



# **Health and Safety Policy, Organisation and Arrangements**



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## **Health and Safety – Statement of Policy**

This policy has been documented in order to clearly show high level commitment to providing and maintaining safe and healthy work conditions, equipment and safe systems of work.

We shall use the guidance set out in OHSAS18001 to help us to operate an OH&S Management System

There shall be a zero tolerance attitude towards unsafe acts with breaches of the TreeStation policy, procedure and guidance being treated as a disciplinary offence.

### **Objectives**

The objectives of this policy shall be:

- To promote acceptable standards of health, safety and welfare within TreeStation
- To ensure compliance with all relevant statutory provisions
- To create and maintain safe and healthy places of work for all employees and to ensure that the safety and health of persons other than employees are not adversely affected by our work activity
- To ensure that staff at all levels are provided with adequate information, instruction, training and supervision
- To develop safety awareness and responsible attitudes at all levels
- To promote a joint consultation approach on health and safety matters
- To provide a framework within which safety performance may be monitored

This policy shall apply to the directors, employees and contractors engaged by TreeStation and shall be applied throughout the range of services undertaken by the company:

- i. Domestic tree services
- ii. Commercial tree services

The Directors recognise that it is their responsibility to ensure that all staff are aware of the contents of this statement and that safe systems of work are provided and maintained on all work sites. Suitable and sufficient financial and physical resources shall be made available to ensure and maintain the health, safety and welfare of themselves, employees and others who may be affected by their undertakings.

The Directors shall manage TreeStation in line with current legislation, guidance and accepted best practice and shall ensure that all foreseeable hazards are identified, arising risk is evaluated and suitable and sufficient controls are put in place to ensure and maintain a healthy and safe working environment.

The Directors shall undertake to provide suitable and sufficient information, instruction, training and supervision as is deemed necessary by the regulatory and enforcing authorities to enable the implementation of this policy.



The Directors shall actively seek the involvement and co-operation of all stakeholders in making TreeStation a safe place to work. Employees shall be encouraged to elect and appoint a Safety Representative in order to show that there shall be no adverse treatment of any person reporting concerns over any aspect of working conditions.

The TreeStation structure chart shall detail the usual reporting lines within the company but it is stressed that anybody at any time shall be granted uninterrupted access to the Directors for the discussion or reporting of any concerns over health, safety or welfare arrangements.

This policy shall be maintained as the business changes in size and nature and following any other significant change.

Analysis of accident, incident and near miss occurrences and trends shall enable the safety management system to be continuously improved.

The Directors shall take responsibility for the monitoring of the success and progress of the safety management system and shall appoint a competent advisor to provide advice and investigation when required.

<b>Signed</b>	
<b>Name</b>	Phil Benn
<b>Position</b>	Managing Director
<b>Date</b>	25 <sup>th</sup> October 2013



## Organisation

	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Specific Actions</b>
Phil Benn Managing Director	Overall Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring resources are available to meet the TreeStation responsibilities</li> <li>• Ensuring that policies, procedures and control measures are reviewed and that revisions are agreed and communicated throughout the organisation</li> <li>• To seek advice from the health and safety advisor when necessary</li> </ul>
Nick Torr Arboricultural Manager	Directing TreeStation policy, compliance, assurance and consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keeping up to date with legislation and requirements</li> <li>• Ensuring staff are correctly trained and certificated in all relevant areas</li> <li>• Ensuring inspections and records are up to date</li> <li>• Acting as a conduit between all stakeholders so allowing TreeStation to meet its legal responsibilities</li> <li>• Ensuring co-operation and co-ordination</li> <li>• Preparation and communication of method statements and risk assessments</li> <li>• Site safety checks</li> <li>• Control of temporary workers and sub-contractors</li> <li>• To implement the advice of the health and safety advisor</li> </ul>
Team Leaders	Day to day health and safety compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring method statements and risk assessments are in order and are followed</li> <li>• Completion of daily site specific risk assessments</li> <li>• Ensuring that work is to the required standard</li> <li>• Reporting any defective systems/equipment that could prejudice the safe system of work</li> <li>• Ensuring that PPE is used as appropriate</li> </ul>
Arborists	Day to day health and safety compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To work safely following national / TreeStation guidelines</li> <li>• To only operate vehicles, plant and equipment that they have been trained and authorised to use</li> <li>• To keep vehicles, plant and equipment in good order</li> <li>• To report any conditions that could prejudice the safe system of work</li> </ul>
Elcoat Ltd	External advisors	The provision of advice or investigation when required.



## Arrangements

This section defines the standards and rules which relate to all employees whilst at work. It is the responsibility of all employees to observe these rules and behave in a safe and reasonable manner whilst at work.

It must be noted that disciplinary action shall be taken against employees who persistently and deliberately flout the requirements placed upon them by statutory provisions and by TreeStation safety rules.

It should also be borne in mind that a breach of Health and Safety legislation by an employee is a criminal offence and action may be taken by the Police and the Health and Safety Executive.

The Managing Director recognises that it is not possible to prepare in written form every safety rule laid down by the Company as circumstances may vary depending upon the nature of the work. However, employees are expected to act in a sensible manner and adhere to verbal instruction given by Management.

All employees regardless of position within TreeStation have a duty imposed upon them by the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974.

This duty includes:

- Take responsible care for the health and safety of themselves and other persons who may be affected by their work
- Co-operate with the Directors in the measures taken to safeguard health and safety at work
- Report to a person in authority any defects which adversely affect health and safety at work
- Be aware of the TreeStation safety arrangements, statutory provisions and the companies safety procedures

Unsafe individuals may be suspended from the work site until further notice.



## Access to Information:

It is essential that the officers of the company firstly understand the requirements placed upon them by legislation and secondly that they have access to the information and guidance available to help them to manage their undertakings in line with those requirements.

The following resources shall be available:

Compliance Register	A maintained list of legislative and contract requirements
Company Library (Electronic)	Electronic file packets containing internal and external guidance material
Company Library (Hard Copy)	Books Industry Standards HSE Guidance Industry Guidance
Arrangements for competent advice	Managers have access to industry specialist health, safety and environmental advice from Elcoat Ltd
Web based sources of information and guidance	<a href="http://www.hse.gov.uk">www.hse.gov.uk</a> <a href="http://www.legislation.gov.uk">www.legislation.gov.uk</a> <a href="http://www.trees.org.uk">www.trees.org.uk</a> (Arboricultural Association)

The specific arrangements in this section of the manual shall be read with reference to the documents available as above and with due regard to the legislation listed in the compliance register. Where available, the compliance register shall contain a web link to the source of the requirement and / or reference to the storage location of any hard copy document.

The following industry guidance shall be accessible for reference:

Ref.	Title
BS3998	Recommendations for Tree Work 2010 (and subsequent updates)
BS5837	Trees in Relation to Construction 2005 (ONLY if undertaking tree root protection fencing construction or development site tree surveys etc.)
ACOP	Regulations – ‘Approved Code of Practice’, i.e. LOLER ACOP / PUWER ACOP (available as free downloads from HSE website)
AIS30	(HSE Agricultural Information Sheet no.30) ‘LOLER – how the regulations apply to arboriculture’
AIS27	PUWER 98 – how the regulations apply to agriculture and forestry
AIS38	Power-fed mobile wood chippers – operator safety at infeed chutes
FISA 202	Application of Pesticides Using Hand Held Equipment
FISA 203	Clearing Saw
FISA 204	Flails and Mulchers in Tree Work
FISA 301	Using Petrol Driven Chainsaws
FISA 302	Basic Chainsaw Felling and Manual Takedown

FISA 304	Chainsaw Cross Cutting and Manual Stacking
FISA 306	Chainsaw Clearance of Windblow
FISA 307	Chainsaw Felling of Large Trees
AFAG 308	Top Handled Chainsaws
FISA 310	Use of Winches in Directional Felling and Takedown
AFAG 401	Tree Climbing Operations
AFAG 402	Aerial Tree Rescue
AFAG 403	Mobile Elevating Work Platforms (MEWPs) for Tree Work
FISA 601	Mobile Circular Saw Bench
FISA 604	Wood Chippers
AFAG 606	Stump Grinders
FISA 607	Firewood Processors
FISA 701	ATV Quad Bikes
FISA 702	All Terrain Vehicles
FISA 704	Excavators in Tree Work
FISA 802	Emergency Planning
FISA 804	Electricity at Work: Forestry and Arboriculture
FISA 805	Training and Certification
INDG259	(HSE Industry Guidance) An Introduction to Health and Safety
INDG214	First Aid at Work: Your Questions Answered
INDG229	Using Work Equipment Safely
INDG362	Noise at Work – Guidance for Employers on Control of Noise at Work Regulations
INDG363	Protect Your Hearing or Lose It (employees leaflet)
INDG175	Control the Risks from Hand-Arm Vibration – Guidance for Employers on Control of Vibration at Work Regulations
INDG296	Hand-Arm Vibration – Advice for Employees
INDG401	Work at Height Regulations 2005 – A Brief Guide for Employers
INDG402	Safe Use of Ladders and Step Ladders – An Employers Guide
INDG145	Watch Your Back – avoiding back strain in timber handling and chainsaw at work
INDG317	Chainsaws at Work
AA	A Guide to Good Tree Climbing Practice
AA	A Guide to the Use of MEWPs in Arboriculture



### **Risk Assessment:**

Hazards inherent in all proposed operations shall be identified and noted. The risk shall be evaluated in terms of the likelihood of the hazard occurring and the potential severity of the consequences.

Generic risk assessments shall be prepared for all operations carried out by TreeStation and these shall be reviewed and updated as appropriate. The generic risk assessments shall be available at point of use for all operations.

Operators shall be informed of their responsibility to comply with the control measures specified in the generic risk assessments during induction training.

Site specific risk assessments shall be undertaken for each operation / site. These shall be briefed to staff at the start of each working shift and to visitors prior to them being allowed onto the work site. These shall identify potential hazards, assess the level of risk to employees, the public and the environment, specify agreed control measures and so reduce the likelihood of accidents occurring.

Employees shall have a responsibility to work in accordance with best practice and instruction in relation to any risk assessment and to inform the Directors of any situation that would result in safe working being jeopardised.

### **Welfare:**

Offices and workshops shall have suitable welfare facilities including toilets, wash facilities and an area to take breaks and lunch.

For short duration work on site 'local arrangements' shall be made and these arrangements shall be included on the daily briefing sheet and the method statement.

For example:

- *Toilet and washing facilities are available in the downstairs cloakroom of the customer's house.*
- *Toilet and washing facilities are available at the McDonalds on the High Street – 100 metres to the south of the worksite.*

For longer duration sites, facilities shall be provided on site or arrangements shall be made to share the facilities of the main contractor.



## **Training and Competence:**

All new employees shall receive induction training relating to TreeStation procedures, health and safety matters and legal obligations.

All employees shall be competent to carry out their duties and shall hold the necessary certification. No one shall carry out any function for which they are not trained or instructed so as to be able to work safely in relation to themselves and others.

When an activity is carried out infrequently the Directors shall ensure that the employee is fully competent prior to him / her carrying out that activity.

A competence matrix shall be maintained to record:

Personal physical constraints (contact lens wearing or colour blindness for example)

Levels of authorisation

Record specific competence, skills, abilities, expiry dates

The matrix shall be reviewed on a regular basis to assess on-going training, refresher requirements and deficiencies. The process shall be informed by safety checks and inspections, feedback from employees and incident histories.

In the event of an employee being involved in a serious near miss or reportable incident that employee may be reassessed and training organised if appropriate.

Training shall be arranged by the Directors through appropriate bodies and training providers.

## **Workplace Arrangements:**

A specific risk assessment covering the office, workshop and yard shall be maintained.

The office shall be kept in a safe and clean condition with no trip hazards or obstructions that could cause harm or prevent emergency access / egress.

Workspaces and display screen equipment shall be assessed for suitability for the specific user and these assessments shall be reviewed or repeated regularly to ensure continuing suitability.

All staff and visitors shall be kept informed of fire evacuation procedures and first aid provision arrangements.

All employees shall have access to relevant safety information and first aid provision.

All staff and visitors must comply with all warning signs and notices displayed on the premises.

All staff and visitors shall make appropriate use of all safety equipment and facilities.

All work areas must be kept clear of debris, scrap and other rubbish in order to facilitate ready access and egress and to reduce the risk of fire.



### **Consultation and Communication:**

All employees, associates, subcontract labour and clients shall have an active part to play in maintaining and improving safety standards. They shall be consulted on safety issues, risk assessment procedures, PPE issues and suitability and use of plant and equipment.

All employees shall receive induction training in order to clearly communicate the standards required by the company.

Employees shall be expected to attend the regular consultation and briefing meetings throughout their employment. Records and minutes of these meetings shall be kept for reference.

Employees shall have access to all relevant safety guides e.g. HSE guides, Data Sheets, Generic Risk Assessments, Site Specific Risk Assessments and Operating Manuals either on site or in the office or stores as appropriate.

A team file shall be kept in the operational vehicle containing all appropriate paperwork and site information.

A method statement shall be prepared when required:

- To give clear instruction as to the methods to be adopted and the expectations of TreeStation to its employees, associates and sub-contractors.
- To give customers and clients sufficient information as to the likely methods of operations to be adopted on their worksites and to foster confidence that the operators of TreeStation are working in line with current industrial best practice.

A specific method statement shall be prepared which shall give clear and specific instruction as to:

- Access and egress arrangements
- Anticipated working dates and times
- Chain of command and contact numbers
- The expected sequence of events on site
- Reference to the site specific risk assessment
- Site welfare arrangements
- Emergency planning



## **Work Equipment:**

The term 'equipment' shall cover all tools, plant, vehicles and machinery used in the course of TreeStation business.

Equipment shall only be used for the purpose it was designed for in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. All guards must remain in place and be functioning correctly. No modifications shall be carried out unless under the instructions of the manufacturer. Essential details and warning signs shall be in place at all times.

Equipment shall be checked, inspected, maintained and serviced in accordance with the manufacturers' instructions and the provisions of PUWER and LOLER. A register of all equipment kept shall be maintained showing details of history, servicing and repair. All equipment shall be clearly marked to be identifiable.

Daily checks shall be carried out by employees prior to using the equipment. Periodic maintenance checks shall be carried out and recorded.

All lifting equipment shall be thoroughly examined by a competent person on a 6 and 12 monthly cycle as appropriate.

It is the responsibility of the employee using any equipment to report any defects in the equipment as soon as they become apparent. Arrangements shall be put in place by the manager to repair or withdraw the equipment.

Withdrawn equipment shall be clearly marked as such and shall not be used until repaired or the equipment disposed of.

### Rules in relation to plant and equipment:

- Employees shall not operate any machine unless they have been trained and authorised to do so.
- Operators must not interfere with or remove guarding on any piece of equipment.
- Any faults, damage, defects or malfunctions must be reported to a manager as soon as they are discovered.
- Operators must not attempt any maintenance on any machine unless they are trained and authorised to do so.
- Cleaning or maintenance must not be undertaken unless the machine has been shut down and the power isolated. On self powered equipment the key must be removed.
- Machinery must not be left unattended whilst it is in motion.
- All employees must observe all pedestrian and vehicle controls throughout the premises.



## **Work at Height:**

All risks from working at height shall be assessed and work at height shall not be undertaken if the task can be safely and appropriately carried out from a position on the ground.

The first stage in planning any work at height shall be to carry out a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks posed by the operation.

The risk assessment shall determine whether the benefits of carrying out the work outweigh the risks.

The overall process that shall be followed is:

- Avoid the risk
- Prevent falls from occurring
- Reduce the effects of any fall

If work has to be done at height then suitable and sufficient measures shall be taken to prevent persons falling a distance where they are liable to be injured.

Work shall be planned, organised, supervised and undertaken in line with the following hierarchy:

- Avoid the risks of working at height by achieving the desired results from the ground
- Achieve the desired results using pole pruners, pole saws and pole mounted chainsaws
- Minor (small diameter) pruning works and hedge trimming operations may be undertaken from a secured ladder, steps or purpose built platform
- Access the crown of the tree using a MEWP
- Access the crown of the tree using approved climbing and work positioning techniques

Account shall also be taken of:

- The risks that need to be managed
- The distances that need to be negotiated by access and egress equipment
- The distances and consequences of a potential fall
- The duration and frequency of use
- The need for easy and timely evacuation
- The requirement for rescue
- The working conditions

Only equipment that is appropriate to the nature of the proposed work shall be used.

Any team allocated work at height shall have more than one competent tree climber in order that an aerial rescue can be undertaken if required.



## **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):**

The term 'PPE' shall cover all high visibility clothing, specific protective clothing, dust and vapour masks, helmets, eye and hearing defence, rope access and fall arrest equipment.

Employees shall be provided with PPE and safety equipment suitable for their role free of charge. In the event of wear and tear rendering the PPE ineffective, it shall be replaced free of charge. Employees are expected to look after and clean their PPE and to report any wear or defects.

PPE shall be checked, inspected, maintained and serviced in accordance with the manufacturers' instructions and the provisions of PUWER 1998 and LOLER 1998. A register of all equipment kept shall be maintained showing details of issue, history, servicing and repair. All equipment shall be clearly marked to be identifiable.

Daily checks shall be carried out by employees prior to using PPE. Regular condition checks shall be carried out and recorded.

It shall be the responsibility of the employee using any equipment to report any defects in the equipment as soon as they become apparent. Arrangements shall be put in place by the manager to repair or withdraw the equipment.

Withdrawn equipment shall be clearly marked as such and shall not be used until repaired or the equipment disposed of.

## **Control of Substances Hazardous to Health:**

Hazardous substances include any substance that could cause harm or irritation to employees or others, or harm to the environment. They include fuels, oils, chemicals, pesticides, preservatives or similar.

Substances considered for use shall be assessed and less harmful substances shall be used wherever practicable. Assessments and details of their safety precautions shall be made available to employees at the offices and where the substances are stored and used.

Employees shall be kept informed of the hazards that they are exposed to and to the relevant safety precautions.

As well as the above, pesticides, including herbicides, insecticides and preservatives, have specific requirements. They shall be securely stored, in their original containers, and their usage recorded. Pesticides shall only be mixed and used by trained and certificated personnel.

Rules in relation to hazardous substances:

- All employees must only use substances or products in accordance with the COSHH assessment.
- All substances including products, chemicals, liquids and gasses must be returned to their designated safe storage location when not in use.
- All spills must be cleaned up using the spill control materials as soon as they occur.
- Any waste products, chemicals or oils must be taken to the correct disposal point



### **Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres:**

The company shall be vigilant for any situation where an explosive atmosphere may build up and shall implement appropriate measures to prevent an explosion or fire.

Preventive measures are likely to include ventilation and the enforcement of a no smoking and no naked flames policy in the yard, workshop and offices.

TreeStation shall provide the necessary equipment and procedures to deal with accidents and emergencies and provide information and training to staff. Where an explosive atmosphere may occur these areas shall be zoned and suitable warnings put in place.

### **Working Adjacent to Highways:**

For simple traffic management activities, the signing, lighting and guarding arrangements shall be set up by a qualified member of our team.

For complex traffic management situations the company shall employ the services of a specialist traffic management contractor.

All staff on site shall wear a high visibility vest or jacket appropriate to the classification of the highway.

For road closures and parking suspension situations, prior arrangements shall be made with the highways authority, the police and the local authority as appropriate.

### **Restricted Access:**

Although it is not anticipated that employees will be working in confined spaces, operations may be required in areas of restricted access, restricted headroom and inadequate lighting.

A specific risk assessment shall be prepared for the proposed operation.

It must be ensured that operators working in areas with restricted access have adequate communication measures available. This may be voice contact with a colleague close by or by mobile phone or radio. The signal strength must be noted on the risk assessment.

Where headroom is restricted or where there are overhead features such as pipes or bulkhead lights, operators must wear a bump cap or helmet as specified by the risk assessment.

The build up of fumes from tools or gasses from other sources such as pool chemicals must be anticipated and an action plan prepared. The action plan must include enhanced voice contact arrangements and enhanced ventilation arrangements.



### **Oil Storage:**

Oils and similar substances shall be stored in such a way as to avoid damage to the environment in the case of a spill.

Substances shall be stored:

- With like substances
- Separate to other types of substances so as to prevent any adverse reaction
- With appropriate spill control
- With appropriate flame control
- With appropriate security

Spill clean up facilities and wash facilities shall be available close to the storage location.

### **Fire Precautions:**

A fire risk assessment and fire plan shall be developed using the following method:

- A plan of the premises shall be drawn
- Significant fire hazards (ignition sources and fuel sources) shall be noted
- The TreeStation standard risk assessment formula shall be applied to the findings
- Control measures shall be introduced to reduce the risk of fire to a level that is as low as reasonably practicable
- All staff shall be briefed in the fire safety arrangements during induction training

The fire risk assessment and fire plan shall be available to all staff and visitors on the notice board.

### **First Aid:**

Employees shall be issued with information relating to elementary first aid.

The company shall ensure that all staff hold a relevant emergency first aid qualification.

The most senior first aider on site shall be responsible for taking charge in the event of injury or illness.

Each office, yard and vehicle shall be equipped with suitable first aid kits appropriate to the number of people in place and the tasks they are carrying out. Where risk assessment or industry guidance specifies, individuals shall carry their own first aid kit.



## **Manual Handling:**

A specific risk assessment covering manual handling shall be maintained.

Information on good working techniques shall be issued to employees during induction training to ensure the risk of injury is minimised.

All staff shall receive manual handling training relevant to the tasks that they will be likely to encounter during their employment. Update training shall be undertaken as appropriate.

All staff must avoid manual handling wherever reasonably practicable to do so. Avoidance of manual handling should always be the first consideration.

If manual handling cannot be avoided, staff should consider the load, the environment, their individual capability and the task to hand when undertaking manual handling operations.

Manual handling shall be undertaken in line with the following avoidance hierarchy:

1. Does the item actually need to be moved or lifted?
2. Use mechanical handling methods such as fork lifts and cranes
3. Use assisted handling methods such as barrows and trolleys
4. Share the load with other people
5. **Last resort** – manual handling techniques

## **Noise:**

Reference shall be made to:

- The Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005

The problems of excessive noise exposure have long been recognised, but it was not until the introduction of the Noise at Work Regulations 1989 that clear statutory guidance was provided. These Regulations have now been superseded by the Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005, which implement the requirements of the EC Directive on the minimum health and safety requirements regarding the exposure of workers to the risks arising from physical agents.

A number of 'exposure action and limit values' are established at which the employer has to take corrective action. These limits are substantially lower than those stated in the 1989 Regulations. Compliance with the earlier Regulations will not necessarily secure compliance with the current Regulations.

The assessment of noise exposure at work and the introduction of suitable control measures are essential elements of providing a healthy work environment.

Noise-induced hearing loss can be divided into:

- Temporary hearing loss (temporary threshold shift)
- Permanent hearing loss (permanent threshold shift)



Temporary hearing loss occurs where exposure to high levels of noise results in a reduction in the sensitivity of hearing, such as is encountered after leaving a disco or pop concert. If the period of recovery is long enough then hearing sensitivity will return to normal.

Permanent hearing loss occurs when people are exposed to high noise levels without sufficient recovery time as would be encountered through exposure in a noisy work environment. There is insufficient time for the hearing mechanism to recover from the previous exposure with the consequence that there is a gradual but definite reduction in hearing sensitivity. As the process is gradual, people do not realise that there is a change occurring until the hearing loss is significant. Noise-induced hearing loss is characterised by a marked decrease in hearing sensitivity around the 4 KHz frequency as opposed to the process of hearing loss due to old age characterised by hearing loss at the higher frequencies first.

Exposure to excess noise can induce stress-related symptoms in people with a consequent lack of concentration and rise in accident rates. This can occur at levels below the first action level, and the employers should always, therefore, seek to reduce noise levels to the lowest level reasonably practicable.

1. A specific assessment of the risks imposed from noise shall be undertaken
2. Suitable PPE shall be issued to employees for the equipment that they operate
3. Employees shall be advised about noise risks and all equipment shall be selected to reduce that risk
4. All PPE and equipment shall be maintained to ensure that noise levels are kept as low as possible
5. Operators shall be assessed for early symptoms of noise injury using a questionnaire annually and if injury is suspected they shall be referred to an occupational health specialist for further assessment



## **Vibration:**

Hand-arm vibration is essentially vibration that is transmitted into the worker's hands from hand-held machinery such as grinders, chainsaws, powered chisels and drills or from materials which are being held whilst undergoing some form of mechanical treatment. Repeated and prolonged exposure to this type of vibration can have serious effects on a worker's health, including:

- Circulatory problems resulting in vibration white finger (VWF)
- Injuries to joints, bones and tissues
- Nerve damage

The effects are collectively known as hand-arm vibration syndrome (HAVS). Sufferers may not necessarily suffer from all of the above symptoms

Vibration White Finger is the result of damage to the circulatory system. The symptoms are whitening of the fingertips, usually triggered by cold or wet conditions. The first signs that damage is occurring is normally a sensation of 'pins and needles', or tingling sensation which is often noticed at the end of the working day. Continued exposure to vibration may result in increasingly frequent attacks accompanied by numbness and whitening of the tips of the fingers or 'blanching'. Continued exposure results in considerable enlargement of the affected area. The whitening is often accompanied by numbness and 'pins and needles'. The colour may change to a reddening of the area as blood returns to the affected area, normally accompanied by severe pain. As the condition is often triggered by the cold or wet conditions, this can have a severe impact on the employee's social and leisure life

Damage may manifest itself as pains to the soft tissue and bones in the hands, wrists or arms as well as a general loss of strength in these areas. Carpal Tunnel Syndrome is a reportable disease when associated with hand-held vibrating equipment. Damage to the nerves in the hands can result in a loss of sensation and permanent numbness or tingling sensation. Dexterity and the manipulation of small objects may become difficult or impossible and again, this can have a severe impact on the employee's social and leisure life

1. A specific assessment of the risks imposed from vibration shall be undertaken.
2. Modern tools with anti vibration systems shall be provided.
3. Vibration levels shall be investigated and logged so as to calculate the maximum trigger times.
4. Tools with the potential for operators to exceed the maximum trigger time due to the high vibration emissions shall be marked with red tape in order to provide a visual reminder for operators to share the task around the team.
5. Suitable PPE shall be issued to employees for the equipment that they operate.
6. Employees shall be advised about vibration risks during induction training or as a toolbox talk.
7. All PPE and equipment shall be maintained to ensure that vibration levels are kept as low as possible.
8. Operators shall be assessed for early symptoms of vibration injury using a questionnaire annually and if injury is suspected they shall be referred to an occupational health specialist for further assessment.
9. Completed assessment forms shall be analysed by a manager and further advice sought if required.



### **Alcohol and Substance Abuse:**

Substance abuse, the use of illegal drugs, the misuse of prescribed drugs, the abuse of alcohol, solvents or similar, that can impair a user's judgement and ability to work safely can lead to unacceptable levels of risk to themselves, others and the environment.

Employees reporting for work in an unfit state due to any of the above shall be suspended until such a time that they are fit to work again.

Disciplinary action may result.

### **Incidents and Accidents:**

TreeStation shall report all incidents required by RIDDOR to the HSE.

Incidents involving near misses shall be reported to the Directors and appropriate action taken to reduce the risk of similar incidents occurring again in the future. All employees shall be encouraged to report near miss incidents as this will reduce the likelihood of re-occurrence, so improving safety standards.

All accidents resulting in personal injury, however minor, shall be recorded.

Investigation may be undertaken to establish the immediate and root causes.

Corrective action, the cost of corrective action, the root cause and preventive action shall be recorded.

### **Working Time:**

An agreement to opt out of the working hour's limitations, which are 48 hours per week averaged over a 17 week period, is available and can be voluntarily signed by employees who wish to work more than the specified limited hours in the regulations.

Any employee who signs this opt out agreement shall be able to terminate the agreement by giving written notice of their wish to do so.

### **Response to Theft or Threatening Behaviour:**

Staff should not attempt to challenge a thief who is in the process of taking company property.

Staff should not respond to threatening behaviour but should withdraw to a place of safety and report the incident to the office.

Staff must note the description of the offender including the registration number of any vehicle used by them.



## Electrical Equipment:

TreeStation shall ensure that all fixed and portable electrical equipment is regularly inspected for safety and structural integrity.

Portable electrical equipment that does not move or suffer wear and tear such as PC's

Timescale	Action
Initial Installation	The appliance is inspected for integrity prior to use and then used until the next scheduled inspection
4 years from entry into service	The appliance shall be inspected and tested by a competent person
4 years from the last inspection	The appliance shall be inspected and tested by a competent person. The inspection routine shall follow the 4 yearly inspection rota until the equipment is deemed to be beyond its safe useful life expectancy.

Portable electrical appliances that are moved regularly and are likely to suffer wear and tear such as hand tools and extension cables

Timescale	Action
Initial Installation	The appliance is inspected for integrity prior to use and then used until the next scheduled inspection. It is checked by the user prior to use
12 months from entry into service	The appliance shall be inspected and tested by a competent person
12 months from the last inspection	The appliance shall be inspected and tested by a competent person. The inspection routine shall follow the 12 and 24 month inspection rota until it is deemed to be beyond its safe useful life expectancy.

Records of testing and examination shall be kept for reference.



### **Working in Proximity to Water:**

The company shall ensure that records show who can and cannot swim and the extent to which the employee is competent to swim.

All staff deployed to work in the proximity of deep water shall be able to swim and shall wear self inflating buoyancy aids for the duration of the work.

Specific safeguards shall be in place for staff engaged in lone working duties near to water. These safeguards shall be specified in the risk assessment.

### **Asbestos:**

There are three main types of asbestos still found in premises. These are commonly called blue asbestos (crocidolite), brown asbestos (amosite) and white asbestos (chrysotile) All are dangerous but the blue and brown are more so than the white. They cannot be identified just by their colour.

There are many building materials that could be encountered that may contain asbestos (ACM – Asbestos Containing Materials) such as corrugated roofing, wall insulation and ceiling tiles and if these are broken or disturbed they could release asbestos fibres.

Breathing in air containing asbestos fibres can lead to asbestos-related diseases, mainly cancers of the lung and chest lining. There is usually a long delay between first exposure to asbestos and the onset of disease of 15-60 years.

ACM's must be included on the site specific risk assessment if present on a proposed worksite.

If working around asbestos roofs or if discovering fly tipped waste which could be ACM on a worksite, you must inform the office immediately so that appropriate advice can be sought.

It is best to assume that materials contain asbestos unless there is strong evidence that it does not.

The company shall maintain both risk and COSHH assessments for asbestos and all operators shall be briefed in the procedure to be adopted if ACM's are encountered.



## **Vehicles:**

To reduce the risk of accidents involving the use of TreeStation vehicles, all drivers shall adopt the following practices:

- The journey shall be planned in advance
- An assessment of the current state of the tiredness and fatigue of the driver shall be made prior to driving
- An assessment of the current state of medical fitness of the driver shall be made prior to driving
- Staff shall not drive whilst taking medication which could make them drowsy
- Staff shall not drive after the consumption of alcohol or if it is felt that there could be a residual effect of drinking the previous evening
- An assessment of the weather conditions shall be made
- The condition of the vehicle shall be checked for road worthiness
- Time shall be allowed for breaks when a long journey is anticipated
- If drowsiness is felt the driver shall stop for a break as soon as reasonably practicable
- The vehicle shall be driven within the speed limit, in line with the prevailing road conditions and with due courtesy to other road users
- Mobile phones shall not be used whilst driving unless a hands free system has been fitted

Copies of the driving licenses of drivers shall be taken periodically and shall be held on file.

All vehicles shall be equipped with a fire extinguisher and first aid kit; the driver shall check the location of these before using the vehicle. Missing items must be reported.

All fines for driving related offences shall be the responsibility of the individual that was driving the vehicle at the time of the incident.

The driving of tractors and other classes of vehicle shall only be carried out by suitably qualified personnel holding appropriate driving licences.

No passengers shall be carried on special purpose vehicles unless they are specifically designed to do so.

Power take off drives shall be guarded at all times when not connected to equipment, and shall never be adjusted or connected whilst in motion.



## **Emergency Planning:**

Potential problems in getting to a casualty shall be anticipated, (for example, tree climbing and the need for aerial tree rescue or the release of a casualty that has become trapped below a tree or heavy equipment).

Hazardous overhead or underground services at the worksite shall be identified prior to work being undertaken and a permit to dig received if appropriate.

Emergency contact details and site evacuation procedures that may be necessary shall be planned prior to work being undertaken. It is anticipated that these details may include:

- Site location name and if required the grid reference
- Designated meeting place (useful in remote areas to guide the emergency services to the worksite)
- Nearest access point, street name/district
- Type of access (public road / light vehicles, four-wheel drive required etc)
- Suitable helicopter landing area
- Phone number of nearest doctor
- Location and phone number of the nearest accident and emergency hospital
- Contract Manager and client contact details

Evacuation measures shall be examined as part of the site specific risk assessment.

If after first aid has been administered a casualty is able to walk and is near to transport or the roadside, they shall be helped to leave the area, otherwise they shall only be moved if it is absolutely necessary.

All staff shall be qualified in emergency first aid.

Should an accident or incident occur that requires the attendance of the emergency services, the client shall also be informed.

Reporting of accidents shall be in accordance with the TreeStation policy and the statutory requirements of RIDDOR shall be taken into account.

An accident report form shall be completed and details copied to client as soon as reasonably practicable.



## **Monitoring and Review**

The company Health and Safety Policy shall be continually monitored for effectiveness. It shall be reviewed in the light of any incident that may have implications for the policy or on the suggestion of any stakeholder.

In the absence of any significant change, this document shall be reviewed at least annually.

The Directors shall be ultimately responsible for all aspects of Health and Safety and for reviewing the policy and ensuring that it is complied with.

Employees shall be responsible for day to day compliance and their own personal safety. Any incidents, injuries or suggestions shall be reported to the Directors.