

No: IGS 220

Infrastructure Group Safety Bulletin

Vegetation Control: Chainsaw Competence Limitations

This bulletin is for the attention of Contract Managers, and all who manage, plan and supervise chainsaw operations and chainsaw operators.

Background

Chainsaw competencies are complex and specific to activities.

This bulletin is a reminder of the scope and limitations of Network Rail chainsaw competences.

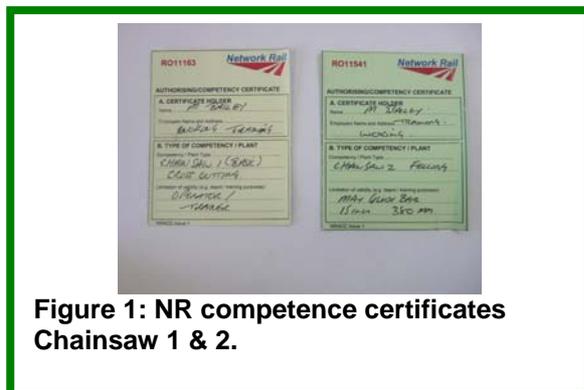
Competence levels and authorised activities.

Holders of NR Chainsaw 1 competence can;

- Use a two-handed chainsaw with max guide bar length of 380mm (15”);
- Cross cut – cut sleepers, or logs and branches that are NOT attached to a tree or a felled tree; and
- Stack timber.

Holders of NR Chainsaw 2 competence can carry out the activities outlined in Chainsaw 1, plus;

- Fell a tree with a maximum circumference of 450mm (18”) measured at the base of the tree (maximum of 75mm above ground level); and
- Sned (de-limb) a felled conifer tree.



These are example certificates. If it is unclear what the limit of the competence is on the certificate contact the issuing body or Training Establishment to verify.

NOTE: Unless a valid NPTC City & Guilds Certificate of Competence is held, holders of Chainsaw 1 and 2 competencies **must not** undertake the following operations (numbers given in brackets);

- Sever individual uprooted trees including leaning, half blown, broken and hung up trees (CS34)
- Sever multiple windblown trees including leaning, half blown, broken and hung up trees (CS35)
- Breakdown hardwood crowns (i.e. from felled tree to branch wood (CS37 [*proposed competency*]))
- Operate a chainsaw from a rope and harness (CS39)
- Carry out pruning operations (CS40)
- Undertake sectional felling/dismantling operations (CS41)
- Re-pollard trees at maximum height of 5m (CS46)
- Operate a chainsaw from a MEWP (CS47)
- Use a powered pole pruner (CS48)

Action required:-

- **Those who plan or supervise work** are required to confirm that chainsaw operators allocated to a task hold the correct chainsaw competence certificate.
- **Chainsaw operators** shall only carry out tasks for which they hold a valid certificate of competence.
- **Any chainsaw operators** who consider that they are competent to perform tasks for which they do not hold the competence certificate should discuss the position with their Line Manager in the first instance.
- **Contract Managers** are required to confirm that any contracts for work activities involving the use of chainsaws specify the levels of chainsaw operator competence required prior to the award of any contract.

All are reminded that:

Chainsaw operation is high risk and shall not be conducted by lone workers.

Provisions shall be made at all times for first aid and a qualified First Aider to be present on site during tree felling.

Work should preferably be performed during daylight and lighting levels shall be suitable & sufficient for the activity. Lighting conditions should be reviewed to check moving parts of the chainsaw are visible to the operator at all times.

Please refer to the following Maintenance Risk Control Sheets published on Connect which cover this activity:

NR/L3/MTC/0003/SP002 (Issue 6) – Use of Chainsaws

NR/L3/MTC/0008/OT013 (Issue) – Tree Felling

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