

MySafety

An initiative to improve Health & Safety in Forestry

Project
Update
2021

Having already delivered a robust solution with functionality to improve both situational awareness and reporting, this third year of the MySafety project has seen the development focus shift to the refinement of both the App and Portal to improve site communications. Again, investigations and trials with supporting organisations are yielding excellent inputs which will make the solution even more effective for the industry.

Our four core development themes were listed in the previous Update in June:

- Enhancement of the Safety Check
- Consolidated Site Safety Record
- Mapping requirements
- Approved contractor status

In the last six months, work has focussed on the first theme - Enhancement of the Safety Check. This is key to delivering the secure communication channel for all the Stakeholders in the UK Forestry industry

Initially, the Safety Check had been designed as purely a self-serve feature prompting users to consider all aspects of the work site and operations. (N.B. Depending on the actual operation, the check consisted of up to 40 questions.) While, this approach is ideal for ad-hoc jobs, operators on allocated work expect to receive a set of safety information as part of the pre-commencement briefing. Therefore, MySafety has been reconfigured, enabling all stakeholders to add information (documents/photos/maps) so the safety check is now site-specific and it highlights the key work-site issues. Also, as information is loaded, hazards can be risk rated and Control Measures must be added to high-risk items.

The recent developments also enable users to update the Control Measures as work proceeds on the site. Consequently, operators can now be informed of changes to controls, which ensures they always have the latest safety information and they are fully aware of the dynamic site risks. These real-time flows of essential information further increase the relevance of the MySafety to all stakeholders.

In addition, formal reports of hazards, access problems, signage and incidents from operators and others can be shared automatically with others engaged on a site. This increased operational transparency ensures safety issues are rectified sooner than they would be with today's less-formal communications. Importantly there is a record of all the reports and therefore evidencing site safety is made much easier for the different stakeholders with dashboards derived from the Consolidated Site Safety Record.

Like the pandemic before it, Storm Arwen has recently impacted significantly on the industry and the MySafety project. However, given the good progress already made in 2021, the current version of MySafety has been offered to the industry to aid communications on these extremely dangerous windblown sites and thereby facilitate reporting of incidents and near misses.

Unlike the rail industry where reporting is mandatory, in forestry many minor incidents go unreported. Fostering a cultural change to improve reporting is a real challenge, and it is essential to ensure a pro-active data-centred approach to safety can be adopted with analytics deployed to highlight potential risks. Unfortunately, until an effective communication and reporting infrastructure is in place, learning opportunities will be missed and uncorrected behaviour is likely to result in a major incident or, worse still, a fatality.