

Background to the European & International Chainsaw Certification

The need for a recognised **EUROPEAN/INTERNATIONAL CHAINSAW CERTIFICATE (ICC)** or 'licence' has been proposed by various organisations and individuals at meetings over a number of years which has ultimately led to the recent successful development of the International Awarding Body Association (ABA).

ABA International is a 'not for profit' organisation primarily tasked with the management and quality assurance of skills certification and recognition throughout Europe and Worldwide. By February 2014 over **300** successful **European Chainsaw Certificates** have been issued and recorded in the new electronic skills register of chainsaw operators.

Prior to the formation of ABA the 'roots' of the idea for International chainsaw certification can be traced back to various meetings held between Instructors/Assessors & Advisors from the UK National School of Forestry, Danish School of Forestry & the Scottish School of Forestry, in the UK in 1997 led by **Ib Christensen** (Skovskolen - University of Copenhagen).

Cooperation and further development in chainsaw standardisation between Denmark & the UK continued following these initial meetings supported by City & Guilds (formerly NPTC) the UK awarding body. A foundation for International certification of chainsaw operators was established following successful standards setting, training & certification events.

Further links were consolidated following an **International Conference** on 'safety & health in forestry' held in France in 2007 where a requirement for chainsaw certification was further promoted by IPC (Holland) & Inverde (Belgium). Neither the Netherlands nor Flanders had a nationally recognised certificate for chainsaw users and were therefore keen to support the concept.

Dissemination meetings were held during 2008 supported by various organisations & individuals to promote possible collaboration on the development of International chainsaw standards. A critical preparatory meeting was also held in Denmark in 2009 where a European project proposal was developed by **William Robb & Ib Christensen** supported by the Belgian partner.

A step closer was taken in Germany in 2009 when William Robb (A1 Arborists) undertook a successful pilot test of a Dutch chainsaw candidate to existing City & Guilds UK standards.

A UK Leonardo project submission by William Robb was approved in 2009 where he subsequently managed and successfully developed with project partners and contributing voluntary partners the 'Evaluation and Implementation of Chainsaw Operators Certification' through to completion in 2011.

William Robb is the technical author of the European and International chainsaw standards and legal owner of the standards & project products. Project products developed include:

European & International Chainsaw Standards, Records of Assessment, Quality Assurance guidance & various supporting materials

The project has now achieved its primary goal of developing recognised Chainsaw Certification Standards for use both within Europe and Internationally.

www.adam-europe.eu/prj/5126/project_5126_en.pdf

Attempts to establish a suitable organisational structure to take the project results forward resulted in the development of ABA International in 2012 and the subsequent transfer of legal ownership of the project products to this organisation. This will ensure continued success and development of chainsaw certification standards into the future.