



# NPTC spraying certificate validity

Industry discussions earlier in 2017 highlighted the fact that there is considerable confusion among foresters, Christmas tree growers and their contractors as to the validity of NPTC/City & Guilds certificates held – and their appropriateness for particular tasks.

This confusion is entirely understandable as the initial 1987 rules were revised in 1994 and again in 2012 each time changing the validity parameters for new certificate holders.

The 2012 rule change was particularly onerous as most, but not all hand held applications gained after 2012 became grouped under a PA6 umbrella but with NO allowance for one qualification permitting use of other application systems.

This means that if you have a post 2012 PA6A, you are not permitted, for example, to use a weedwiper or stem injection/tree thinning technique without the appropriate PA6MC or PA6INJ certificate. Pre 2012 qualifications were unaffected by this change. The position was further complicated by the need for “grandfathers” to be qualified with a rather less onerous certification process.

It should be noted that all spray operators need a PA1 certificate in addition to the application certificate, unless they are “grandfathers” in which case a O51 certificate is required – even if a PA1 is held.

In order to attempt to provide more clarity the chart opposite has been developed over the summer and autumn, and is based on one produced by certification professionals in liaison with NPTC/City & Guilds in 2016. It has been modified for the guidance of certificate holders involved in forestry and Christmas tree production. As an indication of the complexity of this process, the table below is actually the eighth revision of the original paper!

## EXAMPLES

### See table opposite

#### Example 1

#### **A tractor driver took PA1 + PA2 in 1990**

This permits him / her to use hand held equipment such as a knapsack sprayer or hand held granule applicator, but not a hand held mistblower for which a PA9 is required.

#### Example 2

#### **A forest worker took a PA1 + PA6 in 2001**

He / she may also use hand held equipment such as a knapsack sprayer or hand held granule applicator, but not a hand held mistblower for which a PA9 is required.

#### Example 3

#### **A spraying contractor took a PA1 + PA6 in 2015**

He / she may only use a knapsack sprayer

or rotary atomiser. Other modules such as PAGMC for a hand held weedwiper will be required before using any other type of applicator. Modules PA1 + PA2 would be required for tractor boom spraying, and PA1 + PA3A for a cannon type airblast sprayer. The same would apply to Christmas tree growers.

#### Example 4

#### **A 73 year old Christmas tree grower has no spraying qualifications**

As he / she was born before 31st December 1964, then modules O15 + 152 will be required for most hand held uses, and O51 + O54 for using a hand held mistblower. Modules O51 + O53 will be required for tractor applied boom or cannon type airblast sprayers.

## New FR report on the integrated management of *Hylobius abietis* in UK forestry

Interim Guidance on the Integrated Management of *Hylobius abietis* in UK forestry - this new Note provides the latest guidance on the integrated pest management of the insect *Hylobius abietis*. It draws on some of the key findings after 7 years of an ongoing programme of collaborative forest industry research on alternatives to the use of the insecticide cypermethrin for protecting trees from *Hylobius* damage. In addition, as a separate Appendix, it summarises knowledge and guidance on the safe use of the insecticide acetamiprid, which is increasingly being phased in across the UK forest industry as an alternative to cypermethrin.

[www.forestry.gov.uk/fr/hylobius](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/fr/hylobius)



## Kerb revival

As noted in Andrew Heald's Certification notes (see p17), the removal of propyzamide from FSC's Highly Hazardous list has led to renewed interest in the product as an alternative winter treatment to glyphosate. So how does it fit in the weeding programme? The following bullet points provide the main features:

- Unlike glyphosate, propyzamide has no foliar activity, and works purely by root uptake.
- Propyzamide is very sparingly soluble, so requires plentiful rain to reach the weed roots, therefore the optimum timing tends to be November & December.
- Unlike glyphosate, propyzamide can be sprayed in rainy weather.
- It is essential that the herbicide has entered the weeds while they are semi dormant and before weed growth commences in the spring, as active weeds

can grow away from the weedkiller.

- Although overspraying of trees with glyphosate is ideally limited to pine & spruce, propyzamide can safely be sprayed over all crop species including broadleaves.
- Propyzamide reliably controls most grasses, but is not effective on tussocks, rushes and other coarse grasses. It can also have some activity on buttercup, sorrel and docks.
- There are currently over 40 propyzamide product with approval for use in the forest, including Kerb Flo, Kerb Granules, Careca, Cohort, Proper Flo, Relva and many parallel imports and “own brand” products sold by agchem distributors.
- Propyzamide is a lot more expensive than glyphosate, but as the above notes indicate, it nevertheless has a useful role in the vegetation control programme.



## MEMBER SERVICES **Pesticides helpline**

If you haven't used the service to date, be assured it is a free service operated by Confor's crop protection adviser Colin Palmer on behalf of Confor members. Colin can be contacted 8am to 8pm Mondays to Fridays on 01531 633500 (leave a message if necessary) or by email to: [branchline@xln.co.uk](mailto:branchline@xln.co.uk)

## SPRAYER OPERATOR CERTIFICATES

**How to use the chart: The headings identify the certificate types, and critically, the dates on which they were obtained.**

NPTC Certificate Held: Date Certificate Granted:		Tractor / ATV PA2A (i) (1987 - 1994) (ii)	Handheld PA6A (1987 - 2012)	Handheld PA6 (2012 to current date) (iii)	Handheld Grandfather (iv) 051 + 052
<b>Will my certificate (above) allow the uses below?</b>					
<b>Applicator to be Used</b>	<b>Typical Use</b>				
Knapsack/Rotary Atomiser to land	Weed control	Yes	Yes	PA6A required	Yes
Handlance from ATV	Weed control	Yes	Yes	PA6A required	Yes
Knapsack/Rotary Atomiser to or near water	Weed control	No	No	PA6AW required	Yes
Hand Held Mistblowers (v)	Insect control	No	No	PA9 required	051 + 054
Stem Injection (vii) Hatchet + glyphosate	Jap. Knotweed Tree thinning	Yes	Yes	PA6INJ required	Yes
Granules to land (Hand held)	Kerb Granules over transplant	Yes	Yes	PA6G required	Yes
Ecoplugs	Tree/stump control	Yes	Yes	PA6PP required	Yes
Weedwiper (handheld) Paintbrush	Weed control Cut stump	Yes	Yes	PA6MC required	Yes
Closed cabinet (vi) (forest nursery)	Hylobius control	No. PA12 only	No. PA12 only	PA12 required	051+ 054

### Notes:

(i) PA2A pre 2012 also permits use of tractor / ATV mounted rotary atomisers (CDA) & weedwipers

PA3A is required for tractor mounted mistblowers.

(ii) In 1994 the ability of PA2A holders to use PA6A equipment ceased.

(iii) PA6 is not a qualification in its own right, but an umbrella for all the individual hand held application certificates. Units in brackets (..) indicate those units available specifically for this task, but alone will not be able to be used for other tasks. ie. If PA6A was taken post 2012, then this qualifies the operator for knapsack & rotary sprayers only, and would disallow (for example) use of weedwipers or Ecoplugs.

(iv) "Grandfathers" refers to operators born before 31st December 1964 and using sprayers on their employers or own land only.

Unit 051 is required by all "Grandfathers" even if they hold unit PA1.

Unit 053 is required for tractor / ATV / mounted boomsprayers, mounted mistblowers, mounted granule applicators and mounted inter row sprayers.

v) Unit PA9 is required for the use of hand held mistblowers, or units 051 + 054 for "Grandfathers".

vi) "Grandfathers" using closed cabinet applications require units 051+ 054.

vii) Glyphosate labels tend to call tree thinning by hatchet and spray or paintbrush "stem injection" so PA6INJ is required for post 2012 candidates. However, if a paintbrush is being used then PAMC will be acceptable. PA6A qualification taken 2012 onwards are not acceptable for this task.



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