

PR1455 – 9 November 2010

## SETTING HIGH STANDARDS: YOUR TREE AND TIMBER EXPERTISE IS NEEDED

Lantra Sector Skills Council has launched an extensive review examining roles, skills and responsibilities in the trees and timber industry. Those with a keen involvement in the industry are being asked to complete an online survey as part of the industry's National Occupational Standards (NOS) review, with a chance to win a Husqvarna chainsaw.

Stuart Phillips, Lantra's Trees and Timber Partnership Manager says: The Standards are a great tool to help employers identify the skills their employees need, highlight best practice, develop training plans and develop job descriptions. These Standards also form the basis of trees and timber qualifications.

The first step in the UK-wide review is an online survey to find out more details about the activities carried out by workers in the industry. The survey is available to anyone interested and is taking place now until Friday 31 December 2010.

Stuart added: This is your opportunity to pass on your expertise to make sure your ways of working are accurately reflected. Not only will you be helping to shape the future of your industry's Standards, one lucky winner taking part in the online survey will win a Husqvarna chainsaw.

Alongside the survey, Lantra is undertaking detailed research into all aspects of the industry, including forestry, arboriculture, greenwood trades and social forestry. This will be done by researching current skills, highlighting skills gaps, identifying new skills and job roles emerging in the industry. The results will be fed into the review to make sure the updated NOS, due to be released at the end of 2011, are relevant and reflect best working practices.

David C Dowson, Director of Tree Life AC Ltd, explains why getting involved with the NOS survey is so important: This review provides an excellent opportunity for industry to express their skills requirements and to preserve best practice in day-to-day exercises. Demands on employers are changing and the need for businesses to be successful in this difficult economic climate is vital to the viability of our communities. Our greatest asset is the skills of our people, so that's why it's essential to get involved in this review and make sure our Standards are correct.

Higher Education Institutions with trees and timber related provision are also invited to contribute to the review, as the Standards are used for mapping during curriculum development, review and accreditation.

Stuart concluded: NOS are an essential tool for any size business. They help to identify skills gaps and find the most relevant training and learning. This can help businesses with continuous professional development of both managers and of the workforce. Standards cannot be developed without your help. Only by working together can we make sure that the revised Standards will take into account any new business practices and make them fit for purpose and valued by all.

To take part in the online survey and be in with a chance of winning a Husqvarna chainsaw, visit [www.lantra.co.uk/tree-NOS](http://www.lantra.co.uk/tree-NOS). If you have any questions about the upcoming review, you can contact us by emailing [standardsandquals@lantra.co.uk](mailto:standardsandquals@lantra.co.uk) or calling 02476 858 424.

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NOTES TO EDITOR:

" Lantra is the Sector Skills Council for land-based and environmental industries, working to ensure these businesses access the training, qualifications, skills and knowledge they need.

" An independent UK organisation, Lantra works with employers and the UK's governments to address the skills and productivity needs of approximately 230 businesses (one in every ten UK businesses) in: agriculture; animal care; animal technology; aquaculture; environmental conservation; equine; farriery; fencing; fisheries management; floristry; game and wildlife management; land-based engineering; horticulture, landscape and sports turf; production horticulture; trees and timber and veterinary nursing.

" By working together with the sector, Lantra leads research on skills issues and business needs, sets national standards and develops qualifications to meet modern business needs and help businesses grow through skills.

" For more information see [www.lantra.co.uk](http://www.lantra.co.uk).