

## Report 6th ECC-meeting, trainers' week

April, 12-16 Vidrà, Spain



Location: Vidrà, a small, enchanting village in the pre-Pyrenees in the north-east of Spain, Catalunya.

Participants: see participants' list attached (attachment nr1)

### Agenda:

#### Monday

**13.00-15.00** Lunch

**15:00-15.30** Welcome and introduction of the project  
explanation of the various ECS levels (focus 1, 2, 3 and 4)

**15.30 -16.00** break

**16.00-18.00** PowerPoint presentation of the existing testing/ examination formats/ tools in each country (20 minutes presentation/ each participant)

**18:00** Finish

**20.00** dinner

#### Tuesday

**07.45** Pick up at Hotel direction to the forest-field

**09.00-12.00** Field demonstration/assessment (level 1 and 2) IPC method (standard setting – each participant/country is demonstrating maintenance, crosscutting, felling and delimiting techniques)

**12.00-13.00** Lunch-packed lunch in the forest

**13.00-17.00** Field demonstration/assessment (level 1 and 2) NPTC method (standard setting – each participant/country is demonstrating maintenance, crosscutting, felling and delimiting techniques)

All participants marking the demonstration of the \candidate with an English version of there national score sheet

Evaluation of demonstration/assessment and scoring method templates

16.30-17.00 Way back to Vidra (Maintenance of chainsaws)

**17.00-18.00** demonstration NPTC maintenance assessment (CS30)

**18:00-20.00** Optional activities-visiting the town and surroundings

**20.00** Dinner

#### Wednesday

**08.00-12.00** Summary and Finding consensus/ consolidation on level 1 and 2:

Workshop sessions:

1: Practical exam

2: theoretical exam

**13.30-15.00** Lunch

GROUP 1/

**15.00-17.00** Further field testing and consolidation +, scoring sheet etc

**17.00-18.30** proposal score test (start)

GROUP 2/

**15.00-19.00** forest practical test of hung up trees/ group evaluation of the matrix

**20.00** Dinner

Thursday

**08.00-12.00** Summary and Finding consensus :

Workshop sessions:

1: Develop score sheets template (oral and practical observations)

2: Develop Question bank (oral, written, MC)

3: Develop preconditions field assessments (ratio examiner candidate / trainer assessor relation)

**12.00-13.00** Lunch

**13.00-17.00** Further field testing and consolidation + group evaluation of the matrix, scoring sheet etc; 4: Mock external audit of an assessment

**18.00-19.00** Way back to Vidrà

**20.00** Dinner

Friday

**08.00** Meeting Room (Summary)

Consensus on draft proposal examination matrix

Consensus on draft proposal the assessments process and tools. (Score sheets, test formats, theory tests, etc.)

Consensus on draft proposal for external audit procedure

**12.00** Departure

Minutes:

## DAY 1

**13.00-15.00** Lunch

**15:00-15.30** Welcome and introduction of the project  
explanation of the various ECC levels (focus 1, 2, 3 and 4) **Billy**

**15.30** -16.00 break

**16.00-18.00** PowerPoint presentation of the existing testing/ examination formats/ tools in each country **Willem**

**18:00** Finish

**20.00** Dinner

### 1 Welcome and introduction/presentation of the EFESC/ECC (Maria & Billy)

1. Presentation of CTFC, Spain, (Maria Claret) (see attachment nr.2 )
2. Presentation of Formació forestal (Jochum Bax) (see attachment nr.3 )
3. Presentation and explanation of Leonardo project, EFESC/ECC, WP's, rationale behind project. Explanation on WP3: Standard setting + assessment criteria (Billy Robb-A1 Arborists) (see attachment nr.4 )

### 2 Presentation of the existing testing/ examination formats/ tools in each country (Willem)

1. IPC, Groene ruimte (Peter Bongen) (see attachment nr. 5)  
No official recognised certificate; market determines demand of courses and standards  
Chainsaw courses are offered by:
  - private companies, high quality, more expensive
  - schools (state funded), lower quality, lower pricesQ/ Are refreshment courses necessary?
2. Belgium: no certification system in place, only proof of attendance is given at the end of a training course
3. Denmark: 3 systems
  - a. 3 day survival course with some chainsaw training included, no assessment, no certificate
  - b. 2 weeks course with assessment  
+ certificate if passed  
+ allowed to follow xtra higher chainsaw courses
  - c. Forestry course of 2 yrs
    - Chainsaw use is part of training
    - Certification according to NPTC-system (UK system)
4. Spain: NPTC assessments, because it is the only one in place (same as UK)
  - Is there demand in Spain? YES, especially public authorities (fireman,...)

5. Czech republic (Kristyna Dvorackova-A1 Arborists)  
From 2005: no certificate  
Few things (no safety standards etc.) recommended, but certificate is not compulsory. No independent assessment.
6. Germany: own test in Bavarian state  
Apprenticeship-system with written and practical test (possibility to do the written test orally or get assistance when difficulties reading/writing)  
There are different standards between the states, municipalities, etc.

2 Preconditions for the assessment method + formats + goals
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Presentation by Willem Van Delft

## DAY 2

**07.45** Pick up at Hotel direction to the forest-field

**09.00-12.00** Field demonstration/assessment (level 1 and 2) IPC method (standard setting – each participant/country is demonstrating maintenance, crosscutting, felling and delimiting techniques)

**12.00-13.00** Lunch-packed lunch in the forest

**13.00-17.00** Field demonstration/assessment (level 1 and 2) NPTC method

All participants marking the demonstration of the \candidate with an English version of there national score sheet

Evaluation of demonstration/assessment and scoring method templates

16.30-17.00 Way back to Vidrà (Maintenance of chainsaws)

**17.00-18.00** demonstration NPTC maintenance assessment (CS30)

**18:00-20.00** Optional activities-visiting the town and surroundings

**20.00** Dinner

1 Field demonstration/assessment (level 1 and 2) IPC method
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Set-up: The Dutch partner would demonstrate their method of felling small trees, DBH 30 cm (motorkettinzagen 1, lichte velling). Normally there would be one assessor for 6 candidates. The assessor is the same person as the trainer who has been with the candidates the three previous days during training. That way the assessor has some knowledge on the background (skills, knowledge) of the candidates, though the exam itself only concerns the last part. The score sheet consists of an A and a B-form (see attachment A- and B-form). On the A-form there is room for 6 candidates, only pass or failed is marked for about 10 critical issues. All 10 issues have to be passed if the candidate is to obtain his certificate. On the B-form there is room for a comment, but this form is only completed if the candidate fails.

In group we first did a risk assessment of the terrain (provided by Jochum). The 6 candidates were to do the maintenance on their chainsaw before they started (this was not evaluated as such, but taken into account when on the job).

We divided into two groups because the forest was quite dense and on a steep slope, therefore visibility was limited:

1. Peter Bongen: mock assessment of 3 candidates at a time; 1 experienced Belgian candidate, 2 Spanish candidates, less experienced.
2. Willem Van Delft: idem; 1 experienced UK candidate, 1 experienced German candidate

Discussion items:

- 1 assessor and 6 candidates is difficult when visibility as limited + assessor misses some actions
- Assessor is not independent from training, so influenced by prior actions of candidate
- Who provides risk assessment for terrain?
- Score sheet is practical (limited of important items)

## 2 Field demonstration/assessment (level 1 and 2) NPTC method

Set-up: Bo Brockmann (Skovskolen), a certified NPTC-assessor would assess Kristyna Dvorackova (A1 Arborists), a less experienced chainsaw user, on CS31 (about the same as ECC2, felling small trees). All other attendants were spectators, which might have influenced on the stress-level.

Discussion items:

- NPTC works with a 1 on 1 assessment system, which makes it very intensive for the candidate
- There is a complete independency from the training (assessor must be different person than the trainer), therefore more objective
- The assessment takes a much longer time than the IPC method because:
  - o Only one candidate at the time is being assessed
  - o After felling two trees, the assessor could not determine whether the candidate had passed or not, so he would need the candidate to fell yet another tree. We ran out of time to do this, but the point was clear.
  - o A lot of questions have to be covered, even when the situation is not applicable at that time (eg wind conditions, powerlines,...) and the assessor has to make sure he gets the answer
  - o There is no maximum set duration on the tests but according to the situation guidelines

## 3 Maintenance of chainsaw (CS30, NPTC)

Boel Hammarstrand (A1 Arborists) was a self confident candidate for maintenance of chainsaw. We had the facilities of the work place in Vidrà at our disposal. Jochum Bax (Spain) was the assessor (certified NPTC assessor). The test went smooth and Boel passed without any problem. It took less than 1 hour to do this.

Discussion points:

- With a less experienced candidate it may take much longer
- There are several items which can be checked during felling a tree and don't necessarily have to be proven theoretically

## DAY 3

**08.00-12.00** Summary and Finding consensus/ consolidation on level 1 and 2:

Workshop sessions:

1: Practical exam

2: theoretical exam

**13.30-15.00** Lunch

GROUP 1/

**15.00-17.00** finetune theoretical and practical exam subjects +, scoring sheet etc

**17.00-18.30** proposal score test (start)

GROUP 2/

**15.00-19.00** Further field testing and consolidation, practical test of hung up trees/ group evaluation of the matrix

**20.00** Dinner

1 Evaluation of showcases of NPTC and IPC-assessment systems on day 2 (Billy Robb)
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KISS principle: keep it safe and simple

### Considerations for the wg's:

- NPTC contents <-> IPC system
- Item priorities (critical, major/minor)
- setting of a minimum level
- Exam timescale (written/oral)
- Question bank (knowledge assessment/practical assessment) online? Difficulties? Language skills? Dyslectic?
- Life cycle: Update /refreshment courses
- Independent assessment necessary – legal reasons, insurance
- Priority to keep it cost effective

2 Working groups
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### Working groups:

What are the critical items to be checked?

- Question bank (WP1)
- Score sheet / practical safe ability (WP2)
- Pre-conditions/selection criteria (WP3) (explain assignment, critical items, score scheme, preparation)
- assessment methodology/policy (WP4)

The most important items now to be addressed first are the Question bank and the score sheet. Pre-conditions and assessment methodology will be discussed later this week.

WP1: Theoretical exam: Knowledge – be able to know criteria/question bank

Content of exam/knowledge:

Set-up: We discussed in group all criteria of ECC1 and 2 of 'be able to know' and assigned the following labels:

- What is Critical, Major, Minor of the criteria 'able to know'?
- Should they be tested oral (o), written (w) or practical (p)?

*Problem issue: the hung up tree: should it or shouldn't it be involved in ECC2 and should it be in the theoretical and/or practical test?*

Outcome: See attachment nr6 (summary of afternoon)

WP2: Practical exam, focus on 'which of the criteria of ECC1 and 2 should be tested in practice rather than written?

Set-up: The 2<sup>nd</sup> group composed mainly of trainers/examiners discussed the core practical criteria and cross-referenced this to the score sheet.

- Underpinning knowledge and practical demonstrations were separately identified. This was later cross-referenced with the work of the other group.
- A draft practical score sheet was developed around critical, major and minor items.

Outcome: See attachment nr 6 (summary of afternoon) (14 to 4 pages, rest of it written or oral additional q's)

3 afternoon: 2 groups
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2 programs:

1. large group of assessors going to forest to look at procedure on hung up trees and consolidate ECC2 assessment
2. small group indoors to match outcome WG 1 and 2; prepare proposal for score sheet,

1. Practical group (All other trainers led by Billy)

1. Main demonstrations undertaken by Spanish trainers (Miquel) and a few more from partners. Techniques reviewed and discussed as a group. Some discussion over 'pushing' or 'pulling' felling bar techniques. Scope for the situation and National practices?
2. A number of trees hung-up in a range of different scenarios but good agreement that the hung-up method is critical and should be assessed.
3. Discussions over depth of sink varying between 20-30% as standard.
4. UK 'Dog tooth cut' not required in Holland or Belgium and variations discussed. Demonstrated and discussed with Peter. How crucial is UK method on small trees?
5. Potential problem for apprentices in Germany that might not practice hung-up trees. Simulations used and explained by Thomas whom assessed Kristyna. How effective are simulations?

2. Theoretical group (Willem, Boel, Bo, Maria and Alexandra)

1. Matching ECC outcome WG 1 and 2. result cfr. Attachment nr. 6  
We arranged all criteria under T, P or both.  
See attachment nr.
2. Score sheet draft (start)

## DAY 4

**08.00-12.00** Summary and Finding consensus :

Workshop sessions:

1: Develop score sheets template (oral and practical observations) **Boel**

2: Develop Question bank (oral, written, MC) **Peter**

3: Develop preconditions field assessments (ratio examiner candidate / trainer assessor relation) **Willem**

**12.00-13.00** Lunch

**13.00-17.00** Further field testing and consolidation + group evaluation of the matrix, scoring sheet etc; 4: Mock external audit of an assessment **Billy**

**18.00-19.00** Way back to Vidrà

**20.00** Dinner

1 results of field testing on day 3 (Billy Robb)

8-9am

Focussing on levels 1 and 2, 3 and 4 later, up to core group.

Feedback from partners:

Bo: no money for question bank

Solution: IPC makes trial version. (responsible: Willem)

9-11am:

3 WG's:

1. Willem: assessment preconditions
2. Boel: score sheet
3. Peter: domains and example questions

2 Outcome WG's:

11-12am

**Score sheet** (Boel):

, cfr. Score sheet attachment nr. 7

Remarks:

- assessor guidelines still necessary
- responsible to work on the draft: Boel

**Domains** (Peter Bongen)

Proposal: 6 main topics, different items per topic, different q's per item,

See attachment nr. 8

Every country should send q's

IPC will put mock q's online

Remark:

- can there be local q's into the system? Possible in different languages?
- Responsible to work on the draft: Willem Van Delft

Proposal for Question bank (Alexandra):

- Does everybody agree we should have a question bank where we can choose from for questions for the written test? If yes:
- Methodologies:
  - o Online:
  - o Paper
  - o Multiple choice or/and some other way of q's?
    - +: Quick results, objective/more information
- Rating system ECS1 knowledge:
  - o critical questions: each 5 points, 20 critical questions should be picked (by assessor or by computer randomly) from database with 100 critical questions.
    - Minimum score for passing the test: 85/100
  - o Major questions: each 3 points, 20 major q's from etc.
    - Minimum score: 45/60
  - o Minor q's: each 1 point, 20 minor q's from etc.
    - Minimum score: 10/20
- Should be done before the practical test and results should be delivered to the assessor.
- If a person has difficulties reading or writing, the trainer or assessor (depending on when the test is done) should help in explaining the questions and helping in writing the answers down (without help).
- Not compulsory to have a written test, but optional (information to be checked in written test might be included in the practical test (oral-practice), cfr. NPTC-case)

**Preconditions** (Willem Van Delft)

See attachment nr. 9

Use of existing ETW-examples for preconditions, information package, external audit etc.

Remarks:

- Good basic,
- Responsible: Billy

3 afternoon: field practice
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Mock examinations undertaken in the forest focused on level 2. Billy decided as it was such a large group to split into 2 smaller groups undertake evaluations and compare at the end.

- (Group 1-Led by Billy) Kris (Inverde) conducted the first mock examination of Miquel and Boel (A1 Arborists) the 2<sup>nd</sup> assessment on another Spanish trainer (Francesc). Billy undertook the role as evaluator and mock auditor of the process. Miquel's first assessment of the whole unit took 20 mins to complete. The 3<sup>rd</sup> assessment of Francesc was a deliberate borderline performance which Boel decided to stop in the interests of safety at the correct point. Interestingly she had decided the candidate failed at the same time the auditor had decided this was agreed with the other trainers.

Some very lively discussions took place and many questions were raised and examined during the felling process. Even with a theory exam prior to the practical test can an assessor still extract critical underpinning knowledge and when? How should an assessor respond when a candidate asks difficult questions? At what point should an assessment of a borderline candidate be stopped? Alternative felling/snedding methods used by another country what is and is not acceptable for the European standard? Is wearing hi-viz, always using sapwood cuts or a first aid qualification/training necessary? What is acceptable PPE?

- (Group 2-Led by Bo) Bo undertook a second mock assessment of Kristyna this time comparing the ECC2 with the previous NPTC CS31 assessment. 2 trees were felled and 1 hung-up.

Result required that a better balance between the NPTC and ECC methodology. For example clearer criteria required prior to felling. Interpretation of the 'split-level' felling technique raised questions about the variation in methods adopted by different countries and what should be accepted for ECC.

## DAY 5

### 08.00 Meeting Room (Summary)

Consensus on draft proposal examination matrix

Consensus on draft proposal the assessments process and tools. (Score sheets, test formats, theory tests, etc.)

Consensus on draft proposal for external audit procedure

### 12.00 Departure

Evaluation test Thursday:

We need some communication on the site, candidate has to explain about risk assessment and plan of action before starting on every tree they will fell and after the exam (every tree) there should be a ten minute period possible (not compulsory) for explanation from the candidate and questions from the assessor. The assessor cannot ask questions about non existing situations on the site (eg "what if...?", "what if there were...?", ...)

Reasons why an assessor can ask questions during the exam: whenever there is a critical item (according to Cr, major, minor as explained in assessor guidelines) not taken into account by the candidate.

How long should it last? 1hr enough for an experienced candidate, not for a new candidate.

Bo: at least 1,5 hour

Agreed upon: max 1,5 hour; minimum 2 trees;

ECC 2: straight tree + a hung up tree. What if a hung up tree is difficult to take down and takes time? Time will be stopped, use of the winch is not into the assessment, assessment continues after this. Assessor needs to have a winch on the site. Candidate is not expected to know how to use the winch.

There's no fixed method on how to fell a tree, as long as it is a safe method.

ECC 2 diameters 25 to 35 cm felling level, under the guidebar length

ECC3 minimum 50 cm diameter at felling level, no guidebar length; if trees are not available within the region (being 100km<sup>2</sup>) >38cm is accepted when used the same methods as prescribed for ECS3

1 paper per candidate

We need a second standard setting event (test, try before you do!) before issuing a certificate. Proposal: only assessors/trainers whom have attended the first event, September. 3 days, max 2 each country, Denmark. Billy will develop and evaluate the assessor auditing method to be agreed at this event. It was agreed that there should be initially 1 national auditor from each core partner and one lead auditor for Europe to ensure quality control in practice and consistency in the development stage of ECC. Further training for new auditors and an annual 'practical' standard setting event are to be given consideration, as in line with the Leonardo contract, the credibility of the whole certification process is based around this.

Thank you all.

**NEXT GENERAL EFESC-MEETING: OCT 6-7, 2010, BRUSSELS**

The EFESC-team

