

Safety Alert

Inexperienced Workers and NPTC Provisional FMO Certificates



INSIST ON SAFETY

Two recent serious incidents have involved people working with NPTC provisional FMO certificates. The individuals had still not been assessed as competent, but were working without supervision.

Lack of experience and lack of supervision contributed to the accidents that followed.

The message is that trainees and people who are not competent and experienced need to be managed carefully as they gain experience. **This starts with their employer (often the contractor) having a planned approach to training inexperienced staff.**

AFAG 805, which covers training and certificates says:

Assessment

15 It is important to assess an individual's level of competence to confirm the adequacy of training, eg by observing them carrying out an activity, within a set time, to a recognised and appropriate standard.

16 The tree-work industry represented on AFAG has expressed a preference for independent assessments of operator competence, ie separated from any training, to ensure impartiality for certain higher risk tasks.

While trainees are preparing for FMOC assessment, they have to gain experience.

Experience

19 Experience may be gained in many ways, eg by:

- practising the operational skills over time;
- completing both basic and more advanced training; and
- learning from personal trial, observations, work colleagues and supervisors.

While they gain experience, they must be in possession of a provisional NPTC FMOC.

20 Appropriate and skilled supervision is required during learning periods. A record of supervision should be kept, for example by completing the relevant AFAG checklist. (See 'Further reading' at the end of this guide.)

A record should be kept of the tasks undertaken during the training period.

Actions for contractors are:

Provide appropriate and skilled supervision during learning periods.

The contractor engaging the trainee must keep a record of tasks undertaken by the trainee on page 2 of the FMO provisional certificate.

Actions for managers are:

Make sure your contractors are supervising their trainees.

Get regular updated copies of their provisional certificates for the file.

Make a note in your site diary about the trainees you see working on our sites, to record your impressions.