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# **Managing banks and slopes safely**

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# Introduction

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- Challenges in maintaining banks and slopes
- The mistakes made by Local Authorities in managing banks and slopes
- Common themes in accidents and recent prosecutions

# Aims



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- Highlight the pitfalls than many organisations fall into
  - Lessons learned from accidents will provide pointers towards good practice
  - Sign post further advice
  - Answer questions

# How safe is your industry?

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# How safe is your industry?

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## Landscaping/amenity accidents

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- Over the last 10 years there have been an average of
  - 2 fatal accidents per year
  - 2 major injuries per week
  - 6 over 3/7 day injuries per week
  - cases of HAVS

# Health and safety – what's your problem?

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- Moving vehicles
  - Being hit by a moving vehicle
  - Mower overturns
- Manual handling
- Slips and trips
- Hand arm vibration syndrome
- Contact with moving machinery
- Struck by an object

# Recent prosecutions

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- An employee was killed when a mower overturned. Employer prosecuted and fined £20,000 and £20,425 costs
- 29 employees diagnosed with HAVS. Employer prosecuted and fined £25,000 and £9.417 costs
- An employee was injured when a mower overturned. Employer fined £12,000 and £17,000 costs



# What am I trying to achieve?

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- Compliance with a myriad of health and safety regulations?
- Avoid prosecution?
- Trying not to be sued?
- Trying to prevent accidents?

**What am I trying to achieve?**

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***How can I make it easier for the operator to do things the right way, rather than the wrong way?***

# What does success look like?

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- Mowing on slopes being properly planned, with risks assessed and control measures put in place, carried out by appropriately equipped, competent workers (or contractors) adequately supervised and appropriately monitored.

# What went wrong?

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- Work was not planned by a competent person
- Risk assessment –not site specific
- Unsafe systems of work, including HAVS
- Untrained operator, no information about slopes
- Machine operating outside manufacturers recommendations
- Inadequate supervision and management
- Inadequate health surveillance

# Good practice - planning

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## Planning the work to control significant risks

- adequately trained and competent workers
- suitable work equipment
- safe systems of work
- arrangements for equipment maintenance
- provision of information to employees
- selection and management of sub contractors
- on site supervision/management
- monitoring of performance

# Good practice – risk assessment

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- Risk assessment
  - Generic elements
  - Site specific elements
  - Dynamic components
  - Suitable and sufficient

# Good practice – risk assessment

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- Risk assessment for mowing on slopes
  - Does it *really* need mowing?
  - Alternatives:
    - Plant it
    - Landscape it
    - Spray it
    - Leave it
    - Graze it

# Good practice – risk assessment

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- Risk assessment for mowing on slopes
  - The scale and steepness of the slope - considering access/egress, topography and “run-off” areas.
  - Identify who is at risk from the operation consider the operator, members of the public, property, traffic, etc.
  - Availability of suitable equipment - is specialised machinery available to hire or via a subcontractor.
  - Weather and surface conditions likely to be encountered during the operation + consider disturbed areas.
  - Operator competence and identify any specific training requirements.
  - Health surveillance



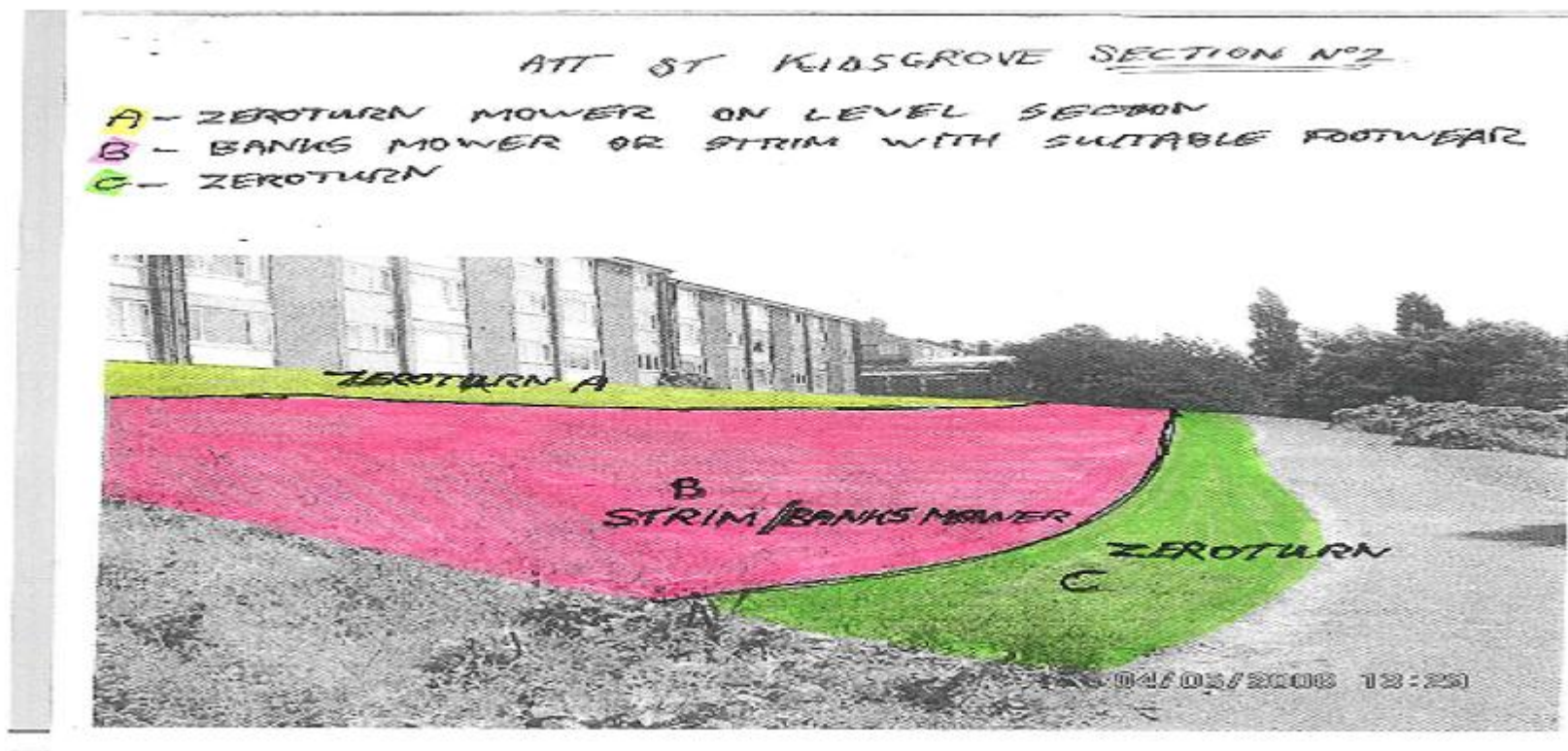
# Good practice – risk assessment



- Measure slopes, guesswork is almost certainly wrong. There are Apps for this



# Good practice – risk assessment



## Good practice - equipment

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- Suitable – ride on v pedestrian controlled v remote controlled
- ROPS
- Seatbelts
- Adequately guarded
- Properly adjusted
- Maintained (brakes, tyres)
- Trained operatives

# Good practice - training

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- Training
  - Operatives
  - What are they trained in?
  - Supervisors and managers

# Good practice - instruction

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- Information and instruction
  - Informing them of any hazards to be controlled e.g. public access, utilities, traffic, diseased trees, angle of slopes
  - Agreeing safe methods of work – using risk assessment, and for unusual jobs, a method statement
  - Monitoring and reviewing performance – make occasional visits to site, record performance

# Good practice - supervision

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- Supervision
  - Is it done
  - Is it effective
  - How is it recorded?

# Tree management

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- Several recent serious incidents
- Flurry of activity among LA's
- Make sure you ensure continuity of arrangements
- Staff training
- Common sense management of trees



## Where to go for advice?

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- All HSE guidance has been revised in the last three years

[www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)

- Increasing emphasis on digital delivery
- Risk assessment guidance, templates and example assessments

[www.hse.gov.uk/risk/assessment.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/risk/assessment.htm)