

## European Chainsaw Certificate ECC

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In Europe, the mobility of workers for forest and horticulture increases strongly. – Some countries have already requirements concerning contents and quality of this training, others have not. However, a border crossing regulation does not exist. Besides, national documents of identification are not comparable. A European Chainsaw Certificate would contribute to the fact that training and further training are comparable. All countries, which have already defined a minimum safety training, shall be acknowledged on European basis. They can keep their own system and let it become recognized on European basis, if it fulfils the appropriate minimum requirements. Thus the training for forest workers becomes transparent and the international exchange of workers is facilitated. A European regulation will also become a solution or a stimulus for those countries, which still have had nothing. A European Chainsaw Certificate will additionally lift the image of the whole branch.

The BUL represents the requests of Switzerland and the ISSA in this working group. Therefore I may present the progress of the work here.

The initiative started by the two training centres IPC Groene Ruimte, Netherlands and Inverde in Belgium. In the forest congress at Annecy in 2007 in which I participated also as a representative of the ISSA, there was born the idea for the international certificate. There, several education centres signalled their interest in this project.

In the first meeting in Belgium, representatives from 16 countries participated. Since that time it became ever more. Further meetings took place in Switzerland in Holland and in Germany.

A goal is that within a period of one year the participants of this course receive an European Chainsaw Certificate.

### Contents

The ECC, European Chainsaw Certificate, is at the time divided in four stages.



## **ECC 1 Chainsaw Maintenance and Crosscutting**

### ***What the chainsaw operator must be able to do***

- carry out daily and weekly maintenance, settings and pre-start checks as per manufacturers' recommendations
- maintain the safety and security of chainsaw(s) and other equipment
- meet specified legislative and organisational environmental requirements
- safeguard and maintain your own health and safety and that of those likely to be affected by your work
- inspect timber and choose safe work position
- use safe crosscut methods
- maintain effective teamwork when working with others
- select and use appropriate aid tools

### ***What the chainsaw operator must know and understand***

- the principles of safe/ergonomic manual handling techniques whilst crosscutting under guidebar length in diameter
- how to apply ergonomic working methods and the implications of manual handling regulations
- how to move or roll timber by hand and with mechanical assistance
- how to identify hazards and comply with the control measures of risk assessments
- how to identify your own capabilities and limitations as operator
- emergency planning and procedures
- how to identify tension and compression in timber
- the implications of terrain, ground conditions, season, weather and species
- causes of, and how to prevent, potential pollution, environmental damage
- the methods and safeguards required when dismantling timber (e.g. hardwood or similar tops) with vertically aligned stems, branches or sections
- precautions to take to avoid the danger of logs rolling

## **ECC 2 Basic Felling**

### ***What the chainsaw operator must be able to do***

- brash trees and remove buttresses to the given specification
- select a felling method which is relevant to the tree size and condition
- fell trees using appropriate felling aids
- safeguard and maintain your own health and safety and that of those likely to be affected by your work
- maintain the safety and security of equipment
- maintain effective teamwork
- take appropriate action in the event of unforeseen circumstances
- delimb trees to the given specification in a safe and ergonomic way

### ***What the chainsaw operator must know and understand***

- how to identify hazards and comply with the control procedures of risk assessments
- emergency planning and procedures
- how and why to initiate and maintain effective communication
- how to recognise signs of disease and decay in trees and the effects of these on safety

- how to take down hung up trees safely and in line with industry guidelines
- how to use a hand-powered winch and hand tools for the take-down of trees
- how to recognise situations where a powered winch is appropriate
- the implications of terrain, ground conditions, season, weather and species
- causes of, and how to prevent, potential pollution, environmental damage
- your own role in work systems and procedures
- the legal requirements for felling trees in different circumstances
- difference between delimiting conifers and broadleaves

### **ECC 3 Advanced Felling** (pre-requisite ECC1 and ECC2)

- Fell medium / large sized trees
- Remove branches by snedding
- Remove branches by de-limbing
- Crosscut felled stems over guide bar length (eg 380mm) in diameter
- Takedown of Hung-up trees using a winch

### **ECC 4 Windblown trees** (pre-requisite ECC1 and ECC2)

- Sever Individual windblown stems and use a winch to restrain a root plate or side tension
- Sever individual uprooted trees using a chainsaw
- Restrain root-plates on individually uprooted trees using a hand operated winch
- Remove branches by de-limbing

### **Organization**

It is intended that in each participating country will establish a responsible agency. This is responsible in relation to the European Management and the assurance of quality. In the country it ensures for the fact that the courses are correctly accomplished and the quality assurance is guaranteed. Besides, it passes the necessary finances to the European Management. The current members of the working group are the general assembly and will meet annually. Three sub-groups are responsible for the management, the contents of the courses and for the quality assurance.

### **Financing**

A still unresolved problem is the financing of the European Chainsaw certificate. One looks for support at the European Union, which has not taken place however so far yet, respectably brought no positive result. Finally those must pay, who profit from the offer, i.e. the course-participants. Whether they have this interest will show up. Surely the member countries of the working group must make a start up funding.

### **Control and quality**

The European Chainsaw Certificate functions only, if the courses are comparable in all countries. Therefore it is necessary that the prescriptions for the courses are uniform and the quality is also controlled. This must be ordered by the European Management and controlled and kept in the country concerned. Therefore it needs regular contacts between the national and the European quality assurance. In addition, it is to be assumed that the national quality assurance also fulfils international standards and therefore it does not need to be constantly controlled. Otherwise the costs would be too high.

## Minimum safety training for female and male forest workers in Switzerland

In Switzerland a working group of the federation, forestry, Suva and BUL elaborated a minimum of safety training for forest work on behalf of the government.

The partners are the BAFU, the Federal Office for environment and forestry, the Suva, responsible for insurance and prevention in the public forest and forest enterprises, the WVS, the union of the public owners of forest and the BUL, responsible for prevention in agriculture and also in the farmer's forest.

The minimum of safety training is addressed to persons without basic forest training, who cut or move trees in the forest or skid wood. Meanwhile, it was recommended to all course providers by the working group "safety in the private forest" for implementation.

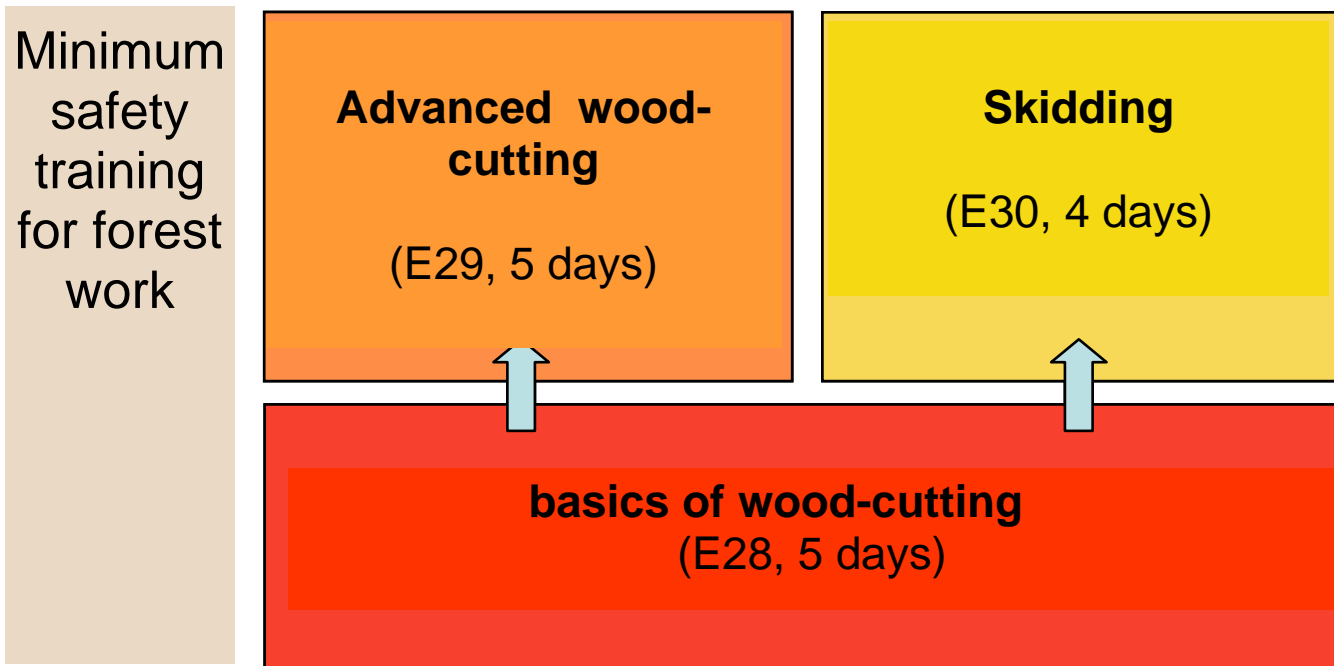


### A) Safety training for wood-cutter works

The training for the special field Wood-Cutting takes totally 10 days. It consists of a 5-day-module "basics of wood-cutting" and a further 5-day-module "Wood-cutting for Advanced" (see descriptions of module in the appendix). The second module is to be completed within 5 years after the attendance of the first module.

### b) Safety training for skidding

The training for the special field of skidding takes altogether 9 days. It covers the 5-day module "basis of wood-cutting" and additionally the 4-day module "skidding with logging trailers and rope hoist" (see descriptions of module in the appendix), which are to be completed within 5 years after attendance of the first module



*Schematic representation of the minimum safety training for forest workers.*

Every participant makes a test at the end of a module. It is examined whether he manages the abilities obtained in the training.

For each existing proof and/or for each equivalence confirmation of the participation, one receives a certificate from the QSK forest, on which all confirmed trainings are specified.

Participants, who did not succeed in gaining the certificate, can repeat it at a later point of time.

For the advertisement and organisation of the repetitions of the certificates, the course providers are responsible.

The so-called base enterprises are new. These are forest enterprises that are able to carry out courses for wood-cutters with their favourable infrastructure and staff directly on the spot. This system has worked satisfactorily and is now being developed. This facilitates the entrance to courses in Switzerland particularly for farmers and private wood-cutters, because the registration is substantially facilitated.

For the offer of courses in the forest branch please click [www.holzerkurse.ch](http://www.holzerkurse.ch).

**[www.holzerkurse.ch](http://www.holzerkurse.ch)**

### **More quality in power saw courses and courses for wood-cutters**

Providers of courses with power saw operation can become acknowledged again with the label "QSK acknowledged". They must keep minimum quality standards during their training activity. With a new quality assurance system for the providers of

courses with chainsaw operation one wants to promote and improve the training quality and safety at work. The course providers must commit themselves thereby to the observance of given minimum quality standards during their course activity. In return they and their courses may be characterised with the label "QSK acknowledged". Besides, starting from 2009, the federation will only pay contributions for courses with chainsaws, if the training takes place by an acknowledged provider.

The quality criteria cover all service of a course provider. This reaches from the qualification of the instructors over the information and communication with the customers up to the manner, how the service is provided in the course, up to self-check and a possible correction of the course activity.

For further inquiries you may surely contact me, [rudu@bul.ch](mailto:rudu@bul.ch) [www.bul.ch](http://www.bul.ch)