



acorn
environmental
management
group



Health and Safety Policy

Head Office

2a Eagle Road, North Moons Moat
Redditch, Worcestershire B98 9HF
Tel: 0800 093 3898
mail@acorn-grp.co.uk
www.acorn-grp.co.uk



Date edited:

12th January 2026

Version 19

Document Number:

PO 023

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 ISO 45001: 2018 to help us to operate an OH&S Management System

Objectives

The objectives of the above policy shall be:

- To establish and maintain an Occupational Health and Safety Management System which satisfies the requirements of 45001:2018, all applicable statutory and regulatory requirements, industry best practice and any other Client specific requirements.
- To ensure we meet the requirements of the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 (CDM 2015) and discharge our contractor duties.
- To maintain workplaces to ensure that they are safe and without health risks, including means of access and egress, with adequate facilities and arrangements for employees' welfare.
- To provide and maintain working environments and safe systems of work for employees that are safe and free from health risks.
- To provide and maintain plant and equipment and operational controls that prevent injury and ill health.
- To ensure safety and absence of health risks in connection with the use, handling and storage of articles and substances.
- To consult with employees on issues relating to occupational health and safety.
- To promote and encourage a positive health and safety culture throughout the organisation through the provision of information, training, instruction and supervision.
- To provide sufficient information, instruction, training and supervision to enable employees to avoid hazards and to contribute positively to the health and safety of themselves and others whilst at work.
- To establish effective arrangements to draw the Occupational Health and Safety Management System to the attention of employees so that they are aware of their obligations and carry out communication so it is understood and implemented by all employees.
- To ensure all employees are aware of their individual occupational Health and Safety obligations under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act. Management shall seek the support and co-operation of employees with respect to occupational health and safety.
- To operate a 'balanced blame' culture whereby employees are openly encouraged to report hazards, including near misses, without fear of reprisal to ensure the root causes of accidents are identified thus enabling measures to be put in place to eliminate recurrence.
- To ensure sufficient financial and physical resources are available to meet the objectives of the Occupational Health and Safety Management System, as well as all applicable statutory and regulatory requirements.
- To ensure occupational health and safety objectives are set, monitored and reviewed at regular intervals.
- To maintain continual improvement of occupational health and safety management and performance by regularly monitoring and reviewing the occupational Health and Safety Management System to ensure its effectiveness.

- To update operations in response to advances in technology, changes to industry best practice and new understanding in health and safety.
- To ensure that risk assessments are being carried out on an on-going basis, with employees participating in the risk assessment process. Assessments will cover Acorn Environmental Management Group's undertakings and will assist in the identification of hazards and the setting of prioritised objectives for elimination and reduction of risk.
- To arrange for the effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review of preventative and protective measures.
- To maintain records as objective evidence to show compliance with the Occupational Health and Safety Management System.
- Continual improvement throughout all of our activities relating to business processes, service quality, continued support for learners on our training academy, prevention of injury/ill health and environmental performance.
- Recording and monitoring of all incidents including notifying and complying with third party requirements i.e. Clients, Bali and LANTRA

This policy shall apply to the Directors, employees and contractors engaged by Acorn Environmental Management Group Ltd and shall be applied throughout the range of services undertaken by Acorn Environmental Management Group Ltd:

Signed:



Date: 12th January 2026

Name: Kevin O'Rourke

Position in Company: Managing Director

Introduction

Formed in 1994, Acorn Environmental Management Group provide the following range of services

- i. Domestic tree services
- ii. Commercial tree services
- iii. Highway infrastructure vegetation management services
- iv. Plant health care
- v. Vegetation clearance
- vi. Soil de-compaction works.
- vii. Root feeding and remedial works
- viii. Consultancy 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. Additionally, 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 wish it to be known and clearly understood that they are fully committed to ensuring and maintaining the health, safety and welfare of themselves, employees and others who may be affected by their undertakings. There shall be a zero-tolerance attitude towards unsafe acts with breaches of the Acorn Environmental Management Group Ltd policy, procedure and guidance being treated as a disciplinary offence.

The Directors shall manage Acorn Environmental Management Group Ltd 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 Acorn Environmental Management Group Ltd a safe place to work. Employees shall be encouraged to elect and appoint a Safety Representative/Champion in order to show that there shall be no adverse treatment of any person reporting concerns over any aspect of working conditions.

The Acorn Environmental Management Group Ltd structure chart shall detail the usual reporting lines within Acorn Environmental Management Group Ltd, 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 and constantly monitored for trending events/occurrences.

The Directors shall take responsibility for the monitoring of the success and progress of the safety management system and shall appoint a competent person in the role 'Operational Management Advisor' to advise them in the successful implementation of this policy and to provide expert advice on the effective management of risk and the implementation of safe systems of work.

Organisation

All employees, at whatever level, and subcontract labour shall be required to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and the health and safety of any others who may be affected by anything that they do, or fail to do, in the course of their employment.

	Level of Responsibility	Specific Actions
Managing Director & Director	Overall Responsibility	Ensuring resources are available to meet the Acorn Environmental Management Group Ltd responsibilities
Managers	Directing Acorn Environmental Management Group Ltd policy, compliance and assurance	Keeping up to date with legislation and requirements, ensuring staff are correctly trained and certificated in all relevant areas, ensuring inspections and records are up to date, acting as a conduit between all interested parties so allowing Acorn Environmental Management Group Ltd to meet its legal responsibilities. To ensure the health and safety at Law poster is on the main staff notice board in Reception and an accident book is located with the Compliance Manager
Skilled Arborists	Day to day health and safety compliance	Ensuring risk assessments are in order, that work is to the required standard and reporting any defective systems/equipment that could prejudice the safe system of work.
Junior Arborists	Day to day health and safety compliance	To work safely following national / Acorn Environmental Management Group Ltd guidelines, to report any conditions that could prejudice the safe system of work.

Acorn Environmental Management Group Ltd	External advisors	The provision of advice or investigation when required.
---	-------------------	---

The Directors shall be responsible for ensuring that the Acorn Environmental Management Group Ltd Safety Policy is implemented in practice.

The Directors shall have day-to-day responsibility for applying safety arrangements, procedures, ensuring that these are applied effectively and that there is adequate training, instruction and supervision.

Staff shall have continuous responsibility for applying safety arrangements and procedures.

All employees regardless of position within Acorn Environmental Management Group Ltd 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 Acorn Environmental Management Group Ltd safety arrangements, statutory provisions and the company's safety procedures.

It should 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 Acorn Environmental Management Group Ltd safety rules.

Arrangements

The primary legislation influencing the overall spirit of this policy document is the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, but reference shall be made to the specific legislation, regulation and guidance applicable to the particular situation.

Welfare, Safe Working Practices and Risk Assessment

Reference shall be made to:

- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (Approved Code of Practice and Guidance) – Regulation 3
- Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1993
- Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 (CDM 2015)

As a contractor we will ensure compliance with the CDM regulations where applicable. We will also always adopt best practice.

To ensure compliance with the CDM regulations we will ensure the following:

- Plan, manage and monitor all work we are carrying out, considering the risks to anyone who might be affected by the work (including members of the public) and the measures needed to protect them
- Ensure and check that all workers deployed to carry out the works have the skills, knowledge, training and experience to carry out the work, or are in the process of obtaining them
- All workers under our control have a suitable, site-specific induction either via our own methods or via the principal contractor.
- Provide trained supervision and information and instructions to workers under our control.
- Ensure they do not start work on site unless reasonable steps have been taken to prevent unauthorised access
- Ensure suitable welfare facilities are provided from the start for workers under their control, and maintain them throughout the work

If we are working on projects involving more than one contractor, we must:

- Coordinate their work with the work of others in the project team
- Comply with directions given by the principal designer or principal contractor
- Comply with parts of the construction phase plan (PDF) relevant to their work

Where a contractor is the only contractor working on a project, they must ensure a construction phase plan (PDF) is drawn up before setting up the site.

Risk Assessments

Generic risk assessments shall be prepared for all operations carried out by Acorn Environmental Management Group Ltd 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.

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

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

For short duration work '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 receive induction training relating to Acorn Environmental Management Group Ltd 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 specific competence, skills, abilities, expiry dates and personal physical constraints (contact lens wearing or colour blindness for example) This 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/accident histories.

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

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

Workplace Arrangements

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.

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

Work site hazards vary from site to site. Relevant site-specific risk assessments shall be undertaken, recorded and briefed to all relevant staff and visitors.

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

Prior planning shall ensure that all employees working on site shall have access to appropriate welfare facilities. These facilities shall either be provided on the worksite or local arrangements shall have been made.

Where a worksite is shared with another contractor we shall endeavour to co-ordinate and share welfare facilities.

For long duration work, Acorn Environmental Management Group Ltd shall provide suitable and sufficient welfare facilities on site.

For short duration work on site 'local arrangements' shall be made prior to staff being deployed to sight.

Welfare arrangements shall be noted in the method statement.

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 of Safety Information

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.

Reference shall be made to:

- The Information and Consultation of Employees Regulations 2004
- The Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996
- Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 (CDM 2015)

Employees shall have access to all relevant safety guides e.g. AFAG 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 generic method statement shall be prepared:

- To give clear instruction as to the methods to be adopted and the expectations of Acorn Environmental Management Group Ltd 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 Acorn Environmental Management Group Ltd 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 and Plant

Reference shall be made to:

- The Provision and Use of Work equipment Regulations 1998 (Approved Code of Practice and Guidance)
- The Lifting Operations and Lifting equipment Regulations 1998 (Approved Code of Practice and Guidance)

This covers all tools, equipment, vehicles and machinery used in the course of Acorn Environmental Management Group Ltd business and shall hereafter be simply referred to as 'Equipment'.

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. Weekly 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

Reference shall be made to:

- The Work at Height Regulations 2005
- The Guide to Good Climbing practice
- The Safe use of Mobile Elevating Work Platforms in Arboriculture 2008 (Arboricultural Association)

Avoidance of risks from work at height (Regulation 6)

All risks from working at height shall be assessed and work at height shall not be undertaken if the task can be safely 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 first consideration shall be to determine whether the work is actually necessary.

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 and undertaken in line with the following hierarchy:

- Achieve desired results from the ground.

- Achieve the desired results using pole pruners, pole saws and pole mounted chainsaws.
- Access the tree using a MEWP.
- Access 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) and Climbing Equipment

Reference shall be made to:

- The Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992 (as amended) (Guidance on Regulations)
- The Provision and Use of Work equipment Regulations 1998 (Approved Code of Practice and Guidance)
- The Lifting Operations and Lifting equipment Regulations 1998 (Approved Code of Practice and Guidance)

All PPE used in the access of trees from rope and harness, used to support, guide and protect the climber, as well as that PPE to protect any ground workers shall be hereinafter referred to as 'PPE'. Employees shall be provided with PPE and safety equipment suitable for their role free of charge.

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. Weekly 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

Reference shall be made to:

- The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (as amended) (Approved Code of Practice and Guidance)

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

Reference shall be made to:

- The Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations 2002

The DSEAR protects against risks from fire, explosion or similar events arising from dangerous substances used or present in the workplace. Acorn Environmental Management Group Ltd shall abide by the requirements of DSEAR and carry out appropriate risk assessments in relation to any qualifying substances and provide measures to eliminate or reduce the risks as far as is reasonably practicable.

Acorn Environmental Management Group Ltd 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

Reference shall be made to:

- Traffic Management Act 2004
- New Roads and Street Works Act 1991
- DoT Chapter 8

All worksites adjacent to the highway shall be managed in line with the above legislation and guidance.

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 Acorn Environmental Management Group Ltd shall employ the services of a specialist traffic management contractor.

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

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

Oil Storage

Reference shall be made to:

- The Control of Pollution (Oil Storage) (England) Regulations 2001

The Oil Storage Regulations require that oils are stored in such a way as to avoid damage to the environment in the case of a spill etc. Acorn Environmental Management Group Ltd shall abide by the requirements of the regulations.

Fire Precautions

Reference shall be made to the main legislation relating to fire safety in the workplace:

- The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974
- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- The Building Regulations 2000
- The Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996
- The Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations 2002

A 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 Acorn Environmental Management Group Ltd 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.

First Aid

Reference shall be made to:

- First aid at work. The Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981. Approved Code of Practice and Guidance
- INDG214 First aid at work
- ACOP L74 First Aid Requirements

All AEMG employees will hold a EFAW (Emergency First Aid at Work) certificate. If they do not hold this certification when employed this training will be provided within one year of their employment commencing. In all cases the most experience first aider on site shall be responsible for taking charge in the event of injury or illness and the name of this person shall be recorded on the Site-Specific Risk Assessment.

The AEMG shall maintain one FAW (First Aid at Work) four-day first aid certification or higher qualification as suggested by INDG214 to cover Head Office and Depot activities. Lisa O'Rourke is a qualified practising Paramedic so she fills this roll and the responsibilities it brings.

Each office and yard shall be equipped with suitable first aid kits appropriate to the number of people in place and the tasks they are carrying out. All vehicles shall carry a HiVis Emergency Response Kit which includes all that the HSE specify for use within our industry and extra equipment that AEMG thought may aid those being treated in an Emergency situation.

These extra items include: 4 x extra foil blankets, tuff cut scissors (to enable access through PPE), 2 x 500ml eyewash, respiration Aid, material to cover burns, HiVis emergency whistle and auditable contents card. This shall be always taken onto site when working remotely from the crew vehicle to enable a quick response to site-based emergencies.

If work is to be issued to employees in extreme environments or remote locations a risk assessment will be completed by the Group Compliance Manager, prior to the work commencing, to understand if extra training or other special arrangements need to be in place.

Manual Handling

Reference shall be made to:

- **The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992**

Manual Handling training is one of the fundamental building blocks of the AEMG Staff Induction given to all new starters. Course completion and passing the exam set at the end of this training session are essential requirements for all employees to proceed to the point of employment.

Information on good working techniques shall be issued to employees during induction training; ongoing Toolbox talks to ensure the risks of injury are understood and 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 as their training specified (Control Measures - avoid, automate / mechanize, use of aides and people measures).

AEMG has invested in plant and Machinery i.e. Tele-handlers and Hiab's to allow these control measure to be implemented and to minimise the amount of manual handling that is necessary at its depot and on its worksites. 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.

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.

A specific assessment of the risks imposed from noise shall be undertaken.

Suitable PPE shall be issued to employees for the equipment that they operate.

Employees shall be advised about noise risks and all equipment shall be selected to reduce that risk.

All PPE and equipment shall be maintained to ensure that noise levels are kept as low as possible.

Vibration

Reference shall be made to:

- **The Control of Vibration in the Workplace Regulations 2005**

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.

Disease associated with vibration exposure:

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.

A specific assessment of the risks imposed from vibration shall be undertaken.

Suitable PPE shall be issued to employees for the equipment that they operate.

Employees shall be advised about vibration risks and all equipment shall be selected to reduce that risk.

All PPE and equipment shall be maintained to ensure that vibration levels are kept as low as possible.

Occupational Health

Reference shall be made to:

- **The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974**
- **The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992**

In health and safety law, there are things you must do to make sure workers' health is not adversely affected by their work and that workers are medically fit to carry out their work safely. This includes:

- ensuring workers are medically fit to undertake the role required (your industry may produce such standards)
- reviewing your risk assessment when a worker is returning to work following sickness absence or declares a health condition

There are other things that you should do where workers have health conditions or disabilities, either work-related or not. This includes complying with equality legislation when supporting workers both in and returning to work.

Referral to Occupational Health Advisers

An employee will be referred to the Company's Occupational Health Advisers (OHA) when they have incurred any of the following:

- 3 occasions of absence in any rolling 3-month period
- 12 days of absence in any rolling 12-month period
- 3 weeks continuous absence

Referral may also be carried out:

- where a manager is particularly concerned about an individual and suspects there is a possible underlying health problem
- where an employee requests a referral. The employee concerned does not have to disclose the reason for the request but does have to inform their manager of the intended appointment, as it may mean being absent from their work area for a period of time.

Fatigue

Reference shall be made to:

- **The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974**

Any employee must not commence or continue work if he or she is fatigued to such an extent that their condition may prejudice his or her safety, or the safety of others.

Managers will not plan work arrangements for personnel who are fatigued or are likely to become fatigued during the work period. Managers and supervisors are authorized to prevent any employee from commencing work or continuing to work if they believe the person is fatigued.

Behavioural Management & Safety

Reference shall be made to:

- **The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974**

AEMG aims to create a sustainable business, which recognises our responsibility to our employees, key stakeholders and the environments in which we work and live.

We will achieve this through efficient working practices and the sustainable use of resources in partnership with our clients, supply chain and our people in order to add value to our clients and the wider community.

- Create a working culture that encourages respect for our people, the environment and the communities in which we work.
- Conduct our business in a way that is open, honest and transparent to those we work with and the communities within which we work.
- Provide training and development opportunities to ensure that all employees are aware of and can fulfil their responsibilities to create a workplace which is accessible for all, is pleasant and safe, and impacts positively on the local community and environment.
- Enhance the environments in which we work wherever possible.
- Empower all our employees and Supply Chain Partners to challenge current practices to enable continual improvement and a culture of sharing best practice.

- Create and support a dynamic workforce that represents the diversity of the communities in which we work.

Alcohol and Substance Abuse

Reference shall be made to:

- **The Transport and Works Act 1992**
- **The Misuse of Drugs Act 1971**

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.

To ensure this unacceptable risk is not present at AEMG worksites, office locations and depots all employees will receive and must pass a pre-employment drug and alcohol test to allow them to proceed onto a company induction. This is then followed during their employment with random drug and alcohol testing and when required 'for cause' drug and alcohol testing.

Within the first six months of all employee's employment they will also receive a CBH Safety Critical Worker medical with a drug and alcohol test from our Occupational Health providers Alere Ltd to ensure they are of suitable health for the environments we operate in.

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

Reference shall be made to:

- **The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995**

Acorn Environmental Management Group Ltd shall report all incidents as defined in RIDDOR 1995 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.

Working Time

Reference shall be made to:

- **The Working Time Regulations 1998**

An agreement to opt out of the Working hours 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.

Electrical Equipment and Appliances

Acorn Environmental Management Group Ltd shall ensure that all fixed and portable electrical appliances are regularly inspected for safety and structural integrity.

Process - Fixed Electrical Equipment

Timescale	Action
Initial Installation	The appliance is inspected by an electrician following installation. The equipment shall be used until the next scheduled inspection
5 Years	The appliance shall be inspected and tested by a qualified electrician
10 Years	The appliance shall be inspected and tested by a qualified electrician
The inspection routine shall follow the 5 yearly inspection rota until the equipment is deemed to be beyond its safe useful life expectancy.	

Process - Portable Electrical Appliances

Timescale	Action
Where the equipment is subject to frequent moving or transport, the appliance shall be checked by the user prior to every use.	
0 – 12 months	The appliance is new and shall be used until the next scheduled inspection
12 months	The appliance shall be PAT tested by a qualified electrician
24 months	The appliance shall be inspected by a designated officer in the organisation who has been briefed by an electrician
36 months	The appliance shall be PAT tested by a qualified electrician
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.

Vehicles

To reduce the risk of accidents involving the use of Acorn Environmental Management Group Ltd vehicles, all drivers shall adopt the following practices:

- The journey shall be planned.
- 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.

Vehicles shall be allocated at the discretion of the Director and must be signed out with details of:

- Date
- Time
- Mileage
- Driver
- Destination

Copies of the driving licenses of drivers shall be taken periodically and shall 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

Reference shall be made to:

- **AFAG 802 – 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
- 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 doctors.
- Location and phone number of the nearest accident and emergency hospital
- Contract Manager, Engineering Supervisor and client contact details
- Radio call signs where appropriate

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 necessary.

Lone working shall only be permitted with a site-specific risk assessment and additional control measures in place that include lone working procedures.

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 Acorn Environmental Management Group Ltd policy. The statutory requirements of RIDDOR shall be considered.

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

Monitoring and Review

AEMG 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.

Signed:



Date: 29th November 2024

Name: Kevin O'Rourke

Position in Company: Managing Director