

**Findhorn, Nairn, Lossie Rivers Trust  
Findhorn District Salmon Fishery Board  
Lossie District Salmon Fishery Board**

**Health, Safety &  
Environmental Policy**

**June 2021**

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# **Findhorn Nairn and Lossie Rivers Trust, Findhorn District Salmon Fishery Board, and Lossie District Salmon Fishery Board.**

## **HEALTH, SAFETY and ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY**

### **Introduction**

As stated in the following policy, achieving high standards of health and safety along with respect for the environment are joint objectives for management and employees of the Findhorn, Nairn and Lossie Rivers Trust (FNLRT) and the Findhorn District Salmon Fishery Board, and the Lossie District Salmon Fishery Board (FISHERY BOARDS). The purpose, therefore, of this Health and Safety Policy Manual is to help all involved to see where they fit in to the picture. As such it shows how the FNLRT and FISHERY BOARDS view the significant hazards encountered at work and the arrangements for dealing with the resulting risks. Along with the basic legal requirements in each area, responsibilities of all concerned are shown. It is to be expected that all employees will take the time to consider the contents, especially those sections that directly affect them and thus ensure that the Trust is, and continues to be, a safe place to work.

### **STATEMENT OF INTENT**

**The Findhorn, Nairn and Lossie Rivers Trust (FNLRT) and the Findhorn, and Lossie District Salmon Fishery Boards (FISHERY BOARDS)** are committed so far as is reasonably practicable, to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of its employees. We also fully accept our responsibility for other persons whose health and safety may be affected by our activities. We will try to ensure our statutory duties are met at all times and will provide adequate resources to protect both our employees and others who may be affected by our work activities.

Every new employee will be given health and safety guidance when they join and, as necessary, each employee will be given refresher information, instruction and training. In return we expect each employee to take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions. All employees will be able to raise health and safety concerns directly with any member of management.

Competent person/s will be appointed to help the FNLRT and FISHERY BOARDS meet its statutory duties and to provide general advice and guidance on health and safety matters.

The successful implementation of this policy requires total commitment from everyone.

**In order to meet its policy objectives, the FNLRT and FISHERY BOARDS will, so far as is reasonably practicable:**

- actively seek cooperation and suggestions for improvements from all employees
- provide adequate information, instruction, training, supervision for all employees
- provide and maintain a safe and healthy working **environment** and welfare facilities
- maintain its workplaces in a safe condition including safe means of access and egress

- ensure the safe use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances
- provide and maintain plant, equipment and safe systems of work

**Employees will be expected to:**

- comply with this policy, thus keeping themselves and others safe, and enabling the FNLRT and FISHERY BOARDS to meet its statutory obligations.

This Health and Safety Manual contains the detailed organisation and arrangements for health and safety and is made available to all employees.

This policy will be regularly monitored to ensure that the objectives are achieved. It will be reviewed at least annually, if legislation changes, or there is any other valid reason.

**Reviewed:** 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2021  
**By:** R. Laughton

## **ORGANISATION FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY MANAGEMENT**

### **DIRECTOR**

The overall responsibility for the operational management of health and safety rests with the Director, Mr. Robert Laughton. In practice, this means that he must ensure that:

- the health and safety policy is developed and communicated to all employees
- adequate resources are provided to achieve the FNLRT's and FISHERY BOARDS stated policy objectives
- roles and responsibilities for key functions are identified for:
  - risk assessment
  - accident reporting and investigation
  - health and safety training
- arrangements exist for monitoring and audit of health and safety performance
- the health and safety policy is periodically reviewed

Due to the diverse nature of the work and the large geographical area covered by the FNLRT's employees, the director may delegate some management responsibility for health and safety to other persons (e.g. administrator, biologist, bailiff, contractors) as appropriate.

### **MANAGERS**

Managers (Biologists, administrators, bailiffs, contractors, etc) are primarily responsible for ensuring that the Health and Safety Policy is implemented. This means not only conducting risk assessments for their areas and/or activities but also making sure that their staff have received adequate information, instruction and training to work safely. In addition they must provide an appropriate degree of supervision. Clearly with the geographical spread of the FNLRT's and FISHERY BOARDS activities, this can present difficulties for physical supervision. However, managers can still substantially fulfil their supervisory responsibilities even at a distance by keeping in regular contact with their staff.

Consideration must also be given to the fact that the nature of the FNLRT's and FISHERY BOARDS activities is such that there is a sharing of labour resource at various times of the year. This could happen when, for example, bailiffs assisting with electrofishing surveys in the summer. In these circumstances the importance of coordination between managers over health and safety matters cannot be overstated and managers must work together to ensure that all involved are kept safe.

Managers are responsible for notifying the Director of any accident or near miss (with a serious or potentially serious outcome) that occurs. They should also carry out an

investigation in order to determine the circumstances and identify relevant corrective or preventative actions.

### **EMPLOYEES (INCLUDING TEMPORARY WORKERS, STUDENTS, VOLUNTEERS AND SUB-CONTRACTORS)**

All employees, including temporary e.g. seasonal workers, students, volunteers and sub-contractors working on the FNLRT's or the FISHERY BOARDS behalf are responsible for ensuring their own and others' safety.

This requires that they:

- comply with all rules, procedures, and training that have been set out for their and others' health and safety and thus to enable the FNLRT and FISHERY BOARDS to comply with all of its statutory duties
- use the correct methods of work and not improvise by using methods, tools or equipment which involve taking unnecessary risks
- wear any PPE that is considered necessary either as a result of a risk assessment
- report any unsafe plant, tools and equipment and unsafe practices or methods of work to management
- report any potential health and safety hazard including infections or other diseases, accidents, injuries or concerns associated with the workplace
- assist in the maintenance of good housekeeping standards at work
- assist, where necessary, in the investigation of any accidents that occur.

## COMPETENT PERSON

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 state that every employer shall appoint one or more competent persons to assist in undertaking the measures he needs to take to comply with the law. These regulations recognise that it is better where possible for the appointment of such a person/s to be from within the organisation. To that end, managers are deemed to be competent persons for the purposes of day to day management of risks and for conducting risk assessment. However, to ensure that the FNLRT and the FISHERY BOARDS are kept fully apprised of its legal responsibilities and to periodically check that the protective measures are adequate, an external consultant will be appointed to provide support to management. His or her duties are to:

- advise on compliance of working practice with current legislative requirements
- assist with the development of health and safety policy
- assist Managers in the conduct of risk assessments where appropriate and necessary
- provide assistance and advice to the Director and Managers as required
- periodically carry out inspections / audits at intervals decreed by the Director

## ARRANGEMENTS FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY MANAGEMENT

### RISK ASSESSMENTS

#### BACKGROUND

Risk assessment is the process of identifying significant hazards and the risks that they produce, and subsequently determining the most effective way of removing or reducing these risks. Risk assessment need not be a complicated process but it should always identify the significant risks present in a given situation. Risk assessments will fall into one of the following three categories:

- **Generic** – these cover the everyday hazards and risks associated with work activities e.g. electrofishing, office work etc.
- **Specific** – i.e. where there are particular hazards and risks associated with a specific location (e.g. unusual access arrangements, poor telephone signal). Risk assessments may also be specific to a person (e.g. disabilities), or to a non-routine activity.
- **Dynamic or point of work** – these are used when the precautions identified in either of the other types of assessment are not enough to ensure safety i.e. the person on the spot notices other hazards and risks that haven't already been considered or the suggested precautions are inadequate.

#### RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES

Under the *Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (MHSWR)* all employers are required to conduct risk assessments of significant hazards associated with their work activities. This is an extension of the duty imposed by the *Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974* which requires that employers shall “so far as is reasonably practicable” ensure the health, safety and welfare of their employees and others affected by their work. Where employers have 5 or more employees it is necessary to record these assessments either in writing (or electronically).

The FNLRT will maintain a register and copies of all **current generic and specific** risk assessments in the Health and Safety Manual. If a risk assessment is significantly revised (e.g. after an accident) prior to the annual revision of this document, this must be brought to the attention of affected employees by the respective line manager. The register should be amended to reflect the revised status. The register also includes details of necessary review periods and whom is responsible for conducting each risk assessment.

Assessments should reflect the way that work is **really** done if the risks are to be adequately controlled. Therefore, it is important that persons actually undertaking the work are involved in the risk assessment process. **All employees** are, in turn, responsible for working in



accordance with the findings of risk assessments, and for notifying their line manager of any reasons why the risk assessment may no longer be valid e.g. accidents or changes in working practice. The responsibility for ensuring that generic and specific risk assessments are conducted rests with the respective managers. All such risk assessments should be retained in the Health and Safety File and included as an appendix to this Health and Safety Manual.

### **GENERIC RISK ASSESSMENTS**

Risk assessments for everyday activities of the employees should be conducted by the various managers in conjunction with their staff. Once complete, the significant findings (i.e. the hazards, risks and risk controls) must be communicated to those affected in an appropriate manner. e.g. training sessions, memos, emails etc. All such risk assessments must be reviewed at least annually or whenever there is good reason to suspect that they may no longer be valid e.g.

- after an accident or near miss has occurred
- when employees raise concerns about the effectiveness of risk controls
- if working practices change e.g. the introduction of new tools or equipment
- when legislation changes
- any other valid reason

### **SPECIFIC RISK ASSESSMENTS (i.e. site, activity or person specific)**

In order to meet the occasional need for **specific** risk assessments, it will be the responsibility of each employee to alert their manager of any circumstances where the measures identified in the relevant generic risk assessment are inadequate. This could occur perhaps when there are unusually difficult access arrangements to a particular location or circumstances have changed since the last time the job was done. In such cases it would be appropriate to either:

- conduct and record a site specific risk assessment; or
- amend the relevant generic risk assessment to reflect the changed circumstances (e.g. the identified health and safety risk may actually apply to other locations as well but had not previously been considered).

Other circumstances that might require specific risk assessments might include:

- certain individuals carrying out normal work activities who may have health problems that could place them at greater risk than their colleagues, e.g. strenuous lifting when someone has a heart condition, remote working for someone suffering from diabetes, issues surrounding expectant mothers e.g. potential harm to the unborn child
- activities that have not been considered before and which by their nature may present significant risk e.g. emergency situations. **NB** although under no

circumstances should emergency action be delayed because of a paperwork exercise but even in such situations people need to assess the risks (albeit very speedily). However, it may be that the immediate aftermath of an emergency could give rise to risks that have not previously been considered.

- if there is a customer (e.g. utility company) requirement for a site specific risk assessment prior to work commencing. In such circumstances the risk assessment can be completed on site in hard copy and subsequently recorded electronically. If necessary, the completed risk assessment can then be forwarded to the customer along with any other documentation, (e.g. method statements, policies / procedures) that might be required.

It should be noted that a specific risk assessment is only required if the hazards and risks are **significant** (i.e. there is a chance that someone could suffer more than a trivial injury), and if these aren't already mentioned in the relevant generic risk assessment.

#### **DYNAMIC or POINT OF WORK RISK ASSESSMENTS**

Even where formally recorded risk assessments have been carried out, the need still exists for employees to carry out their own informal "on the job" assessments i.e. checking for themselves that it's safe for themselves to work and that they won't endanger others. These are sometimes referred to as **dynamic (or point of work)** risk assessments. People doing the job are usually well placed not only to see hazards as they arise, but also to deal with them. Therefore, if a situation has become dangerous, (e.g. equipment has become unsafe, weather conditions have seriously deteriorated) then the employee has a responsibility to determine the appropriate action (e.g. any additional measures that are required to do the job safely). It would, of course, in many cases be appropriate to contact line management to discuss the possible actions.

The FNLRT and the FISHERY BOARDS employ people whom it considers to be competent, self-motivated and resourceful and does not expect therefore to have to "hold anyone's hand" but rather it expects that they will get on with their job. There is good reason to suppose that employees also prefer it to be that way. The FNLRT and the FISHERY BOARDS, therefore, wishes to make it clear that it will respect the judgement of its employees who are on the ground, if they believe that a task is too dangerous to proceed, and conversely, expects employees not to take unnecessary risks just to get the job done.

The significant findings of risk assessments should be brought to the attention of those who might be at risk, in the most appropriate manner (e.g. site briefing, toolbox talk, memos) by the manager responsible for the work

It is a legal requirement that risk assessments are conducted by competent\* persons. For this reason, all persons involved in risk assessments will be adequately trained in both risk assessment and any specific procedures that need to be followed.

\*Usually defined as having sufficient skills, knowledge, experience and other qualities to undertake the activity

## INFORMATION, INSTRUCTION AND TRAINING FOR EMPLOYEES

### BACKGROUND

The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 requires that all employees receive such **information, instruction** and **training** as is necessary to keep them safe. The form of the such information and training may vary according to needs of the individual and the level of risk and complexity of the task or equipment. It is not always necessary to train in a formal setting (e.g. an external training course), sometimes working alongside a more experienced colleague would be the right choice. Similarly, issuing lengthy procedures may be less preferable to a simple memo to all staff. The choice of methods is not prescribed by law and should be determined by the need to achieve the aim of making people safe.

### RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES

All **managers** must ensure that their staff have received sufficient training in the work that they have to carry out and in the use of any necessary work equipment where there are significant risks e.g. use of power tools. The training may not always have to be provided by the FNLRT since individual employees may have undertaken a lot of training in their previous workplaces or occupations. The manager must, however, satisfy himself of the evidence of that training and that it is adequate for the purposes of keeping both the employee and others safe.

Training will be required at different times e.g.

- **Induction** of a new employee. This is especially important for temporary or seasonal workers who may have had little experience of the risks faced by permanent staff. All temporary field workers (e.g. seasonal biologists) must be issued with a copy of the document “Seasonal Worker Guidance” which outlines the key information on the hazards and risks that they are likely to face.
- **Continuation** training to enable employees to develop new skills and/or when assuming greater responsibilities. Such training may be delivered by means of accredited external providers or by means of competent employees of the FNLRT.
- **Refresher** training which will be needed by all employees at some point to ensure that they are up to date with current good practice and to help in overcoming complacency.

It is good practice to record the training that employees receive, even when this is not as part of formal training programme. Records should be kept in the Health and Safety File.

All **employees must**, at all times work in accordance with training that they have received. It is the employee’s responsibility to refer to their manager if asked to do a task, or use equipment when they have not been trained and/or are not competent to do so.

## SAFE SYSTEMS OF WORK

### BACKGROUND

The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 requires that where work involves a significant degree of residual\* risk, there should be safe systems of work in place. This simply means identifying the measures that are necessary to control the risks and usually recording these in writing. It is not always necessary to maintain a standard format and thus safe systems may be found in various forms e.g. method statements, standard operating procedures, codes of practice etc. Such documents should provide for a consistent approach to dealing with the risks that exist and thus can be used as the basis for training staff.

### RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES

All **managers** must ensure that where a risk assessment identifies a significant level of residual risk, appropriate and documented safe systems of work are put in place. This will include categories of work such as:

- work at, near or in water
- working at height
- lone working
- electrofishing
- use of shotguns / firearms

although this list is not exhaustive.

As noted above, the format for documenting these safe systems is not prescriptive e.g. it may be sufficient to refer in a health and safety procedure to the need for employees to follow an approved code of practice. This of course is dependent on the employee being familiar with that code of practice either through training or previous experience. In any event, it will always be the manager's responsibility to ensure that safe systems of work are in place, and that these are drawn to the attention of those affected.

All **employees** must, by law, comply with any training that they have received and must therefore work in accordance with identified safe systems of work. In addition, where an employee sees a deficiency in such a system he must, as soon as is reasonably practicable, draw this to the attention of his manager.

\*Residual risk in this context is the level of risk that exists after considering the everyday controls that would reasonably be expected to be in place e.g. common sense, general awareness of risk. PPE that is normally worn. If these measures cannot be relied upon alone then the residual level of risk will be such that a safe system of work is required.

## ACCIDENT REPORTING

### BACKGROUND

An accident can be defined as an unplanned event that occurs which results in injury to persons (including members of the public) or loss / damage to property.

### RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES

**All Employees** who have an accident at work should report the matter to their manager as soon as possible. As much relevant information as possible should be provided, including names of any witnesses to the accident. The manager should ensure that these details are recorded in the current Accident Book kept in the main office at Logie Steading. The employee's manager is responsible for determining any necessary further action, including accident investigation. The Office Administrator (or deputy when on holiday) is responsible for the upkeep of the Accident Book and for any necessary reporting to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

#### Reporting to HSE

Under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (**RIDDOR**) companies have a duty, not only to record accidents at work, but also to report to the HSE, certain categories of accident, ill health (or disease) and/or dangerous occurrence. These can be broadly listed as follows:

#### **Immediately reportable** (i.e. by telephone)

**Accidents / Dangerous Occurrences** including the following:

- Death of an employee, self-employed person or member of the public on your premises.
- Major Injuries - these would include broken limbs, dislocations, eye injuries, electric shock resulting in unconsciousness. (The full list of definitions of these can be found in the foreword section of the Accident Book.)
- Dangerous Occurrences – these would include collapse of scaffold where the scaffold is more than 5 metres high, collapse of any load bearing part of lifting equipment. (Full definitions of these can be found in the foreword of the FNLRT Accident Book)
- Death on employee within 1 year of the date of a reportable injury or condition.

Telephone reports to HSE, must be followed up by completing HSE Form F2508 within 10 days online at [www.riddor.gov.uk](http://www.riddor.gov.uk)

## **Written notification to HSE within 10 days**

**Accidents** involving the following:

- Absences of more than 3 days as a result of work related injury or illness.

**Certain specified diseases** where work related, e.g.

- occupational dermatitis, skin cancer, chrome ulcer, and oil folliculitis/acne;
- lung diseases including occupational asthma, farmer's lung, pneumoconiosis, asbestosis and mesothelioma.
- infections such as leptospirosis, hepatitis, tuberculosis, anthrax, legionellosis and tetanus.
- Other conditions such as occupational cancer, certain musculoskeletal disorders, decompression illness and hand-arm vibration syndrome.

In general, if a disease may be linked to the job that you do, it should be reported, so that the full list can be consulted to determine whether it needs to be reported.

These should be reported by completing HSE Form F2508 online within 10 days at [www.riddor.gov.uk](http://www.riddor.gov.uk)

The above is not an exhaustive list. Details of other conditions applicable for reporting to HSE can be found on [www.hse.gov.uk/](http://www.hse.gov.uk/).

## FIRST AID

### BACKGROUND

First aid is simply the provision of immediate assistance in the event of an accident or illness and where medical treatment may be required or where no further treatment is necessary. It can be the difference between life and death.

### RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES

The Health and Safety (First Aid at Work) Regulations 1981 require that employers undertake an assessment of their first aid requirements and that they subsequently provide appropriate first aid measures.

The FNLRT's and FISHERY BOARD's employees work falls into two categories with the majority of staff working in the field, whilst a few are primarily office based. The risks are clearly different in each **environment**; the office would be regarded as a low risk whereas working in the field, by its nature poses greater risks (e.g. some lone working, remoteness etc.). First aid provision will therefore be different. The FNLRT will ensure that in the office at Logie Steading there is always at least one appointed person on hand (i.e. someone who can take charge and summon assistance if necessary). For work carried out by field based staff first aid measures are based on the provision a suitably stocked first aid kit, adequate means of emergency communication and training of individuals.

Of course, the ability to self-administer first aid is dependent upon the nature of injury sustained (e.g. treating a cut finger compared to severe lacerations or fractured limbs). For this reason, no higher risk activities e.g. electrofishing (or as otherwise determined by a risk assessment), should be undertaken with fewer than two persons present and that each person involved should be capable of providing emergency first aid treatment whilst help is summoned. If working on a site that is not being operated by the FNLRT or the FISHERY BOARD (i.e. carrying out work on someone else's site), then it would be appropriate for employees to check on additional first aid facilities that may be available.

Each vehicle issued to employees will carry a travelling first aid kit. The use of any of the contents by an employee shall require him/her to report the accident in accordance with the Accident Reporting procedure. It is the responsibility of the employee to ensure that used items are replenished at the earliest opportunity.

A list of what should be included in first aid kits is shown on the next page.



## **MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR FIRST AID KITS.**

### **For travelling first aid kits.**

- One guidance card
- 2 x triangular bandages
- 1 x medium wound dressing
- 1 x large wound dressing
- 1 x extra large wound dressing
- 10 x assorted plasters
- 6 x alcohol free wipes
- 1 x finger stall
- 1 x sterile eyepad
- 1 x pair small scissors
- 1 x small bottle of sterilising-wash
- 1 x resuscitation barrier
- 1 x green polypropylene case

### **For first aid kits in permanent workplaces e.g. office, employing 1 – 4 people**

- One guidance card
- 2 x triangular bandages
- 2 x medium wound dressing
- 1 x large wound dressing
- 1 x extra large wound dressing
- 20 x assorted plasters
- 2 x pairs of protective gloves
- 6 x alcohol free wipes
- 1 x finger stall
- 1 x pair small scissors
- 1 x small bottle of sterilising-wash
- 1 x resuscitation barrier
- 1 x green polypropylene case

**Managers** are responsible for conducting periodic spot checks on the contents of travelling first aid kits and for ensuring that the contents have been replenished by employees where necessary.

### **Training / information**

The FNLRT and the FISHERY BOARDS's will ensure that there are sufficient trained first-aiders or appointed persons available during working hours. To achieve this, training for first aiders and appointed persons will be provided by means of external training providers using courses approved by the Health and Safety Executive. This means that they must hold a valid certificate of competence in either:

- first aid at work (FAW), issued by a training organisation approved by HSE; or
- emergency first aid at work (EFAW), issued by a training organisation approved by HSE or a recognised Awarding Body of Ofqual/Scottish Qualifications Authority.

## **FIRE SAFETY ARRANGEMENTS**

### **BACKGROUND**

Assessment of fire safety arrangements for FNLRT operated premises in order to ensure the adequacy of the means for prevention of, and response to fire.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES**

An annual formal risk assessment of fire safety precautions will be conducted in all premises (i.e. office, hatchery, etc) occupied by the FNLRT and FISHERY BOARDS. Issues arising from the assessment and required actions should be addressed in a timely manner. A copy of this assessment should be kept in the FNLRT Health and Safety File along with the Fire Safety Logbook which also contains details of periodic inspections and appropriate fire drills that have been conducted.

**All employees** are responsible for ensuring that fires are prevented in the workplace, in particular by observing the strict No Smoking policy whilst in the any premises. In addition, staff are required to observe general housekeeping standards e.g. removal of litter, neat storage of materials and maintenance of clear routes to fire exits.

### **Fire Safety Training**

All staff shall receive awareness training in fire safety arrangements when joining the organisations and at appropriate intervals thereafter. Results of fire drills and workplace inspections should be used to determine additional or refresher training requirements. No member of staff should use fire fighting equipment unless he/she is competent and it is safe to do so.

## OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH

### BACKGROUND

Any work activity that could affect an employee's general health and wellbeing (physically or psychologically) is regarded as an occupational health hazard. The type of harm suffered may vary from musculo-skeletal disorders (MSD's) such as bad backs arising from heavy work over time, to ill health such as Lyme disease from tick bites or the psychological effects of stress. Every organisation has different occupational health hazards to deal with and some of those that are significant within the FNLRT's and FISHERY BOARD's scope of work are considered in the individual procedures contained in this Health and Safety Manual. There are, however, some specific potential occupational health hazards that are outlined below.

### CORONAVIRUS

During 2019 the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic significantly affected work practices and workers both locally and internationally. Since 2019 substantial steps to mitigate against the virus have been taken including lockdowns, wearing facemasks, hand cleaning facilities, social distancing and vaccinations. FNLRT and Fishery Boards have adopted the strategies promoted by Scottish Government to reduce risk of spreading the virus and maintaining staff safety.

As a minimum the following should be followed, You should:

- wear a face covering when required
- clean hands and surfaces regularly
- stay 2m away from other people
- self-isolate and [get tested](#) if you have COVID-19 symptoms
- and report if your test is positive (to line manager and Scot Gov)

The guidelines for dealing with coronavirus outbreak are frequently changing and all staff will be updated regularly and encouraged to access the Scottish Governments web site for more information.

For more information see following links

<https://www.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19/>

<http://fms.scot/coronavirus-covid-19/>

<https://www.invasivespecies.scot/coronavirus>

## **WEIL'S DISEASE (LEPTOSPIROSIS)**

Although this is primarily associated with rats (and their urine), other animals can carry the bacteria. Ingestion or entry through open cuts are the main routes of entry into the body. The symptoms include fever, muscular aches and pains, loss of appetite and nausea. The fever may last for about five days before a marked deterioration with symptoms such as bruising of the skin, sore eyes, nose bleeds and jaundice following. Treatment with antibiotics is normally successful as long as begins rapidly after symptoms develop. If left untreated it can cause liver damage and even death. The incubation period for the disease varies from 3 to 19 days and therefore the (somewhat flu-like) symptoms may not be associated with a possibly minor injury that has been sustained.

## **GIANT HOGWEED (also see INNs Control Section)**

This is prolific and abundant in the north east of Scotland. It has a reddish purple stem and spotted leaf stalks, and fine spines that make it appear furry. Since it can easily outgrow a person it may be difficult to avoid contact with it. Its sap is an irritant which makes skin extremely sensitive when exposed to sunlight (i.e. ultra-violet light). Serious burns and blistering can occur and even when the skin has healed, some discolouration of the tissue and a sensitivity to sunlight may remain. The best strategy to reduce the risk is to:

- be aware of what giant hogweed looks like
- avoid contact at all costs; take a different route if possible and/or keep skin covered to prevent contact in the first place
- in the event of contact with the sap, wash immediately (preferably with soap and water) and cover up to minimise exposure to the sun

## **LYME DISEASE**

This is a disease caused by an infection from a micro-organism, itself transmitted by a bite from a tick, a blood-sucking parasite which normally lives on deer but which will readily feed on humans. Ticks hang around on foliage and grass waiting for an unsuspecting host. The disease has a variety of symptoms, including changes affecting the skin, heart, joints and nervous system. Probably the most obvious sign that there may be a problem is a reddening of the skin around the site of the tick bite with the area in the middle often turning pale. Other sufferers report flu-like symptoms such as:

- drowsiness
- headaches
- mild fever
- joint and muscle pains

- swollen lymph glands

Most people will never suffer serious harm to their health from a tick bite. The conditions are treatable as long as the symptoms are spotted early.

### **SUNBURN**

Although the sun may seem rare in Scotland, when working outdoors, sensible precautions need to be taken to prevent sunburn. In most cases, the clothing required for the job will be adequate but there may be a need to wear a hat or to apply sun tan.

### **HAND-ARM VIBRATION SYNDROME (HAVS)**

This describes a number of physiological conditions that can arise from the use of power tools that generate high levels of vibration e.g. hammer drills, chainsaws etc. Such high levels of vibration result in damage to the nerves and blood vessels in the hand and produce symptoms that can range from blanching of the finger tips (e.g. vibration white finger), to painful tingling or reduced dexterity. The symptoms are generally more noticeable in cold weather since blood circulation to the fingertips is reduced. For this reason, it is important to keep the hands warm when doing such work during the colder months.

### **NOISE**

Temporary or permanent hearing damage can result from both short and long term exposure to noise. In general, the FNLRT's employees are not often exposed to high levels of noise and therefore no extraordinary measures are required other than always wearing hearing protection when noisy equipment (e.g. chainsaw, brush cutters) is being operated.

## RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES

All **managers must** identify as part of their risk assessments, any activity that could create a significant risk of ill health to an employee (whether temporary or permanent). This does not necessarily require, for example, consideration of absolutely every manual handling task that could possibly result in a strained muscle, but rather a recognition of circumstances that might cause someone to have to take time off work or suffer long term ill health.

It is likely the majority of occupational health hazards and risks are well controlled. In addition employees themselves have a major role to play by both identifying potential problems and in suggesting solutions. The employee will also be aware of existing health conditions or disabilities that might increase the occupational health risks from their work. **Employees must** therefore:

- work in accordance with any training received, either for the task or for the use of any equipment that has been provided
- inform their manager of any health condition or disability that might place them at additional occupational health risk.

## **MANUAL HANDLING**

### **BACKGROUND**

Manual Handling is defined as the use of bodily force to lift, push, pull, carry or otherwise propel loads. Whilst strains and sprains are the most frequently sustained types of injury, it should not be overlooked that cuts, bruises and fractures may also result from not taking adequate care when undertaking manual handling tasks.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES**

The Manual Handling Operations Regulations (1992) require employers to avoid as far as is reasonably practicable, the need for manual handling operations. Where manual handling can't be avoided, then it is sometimes necessary to assess the remaining risks in more detail to see what can be done to minimise those risks. This can often be achieved by the use of mechanical assistance, but where this is not possible, other measures e.g. training, team lifting may be needed.

Where a general risk assessment has shown that a task carries a significant risk of injury due to the manual handling involved, a more detailed manual handling assessment will be conducted. This detailed manual handling assessment should involve the staff affected in order to ensure that the resulting controls identified are viable and thus that the risks are reduced as far as is reasonably practicable.

All staff will receive appropriate training for the work that they undertake.

All employees must, when undertaking tasks involving manual handling, follow any training that they have received. In addition, if they are aware of any factors (e.g. unusual workplace conditions or known medical condition) that could increase the risk of their being injured they must bring this to the attention of their manager.

### **Manual Handling Training**

All staff shall receive appropriate information, instruction and training in manual handling techniques when joining the FNLRT and/or FISHERY BOARDS and at regular intervals thereafter. Such training should be recorded in the employee's personnel file.

It is clear that some tasks carried out by the employees involve significant manual handling risks, (e.g. the movement of equipment, etc.) It is also clear that although many of these tasks cannot be mechanised and hence employees will often have to make a dynamic or point of work assessment in line with their training to determine the safest method of moving items/equipment e.g. request for further assistance.



## DISPLAY SCREEN EQUIPMENT (DSE) ASSESSMENTS

### BACKGROUND

Display Screen Equipment (DSE) which may also be known as VDU, is any display screen showing text, numbers or graphics. In simple terms this usually refers to computers (including laptops). **DSE users** are employees who use such equipment for a **significant** part of their work (e.g. more than one hour per day on a daily basis). Those employees who only use computers occasionally are not subject to the same legislative requirements.

### RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES

The Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 (as amended 2002) require employers to assess workstations of DSE users, ensure that these meet minimum requirements, plan work patterns to minimise risks to DSE users, arrange eye tests if requested and provide health and safety training / information, and spectacles if necessary solely for DSE use.

The FNLRT is responsible for identifying those employees who are defined as DSE users and for ensuring that an individual workstation assessment and appropriate training is provided. Assessments may need to be reviewed when changes occur, e.g. new workstation equipment, working patterns etc. The findings of each assessment and records of training given should be retained in the employee's personnel file for a minimum of three years.

**All DSE users** must work in accord with the training they have received. In addition, if they are aware of any ill health effects that they may be suffering as a result of their use of DSE, they must bring this to the attention of their line manager.

### Eye Tests

Those employees covered by the regulations can request that the FNLRT pays for an eyesight test. The purpose of such a test is to determine whether or not the employee requires spectacles for DSE work. Where an optometrist/optician finds this to be necessary, the FNLRT will pay a reasonable amount for spectacles to meet this need.

### DSE Training

All DSE users shall receive training, as necessary, in setting up their workstations prior to starting such work and/or on a refresher basis. The training should include information on identification of DSE related ill health effects and what to do if they experience them. Records of training received should be recorded in the employee's personnel file. In addition, each DSE user will be provided with a copy of HSE guidance document "INDG36 Working with VDUs".

## **CONTROL OF SUBSTANCES HAZARDOUS TO HEALTH (COSHH)**

### **BACKGROUND**

Substances (e.g. chemicals) that by their nature may cause injury or harm to human health. Such injury or harm can be caused by direct contact with the skin or eyes, inhalation, ingestion (swallowing) or possibly even by puncture wounds.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES**

The Control of Substance Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH) 2002 require employers to assess risks arising from hazardous substances used or created by their work activities. Employers must determine appropriate precautions to prevent or control exposure to such substances and ensure that such measures are used and maintained properly.

Most of the hazardous substances used by the FNLRT and the FISHERY BOARDS are well known, (e.g. petrol, oils, paints, cleaning products, etc) as are the hazards and risks associated with them. It is still necessary, however, to assess the use of these products and any others in order to ensure that the risks to health are eliminated or reduced as far as is reasonably practicable. Often this can be done quite easily using the information provided on hazard warning labels or the Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) provided on request by suppliers of products. COSHH requires that where possible hazardous substances should be replaced by a safer alternative. Where this can't be done then appropriate control measures should be implemented.

All hazardous substances and chemicals should be stored in the chemical cabinet at Logie Steading, with only the appropriate amount carried for the task an identified task. Copies of COSHH assessments for products used, are held in the FNLRT Health and Safety File and also in the Chemical cabinet.

### **COSHH training and information**

All employees who work with hazardous substances should receive such training and/or information as is necessary to ensure their own safety and that of others. As a minimum this should include information on any Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) that should be used and First Aid measures that may be required.

## VIOLENCE AT WORK

### BACKGROUND

The HSE defines violence at work as *“any incident in which a person is abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances relating to their work”* and whilst verbal abuse and threats are not uncommon, physical attacks are comparatively rare. No employee is expected to accept as a normal part of the job the use of or threat of violence from others. The FNLRT and FISHERY BOARDS will support any employee who becomes the victim of a violent assault and where appropriate will instigate any legal proceedings at its disposal to punish an offender.

### RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES

All employees must avoid being the potential cause of violence through their own potentially aggressive actions.

**Under no circumstances should an employee carry shotguns or firearms in the conduct of their normal duties.** In addition, no employee should carry any other weapon (e.g. hunting knives) unless there is a legitimate reason for so doing. Such weapons must never be carried with the intention of using them for offensive or defensive purposes.

## **ELECTRICITY AT WORK**

### **BACKGROUND**

The use of electricity at work either in fixed (i.e. permanent) installations / equipment or portable equipment (e.g. power tools, kettles, computers etc.)

### **RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES**

Under the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989, employers have a duty to ensure that electrical installations and equipment are inspected at appropriate intervals and properly maintained by competent persons. In addition, persons must not work on live appliances unless absolutely necessary and there is no reasonable alternative.

The FNLRT AND FISHERY BOARDS should ensure that inspections of fixed installations (i.e. premises wiring and the wiring to hard-wired equipment) should be conducted at least once every 5 years by a competent electrical contractor. A copy of the certificate of inspection should be retained in the FNLRT Health and Safety File.

The FNLRT AND FISHERY BOARDS should maintain an inventory of all portable electrical appliances used in workshop / office and site locations e.g. portable power tools, computers, fridges, kettles and determine the appropriate portable appliance testing (PAT) requirements (i.e. frequency and type of inspection) for each appliance. Records of testing and the inventory should be held in the FNLRT Health and Safety File.

The Director and Bailiffs will ensure that testing is carried out on all electrical equipment in their areas of responsibility. The Office Administrator is responsible for maintaining the records of all such testing.

In the intervals between formal PAT testing of equipment (particularly power tools), the users of that equipment should regularly carry out visual inspections of such equipment to make sure that it is safe to use. Users can check for instance that the cable is in good condition, there are no signs of overheating, that RCD's (earth trip devices) where provided operate when tested etc. If a fault is identified then the equipment must be taken out of service until it is repaired by a competent person or replaced.

No employee or sub-contractor shall carry out work on live equipment or circuits at any time.

## ELECTROFISHING

### BACKGROUND

The use of an electrical current through water (i.e. the river or tributaries) in order to collect fish either for survey purposes or for broodstock. Two different techniques are employed which involve:

- individuals standing in small tributaries using either a generator based on the bank or wearing a battery backpack or petrol generator on the bank, or
- stretching nets across a wide section of river and passing an electrical current across that same stretch. The generator is boat mounted and there are a number of operatives in the river at points along the net.

It is not necessary to explore the techniques any further in this section, since this is a specialist area of work with a very detailed associated training programme.

### RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES

Electrofishing for surveying and broodstock capture purposes falls under the control of the River director, Bob Laughton. **No employee should carry out any electrofishing** of either type unless they are competent to do so. Any employee involved will, as a minimum have achieved the Scottish Fisheries Co-ordination Centre (SFCC) Level2-Introductory standard. To supervise electrofishing work, employees will be required to have attained the SFCC Level3 – Team Leader standard.

The Director is responsible for ensuring that electrical equipment is inspected at appropriate intervals and properly maintained by competent persons (see **Electricity at Work**).

Water and electricity are not regarded as good partners, and thus some significant risks exist when electrofishing. These may be compounded by the presence of seasonal (i.e. temporary) workers, who are perhaps novices in this work. Nonetheless, the risks can be properly managed if everybody involved follows the recognised SFCC codes of practice and the instructions of competent supervisors. The FNLRT AND FISHERY BOARDS do regard its employees as sensible and responsible but they do, however, consider it necessary to remind all employees involved of the following:

- any equipment must be used in accordance with training
- visual checks must be carried out on equipment and problems immediately reported
- horseplay of any description is prohibited e.g. trying to give someone a shock
- PPE that is provided must be worn and checks should be made of it e.g. ensuring that boots / life jackets are in good condition
- If in doubt, don't be afraid to ask

- the use of mobile phones when electrofishing is prohibited since it can be hazardous e.g. through recovering a phone that has fallen into electrically charged water and because it can also result in significant distraction.
- The FNLRT AND FISHERY BOARDS accepts no liability for any loss of, or damage to mobile phones as a result of failure to observe this policy.

## ROTARY SCREW TRAP OPERATION

### BACKGROUND

Rotary screw traps (RST) are used to capture downstream migrating salmon and trout smolts. The traps are constructed from aluminium and stainless steel and consist of two floating pontoons with a cone shaped screw positioned between them. The trap is positioned to face upstream and when the cone is lowered into the water, it turns allowing smolts to swim through to a holding box. The trap is inspected each day and any fish captured are identified and measured.



After measurement the fish are typically released a short distance downstream, although a proportion may be marked using a dye or other tag and released upstream to assess trap efficiency.

### RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES

Operation of the RST falls under the control of the River director, Bob Laughton. All **employees will be instructed in the installation and operation of the RST**. Currently no formal training course for trap operation is available but should one be developed employees will be encouraged to attend.

Several key risks are associated with the installation and operation of RSTs. The majority of these, general manual handling, drowning, slips and trips are covered elsewhere within this H&S policy. Additional precautions and procedures more specific to RSTs are outlined below.

- **Transport:** drivers should be competent at towing, light boards must be fitted to the trap/trailer and be fully operational.
- **Trap Construction and Installation:** All parts of the trap are light enough to be manually carried and installed but all staff should be instructed in correct lifting procedures, minimum of four staff are required to unload and construct a trap. Construction should take place in a still or slow flowing area of the river and then the completed trap pulled/pushed in to site using anchor ropes. Ropes must be of appropriate strength, appropriate tie off points should be identified prior to installation. Warning signs “Danger Keep Off” and “Danger Moving Machinery” must be installed.

- **Operation and Moving Machinery:** the central conical screw is lowered in to place by a winch. Lowering must be carried out slowly and carefully and the person operating the winch must retain a good firm grip on the winch handle at all times during this process. The conical screw then rotates under water flow and operators must not attempt to rest on or affect the drums rotation while it is the lowered position. All shackles, the winch and handle must be checked prior to installation, lubrication to the winch mechanism should be applied and the mechanism checked regularly during installation and operation. Any worn or fault part should be replaced immediately.
- **Removal of Fish:** The holding box is accessed through a large lid at the rear of the trap, this should be lifted and secured into position using a metal stay or chain depending on the type of trap. Care must be taken in windy condition to prevent the lid blowing over or closing on an operator removing fish. An additional staff member should hold the lid open during windy conditions. Fish are removed using hand nets and care should be taken to minimise damage, appropriate sized buckets with lids will be provided for fish transport to the bank for processing.
- **Fish processing:** Operators should set up an appropriate and flat site for fish processing, fish will be held in large tubs/buckets then anaesthetised, identified and measured. Scales will be taken using standard approach. Then all fish released downstream of the trap. A proportion of the catch will be marked using dye tattoos or other tagging techniques and released upstream to assess trap efficiency through mark and recapture techniques.
- **Storage and Maintenance:** After operation the trap is removed and stored on the trailer at a suitably sheltered site. Checks will be carried out and worn or broken parts replaced, lubrication for moving parts will be applied as required. Occasional checks will then be carried out throughout the period of storage.

Similar to other tasks the operating staff must,

- Operate equipment in accordance with training,
- Carry out visual checks on equipment and report problems immediately,
- Carry out repairs to any defective equipment if possible,
- Wear PPE that is provided and checks should be made of it e.g. ensuring that boots / life jackets are in good condition
- Not use mobile phones on or within the river around the RST,
- Not smoke (including e-cigarettes) on or within the river around the RST.
- The FNLRT AND FISHERY BOARDS accepts no liability for any loss of, or damage to mobile phones or other personal items as a result of failure to observe this policy.



## LONE WORKING

### BACKGROUND

Carrying out work on behalf of the FNLRT and FISHERY BOARDS whereby the associated risks are significantly increased due to the need for employees to work alone. For example, the risk of a member of staff suffering an injury (e.g. from slips, trips or falls), whilst on a river bank is always present. The staff members experience and awareness of the hazards along with clothing, sturdy footwear and means of communication in the event of a problem, mean that the risks are managed as far as is reasonably practicable. If, however, help is not readily available because of the remoteness of location, adverse weather conditions, or the lack of mobile phone reception, then obviously the potential consequences may be much more severe.

### RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES

**All** employees are responsible for their own and others' safety and must ensure that they take appropriate precautions where lone working could increase the risk to themselves or their colleagues. This involves:

- checking the risk assessment and any other relevant information relating to the work area or activity (e.g. photographs) to see if there are specific lone worker issues
- regularly notifying their manager of their intended movements and locations e.g. patrol areas, expected return time, nature of the work. This will need to be done at least on a daily basis, but more frequently if necessary.
- immediately advising their manager of any change to the plans for that could affect either their safety or any emergency measures that need to be in place

**Under no circumstances whilst** on the FNLRT and FISHERY BOARD's business, is it acceptable for employees to **enter water**, or undertake **work at height** when **working alone**.

## WORKING NEAR / IN WATER

### BACKGROUND

Any work that requires employees (and/or visitors, contractors etc.) to be near to or in water in such circumstances that there is a potential risk of drowning or other serious consequences.

### RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES

As with all work activities, it is the **manager's** responsibility to ensure that the risks from any work near to, or in water, are adequately assessed. This understandably includes other risks e.g. hypothermia, which must also be addressed in the risk assessment. Managers must therefore identify particular tasks and/or locations to which the above definition applies.

In all circumstances where a serious risk of drowning arises, the following rules must be followed by **employees**:

- the activity must never be carried out alone
- all persons involved should have suitable PPE including lifejackets which must be worn at all times where the risk exists
- an emergency lifeline (and flotation devices where appropriate) should be available at all times
- if the work has arisen unexpectedly, the employee must notify his manager that the work is taking place
- any other precautions that have been identified by a manager or in a risk assessment must be followed.

## **WORKING AT HEIGHT**

### **BACKGROUND**

Under the Work at Height Regulations 2005 working at height is defined as:

*(a) work in any place, including a place at or below ground level;*

*(b) obtaining access to or egress from such place while at work, except by a staircase in a permanent workplace.*

*where, if measures required by these Regulations were not taken, a person could fall a distance liable to cause personal injury;*

This definition means that some tasks that formerly would not have been regarded as working at height (e.g. standing on the back of a trailer) may now be considered to be such.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES**

The Work at Height Regulations 2005 require employers to assess work at height and take appropriate measures to eliminate or reduce the associated risks by following the hierarchy shown below: Where work at height cannot be avoided, the controls should so far as is reasonably practicable:

- avoid work at height if reasonably practicable to do so, and where this is not possible, to
- plan such work at height e.g. assess the nature and risks of the work, identify appropriate means of access, competence of individuals concerned, weather conditions, emergency procedures etc.
- take appropriate measures to prevent falls of persons or objects from height, e.g. use of fixed platforms, scaffolding, guard rails, etc.
- implement measures to arrest falls e.g. netting, safety harnesses etc.

Working at height may therefore be involved in forestry work or in simply using a ladder or step-ladder to reach a gutter. All managers must ensure that work at height is only be carried out by competent persons whether these be FNLRT AND FISHERY BOARDS employees or external contractors. All equipment used for lifting or bearing persons such as ropes and harnesses should be checked before use by a competent person and periodically examined in accordance with the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER). Records of such inspections should be retained in the Health and Safety File. In addition, any work at height that is not covered by a generic risk assessment (e.g. emergencies) shall be risk assessed beforehand to determine how best to carry it out.

Even where employees are familiar with the use of ladders and steps the danger can be complacency. This can lead to taking shortcuts and thus failing to observe basic safety precautions. Employees must take care of themselves and others.

**Under no circumstances should any employee carry out work on the roof of a building.**

Some basic guidance is shown below

## **GUIDANCE ON THE SAFE USE OF LADDERS AND STEPLADDERS**

### **Ladders**

- The general condition should be checked e.g. broken or bent stiles or rungs, excessive splintering of wooden ladders.
- They should always be placed on a firm, level surface.
- Information about their load-bearing capacity (SWL) should be visible on the stiles of the ladder; they should be capable of bearing the load imposed on them.
- They should be tied at the top where possible; if not it **must** be footed by another person to ensure that it doesn't slip

**N.B.** Ladders **must** be footed whilst being tied and untied.

- Where landing onto a platform, the top of the ladder should exceed that platform by at least 1100mm;
- They should not be used for long periods; if extended periods of working are required, then other more appropriate equipment e.g. scaffolding, cherry-pickers etc. should be used.

### **Step-Ladders**

- The general condition should be checked as for ladders e.g. broken stiles or treads.
- They should always be placed on a firm, level surface.
- Information about their load-bearing capacity (SWL) should be visible on the step-ladder; they should be capable of bearing the load imposed on them.

## **DRIVING AT WORK**

### **BACKGROUND**

The driving of any vehicle in the course of employment by the FNFLT. This includes private vehicles used for business purposes.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES**

Any employee required by the FNLRT AND FISHERY BOARDS to drive for work purposes must hold a full driving licence for the class of vehicle. It is expected that any such employee will obey relevant road traffic legislation, e.g. speed limits, drinking and driving, seat belts etc. In addition it is the responsibility of the vehicle driver to ensure that his/her vehicle is roadworthy. Vehicles must be regularly checked and any problems rectified as soon as possible.

All accidents, however minor, involving vehicles must be reported in accordance with the FNLRT AND FISHERY BOARD's accident reporting procedure.

All vehicles owned by the FNLRT AND FISHERY BOARDS shall be fitted with hands-free mobile phone kits. Research has shown that such kits can create as much distraction to drivers as hand held phones, thus reducing reaction time. For this reason, regular and lengthy conversations should not be conducted while driving; the hands-free option should only be used when absolutely necessary and only if it is safe to do so.

**Under no circumstances should any employee use a hand-held mobile phone whilst in control of a vehicle.**

Passengers who are not FNLRT AND FISHERY BOARDS employees must be informed that they travel at their own risk. Such passengers must comply with reasonable requests of the driver and must comply with all relevant legislation. Animals should only be carried if the vehicle has been adapted to contain them in such a way that neither they nor the driver is placed at risk (e.g. dog guards).

When towing loads, the maximum speed limits must be observed for each category (i.e. 50 mph for the patrol boat, 35 mph for fish tanks). It is also important that extra care is taken to ensure the roadworthiness of the vehicle being towed. Additionally, when driver visibility is impeded, trailers should be reversed under the direction of a banksman.

Remember that it is the driver of the vehicle that receives the points on the licence and that he/she has the ultimate responsibility for the vehicle/s when used on the public highway.

Only those persons deemed competent are allowed to tow vehicles or drive off-road. Should it be necessary, the FNLRT AND FISHERY BOARDS will make training available to any employee

who is required either to tow or to drive off-road. The names of those currently authorised to drive off-road and /or tow are provided on the following page.

**List of employees who are currently authorised to tow**

..... Date authorised .....

..... Date authorised .....

..... Date authorised .....

..... Date authorised .....

**List of employees who are currently authorised to drive off-road**

..... Date authorised .....

..... Date authorised .....

..... Date authorised .....

..... Date authorised .....

## Invasive Non Native (INNs) Plant Control

### Background

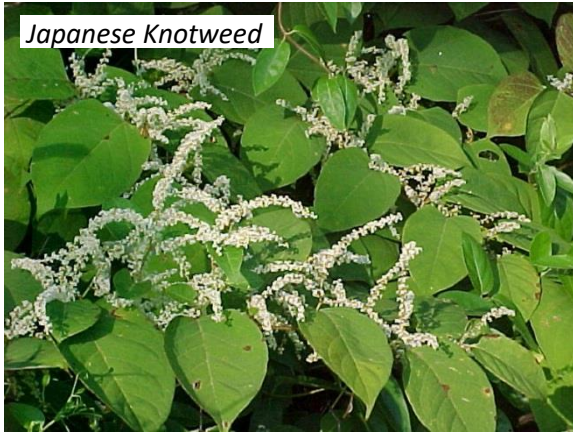
All three rivers, the Findhorn, Nairn and Lossie have serious infestations of Giant Hogweed, Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balsam in their lower reaches. A co-ordinated control programme across the three rivers began in 2011 and involves staff from the Trust, Boards, Estates, volunteers and contractors.

**Giant Hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*)** is a member of the Heracleum family along with other species such as Common Hogweed and Cow Parsnip. It originates from the Caucasus region and parts of Asia where it adapted its survival of the harsh climates by producing thousands of seeds each season. It was brought to the UK in the 19th century by the Victorian botanists and was introduced into Morayshire at around the same time. Its size and stunning appearance when flowering was highly prized and the warmer climate and nutrient rich soils in the lower reaches of the rivers Findhorn, Nairn and Lossie allowed it to become well established. Control



efforts in recent years have been patchy and un-coordinated allowing the plant to become the dominant species, choking out most native vegetation and reducing bio-diversity. When it dies back in winter it leaves huge areas of dead leaves and stalks which become susceptible to erosion, particularly on river banks. It can adversely affect agriculture. It's not illegal to have Giant Hogweed present on your land but if you allow the Giant Hogweed to spread to neighbouring land, then the owners of that land can bring legal action against you; it is also considered an offence to allow the plant to spread into the wild.

The plant can grow to a height of 5m, produce white umbrella shaped flower heads, have serrated edged leaves growing up to 1 metre across and produces a poisonous sap harmful to humans and animals.



Japanese Knotweed

**Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*)** is an herbaceous perennial, with stems typically about 2m tall and an extensive system of rhizomes. It has large, roughly triangular leaves with truncate, heart-shaped bases. Japanese knotweed is an invasive non-native weed, mainly in urban areas where it is considered a nuisance in property development, because plants regrow from rhizomes they can come up through gaps in flooring in conservatories and

patios. Japanese knotweed is also common along rivers and is present on the Findhorn, Nairn and Lossie. Very dense stands are present on the lower Findhorn and the middle sections of the Lossie.

**Himalayan Balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*)** is well established and extremely invasive throughout most of lowland Great Britain and present on the lower reaches of the Findhorn, Nairn and Lossie. It is an annual herb with stout succulent, reddish-translucent hollow stems to which can grow to 2.5 m height; leaves opposite or in whorls of 3, 5-18 cm long and 3-7 cm wide; flowers with short spur, helmeted upper petal, deep purplish-pink to white, strong balsam smell. When seed have formed these will spring considerable distances from the plant when disturbed. Grow well in moist and semi-shaded damp places along banksides and by slow-moving watercourses.



Himalayan Balsam

### Treatment of INNs Plants

All employees involved in INNs treatment will complete the appropriate training courses for safe application of herbicide and operation of sprayers and stem injectors (PA1/6) and are expected to adhere to the guidelines within the course.

Before treating Giant Hogweed great consideration should be given to the health and safety. The sap of Giant Hogweed is poisonous and brushing up against the plant can have severe consequences such as blistering of the skin and long term rashes which are sensitive to sun light. All bare skin should be covered up, depending on the size of the plants face protection may also be required. During treatment sessions, all staff will be issued with and **must wear**,



**Wellington boots or waders, protective white Tyvock suits, and nitrile gloves, face masks** will also be made available.

On completion of treatment any contaminated suits will be stored in a separate contained for subsequent disposal, and hand washing facilities will be made available. A contained of freshwater will be carried during any treatment events. All treatment equipment and clothing should be cleaned and inspected for seeds after use to avoid transporting them to a location which doesn't yet contain the plant,

Treatment of Giant Hogweed and Japanese Knotweed will be by using herbicide application, typically Round Up. Application will be backpack, hand sprayer or stem injector (Jap knotweed only). All spraying, stem injection and physical control of INNs plants must be carried out in a minimum team of two staff and/or trained volunteer.

Physical control methods such as long pole saws and hand cutters, may also be used for control of Giant Hogweed and Himalayan Balsam. All staff will be instructed in the safe use of these implements. During transport to and from control site all lades should be covered with the appropriate protective sheath.

For Giant Hogweed apply herbicide in early to mid-spring, applying on dry and windless days. Avoid spraying plants directly over watercourse. Several repeat treatments may be required.

For Japanese Knotweed spraying and stem injection may be used and treatments will be carried out from mid-August to late October. Appropriate concentration of herbicide will be determined and applied.

Physical cutting of Himalayan balsam should be carried out from May to July. Cut plants can be left in piles to decay.

### **Giant Hogweed and Personal Safety**

Giant Hogweed represents a potentially very serious health risk to humans and animals. The sap present in the plant causes burns and blistering to skin, ongoing issues of skin being photo-sensitive for several years and temporary or permanent blindness if the sap is in contact with your eyes.



**Blisters after exposure to Giant Hogweed sap.**

On contact the sap is released from broken stems or the bristles/ hairs growing on the stem and leaves. Simply brushing past a plant with your bare skin could be sufficient to cause problems. The sap contains substances called furocoumarins which “burn”. The severe irritation which results in photosensitivity, (fully described as Phytophotodermatitis) this will make the affected area extremely painful, with blistering occurring 24-48 hours after exposure and will probably result in dense pigmentation (purple scars). The effects of the photosensitivity may persist for years afterwards causing exposure to sunlight to be very painful. The scars can be extremely disfiguring and take months to heal and fade.

The furocoumarin substances are actually present in the sap of all members of the hogweed family but in much smaller quantities, sufficient to cause irritation rather than the severe effects of exposure to Giant Hogweed sap.

**Any staff members who come in contact with sap must inform other staff and seek immediate medical attention.**

There is no evidence of harmful effects to skin from contact with Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balsam.

## **USE OF FIREARMS IN PREDATOR CONTROL**

### **BACKGROUND**

It is necessary on some occasions for bailiffs to use shotguns or rifles in the legitimate protection of the salmon stock in the river and its tributaries. In most circumstances an employer is wholly responsible for any work equipment that it provides to an employee, both to ensure that it is properly maintained and that it is safely used. This cannot be the case in respect of the use of shotguns or firearms since the licensing laws do not permit a civilian organisation to own such weapons; the responsibility for obtaining a licence lies with the owner of the gun and the responsibility for issuing the licence rests with the police.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES**

The Director will be responsible for identifying those employees who are required to use shotguns and/or rifles when carrying out work on behalf of the Board. He will take reasonable measures to ensure that at all times the employee holds a certificate appropriate to the class of weapon.

Those employees who have agreed to shoot on behalf of the Boards, must at all times use their weapons in accordance with the law and best practice as set out by the British Association for Shooting and Conservation (BASC). Any employee whose licence is revoked for any reason, must inform the Director accordingly.

The Board accepts no liability in respect of any unauthorised or criminal use of any weapon.

## **AUTHORITY FOR THE POLICY**

### **Findhorn, Nairn and Lossie Rivers Trust, HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY – Jan 2019**

This policy document has been prepared with the aim of ensuring that the FNFLT achieves compliance with current legislative requirements in respect of health and safety. This document is supplemented with guidance and approved codes of practice provided by both the Health and Safety Executive and other relevant bodies. These should be consulted as appropriate and many of them are included in the appendices to this document.

No liability is accepted by the writer for any subsequent failure on the part of the FNLRT AND FISHERY BOARDS or its employees to comply with legal obligations in respect of health and safety.

This policy comprising 38 pages as of this revision is accepted by the FNFLT its current enforceable Health and Safety Policy with effect from the date below:

Signed ..... Position ..... Date .....

Signed ..... Position ..... Date .....

Completely revised and reprinted .....