



# UFUA AVIATION BRANCH

## WHS – SAFETY ALERT

### ISSUE

Introduction of new disc cutter and safety concerns with training package and AFFMs.

### CIRCUMSTANCES

ARFF is attempting to introduce a new piece of equipment [disc cutter] in circumstances where the training package is inadequate and elements of it contradict the manufacturer's specs/user's manual and there is conflict between the training package and AFFMs.

For instance:

- The training package says the blade should not be used to cut plastics [there is a highlighted note] while the AFFMs state the blade is capable of cutting plastics and does not mention any associated hazards;
- The fuel/oil ratio in the training package contradicts the manufacturer's spec of 50:1;
- The training package says the blade may clog with extended alloy cutting. There is no indication in regard to time in which this could occur. To clear a clogged blade, cut into concrete or masonry – where are these readily available at an incident? The training package says that ARFF are conducting research into the use of lubricant sprays and hose reel water sprays. The AFFMs say to use a light spray from a hose reel to cool and lubricate the blade;
- The training package says to hold the blade with a gloved hand when changing a blade. There is a locking system built into the saw so holding the blade when changing is not necessary. The training package says to do the reverse of the locking procedure;
- The training package and AFFMs state the saw can be used to cut through CFM without appropriate guidance on PPE and decontamination procedures.

Despite numerous attempts to get ARFF to consult with your Union they proceeded to continue to implement an inadequate training package and potentially compromise your safety.

### BRANCH COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT ADVICE TO MEMBERS

Your Branch Committee of Management strongly cautions against the use of the training package and new disc cutter until such time as the Union confirms that all issues have been addressed and that the training package and equipment are safe to use.

Authorised by Henry Lawrence, Branch Secretary UFUA Aviation Branch