins. Our response to the Covid pandemic has considered the impact on our employees and has supported them wherever possible, while keeping inline with the various restrictions. We will continue to do this while the pandemic runs its course.

In September 2020 we launched our online Diffuse Pollution training, to date well over six hundred individuals have completed the course. This is a marvellous achievement, thank you if you have completed the training. We are seeing more proactive management of water, mud and siltation on sites than even just 3 years ago. This is in part due to better planning, but also to the awareness and actions of all those working on our sites.

The risk of diffuse pollution will be something we have to manage each year, wetter weather, with more intense rainfall events continue to make this a challenge, but one I am proud to see us improving on year on year.

I cannot write this piece without reflecting on the shocking statistic that 9 people were killed at work last year involving chainsaw work. These were spread between forestry and arboriculture. We are committed to ensuring all our own staff, contractors and other stakeholders go home to their families at the end of each working day. We are committed to working collaboratively with all parties to make this a reality for all in our industry.

It is vital that all chainsaw works are properly assessed, undertaken by competent operators and supervised and monitored adequately. Tilhill provides all its managers with basic chainsaw awareness training and during 2021 established Chainsaw Champions in each region. These individuals have previous chainsaw experience and received a further two day in forest training considering planning and monitoring chainsaw works. Tilhill supports the work of the FISA Chainsaw Working Group as they work on bringing better recognition of chainsaw competence to the industry.

Looking forward to 2022 there is still more work to do. The renewed interest from politicians, the media and the general public in forestry brings a spotlight on the industry and what we do. This brings both opportunities and challenges.

Weather patterns seemingly continue to change, tree pests and diseases bring not only silvicultural but also safety challenges, and we must continue to do all we can to eliminate fatal injuries. We have set out our Action Plan for 2022 detailing our next steps to addressing these challenges. We cannot do this alone and will support FISA and the Forest Industry Environment Group, but also ask that all our employees and contractors work with us to achieve our goals.

May we all have a very safe and environmentally sound, 2022.

Gavin Adkins
Managing Director



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Call to Action

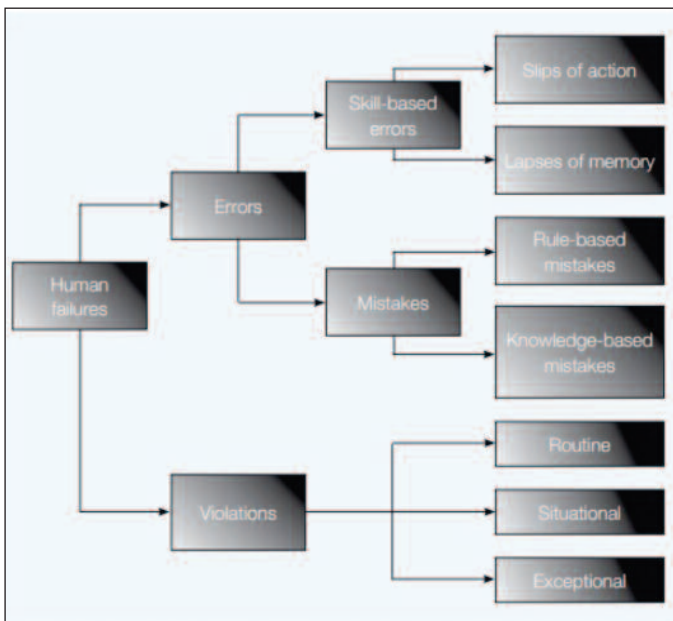
Here are some of the main highlights from our 2022 Safety & Assurance Action Plan.

Pathway to Competence

Just as it is important to engage competent contractors in the work we do, it is also critical that our own employees are fully competent in the roles we ask them to fulfil. Tilhill has long had a Competence Matrix for our staff roles. Building on work completed in 2021 we will continue to develop this into a career pathway from recruitment to retirement. This will meet the forthcoming FISA Guide to FWM competence.

Just Culture

One thing we have learned through many incident investigations is that when looking back on an incident people have often done something, that in hindsight, seems surprising. In a 'Just Culture' it is important that the reasons and motivation for that surprising action are investigated and understood. The difference to a 'No Blame Culture' is that wilful acts can have disciplinary consequences. True wilful acts are rare and most human failings are either Errors or Violations that are motivated by a desire to carry out the job despite the prevailing constraints, goals and expectations. This has been a guiding principle in our investigations for many years, and we will formalise this approach.



Above: Diagram Taken from HSE book, HSG48 Reducing Error and Influencing Behaviour.

Site Monitoring

Site monitoring is a critical step in ensuring we achieve the end product without harming any person or causing pollution of our environment. During 2022 we will be reviewing our current practices to ensure that we make the most of our time and engage with our contractors and other stakeholders in the most meaningful ways.



Plant Your Feet

This is our developing campaign to reduce the number of serious injuries caused by slips, trips and falls on site. We can't set out to prevent every slip, trip or fall on site, but we will explore ways in which we can reduce the number of serious injuries. Previous injuries have included a fractured knee cap and a fractured shoulder socket joint.



Support FISA Chainsaw Work

We will fully support the FISA Chainsaw Working Group as they devise ways to improve safety for chainsaw operators. This is a difficult task and will require plenty of time and effort from many of us in the industry. We must come together as an industry to help solve these issues.

Contractor Portal Videos

Following the success of our online Diffuse Pollution Training we aim to create further online training videos for other environmental and sustainability issues.

continued

Call to Action – continued

Plastics in Forestry

As a founder member of our industry's Forest Plastics Working Group we will continue to seek ways to remove plastic from our operations.

Alternatives must be considered in the round so we don't cause any additional unforeseen consequences into the future.



Above: Cardboard Tree Guard



Above: Chestnut Tree Guard

FISA 608 is launched

The new FISA 608 Guide for Tree Shears and Grapple Saws has been launched.

■ This is the result of many hours of work by the working group and has been a collaborative effort by FISA and The Arb Association.

The Group was made up from manufacturers, distributors, contractors, forestry companies and the HSE. All worked together, pooling their knowledge, learning from each other about the regulations covering the equipment and the reality of operating the equipment.

The guide follows up some of the issues raised in the safety alert the Group released in April 2021.

The new guide is available to download from the FISA and Arb Association websites.

FISA
www.ukfisa.com

Arb Association
www.trees.org.uk



FISA Safety Guide 608 Tree Shear & Grapple Saw



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10. Machine operations

Further reading

Further information

- Appendix 1 Site Considerations
- Appendix 2 Operational Planning
- Appendix 3 Actual Operation
- Appendix 4 Lift Plan Guide

This FISA guide is new to the forestry industry and we welcome your feedback on the guide. If you have feedback, please email info@ukfisa.com. Your comments will be fed to the FISA Plant & Equipment Working Group and the guide will be reviewed in eighteen months' time.

Trailer Towing

In November we informed you of the intention to give all driving licence holders B+E entitlement.

■ Those who passed their driving test since January 1997 have had to pass a separate test to be able to tow trailers of up to 3500 tonnes. However, last month we informed you that the plans had not gone ahead, having been pulled at the last minute. Well, this month we can confirm they have finally gone through. The wording from the Government website is in the box below.

A trailer is still a piece of work equipment and so training should still be undertaken. It is important that users know the safety and practical aspects of towing a trailer, how to hitch,



what to inspect to ensure the trailer is road worthy, reduction in speed limits and how to manoeuvre with a trailer.

What changed on 16 December 2021

If you passed your car driving test from 1 January 1997, you're now allowed to tow trailers up to 3,500kg MAM.

DVLA will update your driving licence record to show that you're allowed to tow trailers. You'll get category BE (www.gov.uk/driving-licence-categories) added to your driving licence when you get a new photocard driving licence.

Do not need to contact DVLA for this to happen. It will be done automatically.

If you passed your car driving test before 1 January 1997, you are not affected by the change.

In the News Elsewhere

A quarrying company fined £300k after blasting operation put workers at risk

■ The company has been fined for safety breaches after a fly rock projection event occurred during the use of explosives. A blast at a quarry in North Wales, resulted in rocks being ejected outside of the danger zone,

The HSE's investigation into the incident found that flyrock from the blasting operation, had landed approximately 270m away, punctured the roof of an occupied work shed, and put a hole in the outside pane of the occupied manager's office skylight window.

HSE found that there were poor stemming practices: The written specification was prepared after the firing of the blast, and an inadequate danger zone was in place. As a

result there was a projection of flyrock outside of the danger zone that caused a quarry operative to run for cover and put other employees at risk when the roof of the shed they were working in was punctured.

After the hearing, HSE commented: "Blasting operations at quarries are inherently high risk, and these risks must be rigorously controlled by good explosives engineering practice and in accordance with legal requirements.

"It is unacceptable that employees, and potentially members of the public, be put at serious risk of being hit by rocks that could easily lead to death or serious injury."



January 2022 – Safety & Assurance Bulletin briefing

I have been personally briefed in the contents of this Safety & Assurance Bulletin.

Please add any questions relating to this briefing or any other health, safety and environmental matters you wish to raise:

Please add any suggestions on health, safety and environmental matters:

I have been briefed by: _____ My Tilhill Office is: _____

I understand that I am encouraged to submit comment and contribution from this bulletin.

Signed: _____ Name: _____ Date: _____

Signed: _____ Name: _____ Date: _____

Signed: _____ Name: _____ Date: _____

Signed: _____ Name: _____ Date: _____

Signed: _____ Name: _____ Date: _____

Signed: _____ Name: _____ Date: _____

ORIGINAL sheet to be held at the Tilhill Office.

Send a **COPY** to: Head of Safety, Tilhill, The Gatehouse, Ruck Lane, Horsmonden, Tonbridge, Kent, TN12 8EA. Fax: 01892 860441. Email: ios@tilhill.com

Contractors: If you would like your own copy of this Safety & Assurance Bulletin please contact your local office and ask to be included on the mailing list.