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## Accepted Climbing Practices (ACP)

Posted by Treeman - 09/29/2005 08:20pm

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I have broken this thread out into its own topic. Let's take a look at ANSI Z133.1 standards to see its format and how they deal with subjects. The subject here is CLIMBING PRACTICES. This is not to be confused with Wilderness Ethics or ethical issues. We are talking about gear and technique here. Yes?

Now comes the big question. Who wants to manage this committee or conversation? We are not talking about one person doing all of the work. Let's make that clear right now. We need a designated group (committee) that creates input and talks the issues out. Then the issues are brought forth here on the board (in small manageable pieces so we do not get lost in generalities) for more discussion and/or questions are raised here for more input on specific pieces.

So who is going to sign up for the issue of "Accepted Climbing Practices"? I personally decline the lead role position because I need to stay focused on the book. Anyone brave enough to step up to the plate in a leadership capacity? How about those valuable committee members? We need to get started in a simple fashion because this is a big project that will need lots of input (managed input at that) from everyone.

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## Committee member

Posted by Patrick - 09/29/2005 11:03pm

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I'm willing to help take a look at the ANSI standards to see what we can glean from it so that its structure and details that apply to recreational climbing can be used.

Patrick

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## Second The Motion

Posted by JimK - 09/29/2005 11:24pm

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I'll second the motion for Patrick to be involved

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Posted by Leon - 09/29/2005 11:43pm

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The applicable parts of the Z133 (i.e. pertaining to tree climbing) will be found in sections 8.7, 8.8 and 9.1. Some of the definitions in section 3 may also be useful, specifically: 3.4 - 3.8, 3.13, 3.16, 3.22 - 3.23, 3.29, and 3.33. Some applicable standards on PPE can be found in 4.2.2 and 4.2.6 - 4.2.7. It may be worthwhile to briefly mention the standards on proximity to electrical conductors (section 5), although this might fit into a description of a pre-climb tree inspection.

Also, keep in mind that the Z133 is currently under revision, and may have some new standards concerning climbing gear. Tom Dunlap may be able to tell us when the new version is expected to be released.

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## Checking out ANSI

Posted by Patrick - 10/05/2005 04:31pm

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Is there an online resource that contains the ANSI standards? How would I examine the standards?

Thanks,  
Patrick

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Posted by Leon - 10/06/2005 01:12am

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The standards are available from ANSI and the ISA webstore. They are copyrighted though, and are not distributed for free. I believe the Z133 costs in the neighborhood of twenty bucks.

However, I am willing to take a risk and break the law! Email me your address (treesurf@gmail.com) and I will send you a copy of the sections that relate to tree climbing.

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**So let's get a core group to study this.**

Posted by Treeman - 10/06/2005 02:53pm

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How shall we organize this research? Who wants to give the orders and assignments? This is a call for leadership here.

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Posted by Leon - 10/06/2005 10:27pm

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Well, it looks like I got volunteered for this! (gotta learn to keep my mouth shut :D )

I am trying to put together an outline of the topics that should be covered in Accepted Climbing Practices. So far I have three main areas. Let me know if I have left anything big out, or if there is a better way to organize this:

- Gear standards: double locking biners, MBS of ropes, saddles, etc.
- Pre-climb inspection: looking for widowmakers, electrical hazards, structural integrity of the tree, inspection of gear, etc.
- Guidelines for the climb: ALWAYS tied in with lanyard or climbing line, maintaining a safe angle of the climbing line, "bitter end" knot in end of line on multiple pitch climbs, etc.

As you can see each one of these three main areas breaks down into many smaller topics. I am hoping, as a first step, that I can get some volunteers to help make a comprehensive list or outline of the topics that need to be covered in each main area.

Patrick has already offered to look through the ANSI Z133, which should provide us with most of the accepted climbing gear standards.

I think the pre climb inspection should be fairly straightforward as well. If I remember correctly, Jepson's book has a pre climb checklist in it. (I'd check and see but I lent it out and never got it back.)

The guidelines for the climb may be the most difficult. I feel that it should be extremely clear about what is safe and what is not, but at the same time should be kept as simple as possible, so as not to stifle creativity in climbing techniques.

So.....any takers? :)

I am willing to collaborate and compile as much of this as I can. I already have a number of ideas for each main area, but would like to wait and see if I can get some others involved first. I should also point out that I am a professional tree worker. This forum is my first exposure to recreational tree climbing, so there may be some things that I am not familiar with, or may do differently. Please point these things out to me (and anything else stupid I might say!).

Alright, I'll wait for some responses now and we'll see how this develops.

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Posted by Tom Dunlap - 10/07/2005 12:25am

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On October 19 the Z133 committee will meet in Baltimore to vote on the changes to the 200 version. If things go smoothly there will be a new Z in February. There aren't a lot of proposed changes that would effect RTC.

If you're looking for a copy of the changes go to Treebuzz and find the ANSI Z133 thread.

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Posted by Leon - 10/08/2005 03:04am

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Let's not all jump at once now!

Just kidding. I have some long workdays coming up this weekend and may not be able to look at this until next week. I'm going to try to come back with something more detailed for us to get started from.

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## Getting organized.

Posted by Treeman - 10/08/2005 02:36pm

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Leon. Work this weekend? I've never worked weekends! (Lie) Be safe and hand the rakin' over to someone else.

Let's start with a little organization here. How about starting a message group using an e-mail distribution list? I forget what they call these groups. I think Yahoo has that kind of service free, no? Does anyone volunteer to set up the group? Others can then join the group and have the inside track on the discussion, or you can NOT have others enter the group, avoiding a free for all. Possibly you can make personal INVITATIONS into the group. Just brain storming here.

Start with one part of gear, figure it out with the group, then move on to the next item. Maybe a starting list would help. Maybe start with items in the Z133 that are mentioned first. Later bring up new items not on the Z133. Again, just brain storming.

Any other suggestions? Anyone else want to participate? Patrick? You in? (your name was dropped earlier).

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## Second thoughts

Posted by Treeman - 10/09/2005 12:39pm

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Second thoughts about having the discussion on a separate group away from the board here as mentioned in the previous posting. Let's use the board here as opposed to going somewhere else. It keeps the conversation centralized.

For those just entering this conversation, read completely what has already been said so far on the "Standards Forum" to get an idea of the development of the conversation, not just the last posting.

So I ask again, who wants to roll up their sleeves? The call for leadership on this topic is still taking place. However, there needs to be organization, or you end up with a town hall free for all meeting where little or nothing gets accomplished.

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Posted by Patrick - 10/10/2005 11:29am

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I'm in. I hope to obtain the ANSI standards soon to assist with the review.

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Posted by Tom Dunlap - 10/10/2005 07:25pm

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Patrick.

Don't pay for the Z133 standards. On 10/19 the Z committee will meet to put the final touches on the 2005 standards. This will make the 2000 version obsolete. If you know of a climber that has been through the EHAP training they should have a hard copy. Go to Treebuzz and find the thread about the new Z standard.

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Posted by Leon - 10/11/2005 03:09am

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Well this appears to be going a little slow. I'm going to take Peter's advice and start with some ideas on one subject (climbing equipment) and see if I get any responses.

Here is what the Z133 has to say about arborist climbing gear. Some of this is quoted, some is my paraphrasing. In a few places I have added my own opinions, which are in parentheses:

Saddles: "Type II saddle belts and lanyards as specified in ANSI A10.14 shall be worn when above ground level". (Seems to me like rock climbing harness would be okay as long as the climber doesn't mind being incredibly uncomfortable. Also I would have no problem with a homemade harness, for instance one made out of tubular webbing as long as the parts all meet the safe weight requirements)

Ropes: ANSI says that arborist ropes should be 1/2 inch, have a MBS of 24kn when new, and should be designated as arborist climbing lines by the manufacturer. Split tails should meet the same strength requirement. The new edition will probably include the newer 11mm lines as OK. It does not mention static entry lines.

Lanyards: (Lanyards should have the same MBS as ropes. Other than that it doesn't really matter what you use.)

Carabiners and Snaps: These should be double locking and at least 5,000 lbs MBS. (I don't know where they came up with the 5,000 lbs. It makes much more sense to me to use 22kn, which is the standard in every other industry I'm aware of, and is only 50 pounds less than 5,000.)

Other climbing devices: The only other device the Z133 currently as far as I can see mentions is the false crotch, which it says should be rated to 5,000 lbs MBS. (My opinion is that ascenders, descenders, false crotchs, etc. are all OK as long as they are rated to 22kn and used properly.)

Splicing: "Splicing shall be done in accordance with manufacturer's specifications."

Here's a few more quotes from the current Z133:

"Equipment used to secure an arborist in the tree or from an aerial lift shall not be used for anything other than its intended purpose. EXCEPTION: The arborist climbing line may be used to raise and lower tools."

"Ropes and climbing equipment shall be stored and transported in such a manner to prevent damage through contact with sharp tools, cutting edges, gas, oil, or chemicals."

"Arborists shall inspect all components of their climbing system for damage, cuts, abrasion and/or deterioration before each use. Excessively worn or damaged components shall be removed from service"

"Arborist climbing lines shall never be left in trees unattended".

Well there you have it, folks. A crash course in what the Z133 currently has to say about arborist climbing equipment. Obviously this does not cover everything that could be mentioned (tree hammocks, for example), and there is no reason that we cannot change what it does cover. My fingers are tired so I'm going to let this go for some responses.

What do you guys and gals think? What needs to be added? What needs to be taken away? What needs to be changed? What is the average wing speed velocity of an unladen swallow?

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Posted by moss - 10/11/2005 09:10am

Since we're looking at this as an international guideline and we're not writing arborist guidelines it would make sense to go with the 22kn minimum strength threshold for all equipment used for life support (I think Leon is also recommending this).

-moss

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## Breaking it down into smaller pieces.

Posted by Treeman - 10/13/2005 09:38pm

This subject will now be broken down into smaller pieces in topics by themselves to keep focused. From here on out when we talk of Accepted Climbing Practices we will head it under ACP. Like: ACP- Carabiners, ACP- Saddles, etc. I will start with what I see as topic threads as proposed by our subject facilitator, Leon.

Ethics will be handled in a similar manor. They will look like; Ethics- Noise, Ethics- Ground Impact, etc.

Thanks Leon for your review of Z133 subjects. You've given us a place to start, subject wise.

I encourage others to take part too. This is a discussion after all.

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Posted by SRT-Tech - 09/28/2006 01:54am

Originally posted by Leon

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what about friction saver rings? whats the boards desire for WL and material? some of us use stainless steel anchor shackles (3000 - 10,000 lb WL) for our friction saver straps....

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Posted by Leon - 09/28/2006 02:27am

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There is no specific spec for friction savers in ANSI. As long as all components are rated to 5,000lbs you're good to go. As always, use common sense.

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Posted by SRT-Tech - 09/28/2006 02:42am

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what are the rings rated for on the friction savers that many companys sell??? anybody have any idea?

(this is what i'm refering to:

[http://www.aie.org.uk/images/tools/cambium\\_saver1.jpg](http://www.aie.org.uk/images/tools/cambium_saver1.jpg)

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Posted by moss - 09/28/2006 09:40am

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Originally posted by SRT-Tech

what are the rings rated for on the friction savers that many companys sell??? anybody have any idea?

I'd check with Buckingham, they seem to have the corner on the market in the U.S. on this type of false crotch. They come in steel or aluminum, the steel rings are out of sight strong. The aluminum would have to be 5000 lbs or better as Leon mentioned. I have never heard any report of a ring failing on these for arborist work. This type of saver is not as commonly used in the rec climbing world. I have a Buckingham with steel rings and used to climb on it a lot but rarely use it now. It's heavy and I like my conduit pipes, they're very easy to install and wear well. The ring savers are not bad to install but when you take them out it's best to lower them with a throwline so as not to damage the rings on ground impact and that invites problems in some situations.

-moss

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