



Forestry and  
Land Scotland  
Coilltearachd agus  
Fearann Alba

# Health and Safety Policy Statement 2022-23



Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba  
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# Introduction

We are committed to protecting the health and safety of our employees, our contractors, our visitors and the communities in which we operate. Our vision is to create an excellent health, safety and wellbeing culture within Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS) to:

- eliminate work accidents for those working on the National Forests and Land,
- sustain a healthy working environment that supports physical and mental health;
- significantly reduce number of the public accidents resulting from recreational use of the national forests and land; and
- promulgate a strong health, safety and welfare culture amongst those we work with.

It is our policy to demonstrate an ongoing and determined commitment to improving health and safety and wellbeing 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 recognise that mental health is as important as physical health. We aim to provide an environment in which staff who have mental health difficulties feel able to discuss them in a safe, confidential environment. Staff will be able to receive suitable support and reasonable adjustments to their working environment to allow them to work effectively, fulfil their potential and be well 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 (FISA) 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

That all staff and those who work for us and with us 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, and those who work on our land 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.

We will promote safer visitor behaviours through better awareness of safety hazards, other forest users and risks associated with activities such as 'adrenaline sports' and stalking permissions.

## 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

That 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 our 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 and be open to challenge themselves.

Our staff and those working on our land are 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

That our planning and 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 incidents including accidents, 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 and will expand this to include wellbeing as this approach is progressed by the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team through delivery of the Mental and Physical Wellbeing Action Plan.

### 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 and Land Scotland 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 work only with people 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 and the Visitor Safety in the Countryside Group (VSCG) to drive and adopt improvements in health and safety practice throughout the industry. We will encourage those working on the national forests and land into membership of FISA and proactive engagement with FISA health and safety resources.

### 4.3 Work-related health

We will assess our occupational health risks. Our staff will be informed of those 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 Head Office, Regions, and Workshops will maintain, display and promote 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.

Simon Hodgson  
Chief Executive  
Forestry and Land Scotland  
Date: 31 January 2022



# Annex 1: Management Responsibilities

## Organisation and Responsibilities for Carrying out the Policy

1. The primary responsibility for health and safety rests with Simon Hodgson, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) FLS and the FLS Executive Team. The FLS Executive Team has appointed Trefor Owen, Head of Land Management, as Safety Director.
2. The CEO is accountable for all aspects of health and safety in FLS, for ensuring that there is an effective policy, and for reviewing the effectiveness of this policy periodically.
3. Members of the FLS Executive Team (FLSET) are collectively responsible for providing health and safety leadership. Members of the FLSET are also responsible for all aspects of health and safety in their area. The Safety Director is responsible for advising the FLSET on matters which could affect their responsibilities for health and safety. A Health, Safety and Wellbeing team has been established within FLS to support our health, safety and wellbeing delivery.

## Unit Managers

4. Cost Centre Managers are responsible for the health and safety and wellbeing of their teams and for ensuring there is an effective policy for their Cost Centre, including arrangements for hosting visiting staff from other Cost Centres. Cost Centre Managers are responsible for reviewing the effectiveness of this policy periodically in consultation with staff and Safety Representatives.
5. The Head of Business Services is responsible for health and safety in our Inverness office and Silvan House in Edinburgh.
6. Our organisation chart shows line management responsibilities.

## Arrangements for Carrying out the Policy

7. FLS maintains a country-wide Health, Safety and Wellbeing Improvement Strategy. FLS has an active National Health Safety and Wellbeing Committee that helps deliver the strategy. The HS&W committee includes trade union H&S reps and representation from across the business.

## Consultation

8. The Trade Union Side of Forestry and Land Scotland and the FLS HS&W Committee have been consulted on the content of this Safety Policy Statement.



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