

"Through the way we work and behave, we will protect people from the risks of injury or occupational ill health."

Statement of Intent for our Health and Safety Policy in England

It is our intent to demonstrate an ongoing and determined commitment to improving health and safety at work throughout our organisation.

- We will ensure the health and safety of those who may be affected by our work activities including staff, those who work for us or under our supervision, those who work on our land, and those who visit us at work.
- We will comply with the requirements of health and safety legislation and follow the guidance of the Health and Safety Executive and other regulatory bodies.
- We will support the Forest Industry Safety Accord and promote best industry practices in our own work and in that of others who work on our land.

Our policy reflects our active commitment to ensure that health and safety at work is central to our business and also our recognition that safe working contributes to our success.

1. Awareness

All people are aware of and understand the relevant health and safety hazards and risks associated with the work.

1.1 Health and Safety Policy statement

We will ensure all staff and those who work for us or under our supervision, are aware of this policy and that they understand we are committed to its effective implementation. We will publish this Policy on our website for others to see.

1.2 Communication and consultation

There will be active open communication and consultation. Health issues and safe working will be part of our formal and informal communications wherever appropriate.

1.3 Management roles and responsibilities

Roles and responsibilities for health and safety will be defined within staff job descriptions or profiles. Senior management will ensure that;

- adequate resources are provided for both health issues and safe working;
- health and safety achievement is adequately assessed, controlled and monitored, and;
- people at work are actively involved in implementing and improving health and safety.

1.4 Hazard identification

We will identify our workplace health issues and safety hazards and will tell our staff, people who work on our land, and those who visit our workplaces, of these hazards.

We will require those who work on our land to identify the health issues and safety hazards of their work that may impact on our staff, on others at work, on our visitors, or on our work activities.

2. Competence

All staff and those working on our land are competent to undertake their work and are empowered to take action to minimise health and safety risks.

2.1 Health and safety training

We will ensure that staff are adequately trained in the health issues and safe working practices of their work, and that they are competent in practice.

We will ensure those working on our land have health and safety policies and practices that provide for the well-being and competence of those they employ, and of those who may be affected by their work.

2.2 Behaviour and culture

All our managers, especially senior managers, will be role models and demonstrate leadership in health matters and safety.

Our senior managers and all staff will challenge health issues and safety practices when visiting our work places and our land to ensure that issues are identified, assessed and managed.

Our staff and those working on our land will be empowered to raise health and safety concerns with management and there will be systems to support and facilitate this.

2.3 Risk assessment and management

We will assess the risks associated with hazards to health and safety in the workplace. Our staff and those working on our land will be informed of the hazards associated with their work.

We will take action to remove, reduce or control risks to an acceptable level and reduce the potential for health issues, incidents and accidents.

3. Compliance

Our work activities will keep up to date with legislation, and we will take action to learn and improve our understanding of health and safety risks.

3.1 Incident investigation

We will report and investigate accidents, incidents and near misses to improve our health and safety management. Incidents will require appropriate corrective action to prevent recurrences and embed the lessons learned.

3.2 Measuring performance

We will review and report on our health and safety performance. Improvement plans will be developed and implemented to ensure the well-being of staff and to protect them from harm.

3.3 Health and safety management systems

We will implement management systems to ensure we;

- comply with health and safety legislation, and;
- continually improve our health and safety performance.

4. Excellence

Forestry Commission England aims to achieve excellence in the way it manages health and safety.

4.1 Developing innovative practices

We will constantly encourage, develop, review and share health and safety good practice both internally and externally.

4.2 Influencing stakeholders and customers

We will only work with others who are willing to meet our health and safety expectations while on our land, and can demonstrate this in practice. We will not condone unhealthy or unsafe working practices that we may encounter in the course of our work and will make our concerns known to those responsible.

We will work with the Forest Industry Safety Accord and engage with FISA partners to drive and adopt improvements in health and safety practice throughout the industry.

4.3 Work-related health

We will assess our occupational health risks. Our staff will be informed of the occupational health risks that affect their work. We will take action to remove, reduce or control occupational health risks to an acceptable level and reduce the potential for ill health. Health surveillance will be conducted to satisfy health and safety legislation.

Delivering our policy

Our policy will be delivered by direct action and by fostering the conditions for a safety culture that;

- gives everyone a personal responsibility for safe working;
- supports everyone to challenge situations that are or seem unsafe;
- focusses on learning, improving attitudes and preventing recurrences, and;
- seeks health and safety excellence as the only acceptable position.

Our National Office, Forest Services, Forest Districts and Area Offices will maintain Health and Safety management statements that explain how this policy will be delivered in the workplace.

Policy review

This policy has immediate effect and will be reviewed and amended, as necessary.

Ian Gambles
Director England