QTRA Quantified Tree Risk Assessment

Simply Balancing Risks With Benefits

Issue 19, September 2015

Newsletter

and events calendar

Subscribe to Newsletter

QTRA Field Trips - A Nice Day at Windsor

A big thanks to those of you who came along to the Windsor Great Park QTRA outing on 2nd August. It was a really instructive day packed with discussion and debate that has helped to inform the ongoing development of QTRA, and the work in progress VALID approach to estimating Probability of Failure.

The participation of everyone chipping into the debates was really welcome. In particular, there was some great input from both users and non-users in the area of assessing tree stability, and on this occasion it was particularly useful to have Paul Muir's knowledge of biomechanics to help frame the calibration exercises. Paul brought SIA (Statics Integrated Assessment) to the discussion, which is perhaps an approach that we could be making better use of when estimating the 'probability of failure' of trees. By providing us with a safety factor for stability of the tree, SIA can give us greater confidence in selecting a QTRA 'probability of failure' range.

The wonderful old veteran trees in the park provided great opportunities for discussion of tree stability, decay and structurally adaptive growth in trees and we really benefited from the group knowledge and from a range of expertise in this area of tree assessment. Thanks to everyone who attended.

Here's a shot of some of the attendees at the end of the day re-enacting one of the voting exercises.

There are further field meetings planned for QTRA Users and anyone else who is interested in tree risk management. They are scheduled for Duncombe Park in North Yorkshire on the 12 September, Chatsworth House near Matlock in Derbyshire on the 13 September and the Escot Estate near Exeter, Devon on 24 October.

Just to remind you, the idea behind these days is they are social outings, with a potter and a picnic, amongst marvellous veteran trees and great landscapes, but that they also come with some training value.

Mike Ellison and David Evans are going to be at all the days, and they plan to run some Probability of Failure estimating exercises. Those that come along can share opinions and experience, and debate the factors that affect tree and branch stability. As well as going through the QTRA calibration exercises, the days will also provide a road-testing opportunity for VALID as a way of helping User's to estimate Likelihood of Failure with greater confidence and consistency.

QTRA Users in Canada

At the end of July, Mike Ellison travelled to Peterborough, Ontario to deliver QTRA training to arborists and to managers of both city trees and wildlife areas. The workshops were well received and the feedback was that QTRA is a tool that could make a major contribution to proportionate tree risk decision making in North America. We are already looking at the possibility of further training in Ontario.

The stimulus for the visit, hosted by Paul Hambidge of Peterborough Council, was the developing crisis that is the emerald ash borer (*Agrilus planipennis*). Across the greater Toronto area, the native white ash (Fraxinus americana) is being devastated by this imported Asian beetle.

Quantified Tree Risk Assessment Ltd, 9 Lowe Street, Macclesfield, Cheshire, SK11 7NJ

T: +44(0)1625 618999 E: admin@qtra.info W: www.qtra.info

Events Calendar

Australia

QTRA Training

02 Dec - Perth

08 Dec - Broome

14 Dec - Melbourne

21 Dec - Sydney

Visual Tree Assessment - Estimating Probability of Failure Training

03 Dec - Perth

09 Dec - Broome

15 Dec - Melbourne

22 Dec - Sydney

QTRA Update Training

04 Dec - Perth

VTA Field Trip

20 Dec - Hambledon Cottage, Parramatta

New Zealand

QTRA Training

17 Dec - Auckland

Visual Tree Assessment - Estimating Probability of Failure Training

18 Dec - Auckland

If you would like to attend our training workshops but your area is not included in these dates, please get in touch and we will look at scheduling training near you.

In North America, emerald ash borer has no effective natural predators of the tiny eggs, which are widely distributed on the stems of the ash in a way that foraging by native bird species provides very limited control. In one study, predation of larvae by woodpeckers has been recorded at an average 16%, which will be a component of evolving natural control

agents. Parasitoid wasps have been released into several states in the USA and the impact on the regeneration of ash is under evaluation.

Until the recent emergence of ash dieback

(*Chalara fraxinea*) in the UK, Fraxinus was the second most commonly planted genus and makes up around 15% of the UK's broadleaved woodlands, and the impact of emerald ash borer could have a catastrophic impact on the British landscape. This is a pest that the arboricultural community should be aware of. The first symptom is usually dieback in the crown of the tree, followed by the visible D shaped emergence holes in the stem of the infected tree.

QTRA in the US of A

David Evans is now back in tune with Greenwich Mean Time following his adventures in the sub-tropics of the Sunshine State, where he delivered a presentation called 'Safety in Numbers: Balancing Risks with Benefits' at the International Society of Arboriculture's conference in Florida. 'Safety in Numbers' is an introduction to QTRA v5, a look at the substantial advantages of using numbers rather than words, and the considerable benefits QTRA provides for the risk assessor and risk owner/manager…….

The presentation also included a brief case study of North Somerset Council (NSC) who were an earlier adopter of the QTRA approach to tree risk assessment and management. In times of severe financial austerity for many councils, not only have NSC met their legal duty of care obligations, but have done so whilst maximising the benefits from their estimated 300 000 tree assets, and achieved this at half the cost of tree risk assessment mitigation tree work down from £200 000 to £100 000.

Safety in Numbers' seems to have created a lot of interest and been very well received judging by the questions asked afterwards, feedback, and requests for copies of the presentation. To this end David has gone the extra mile and bravely fought off the ague of jet-lag to write an enhanced transcript of the presentation to accompany the PowerPoint slides.

The presentation is a great introduction to the concepts of risk, value in quantifying risk, and the many benefits QTRA provides. It can be downloaded from the QTRA site here; http://tinyurl.com/nwy94nl

---

QTRA in a Snap

Whilst preparing for the presentation David was keen to dispel any ill-founded myths that QTRA is somehow difficult to use, or understand, because it is built of a foundation of internationally recognised and widely accepted numbers that define levels of risk tolerance. So he thought what better way than undertaking a QTRA of the tree in the worst condition on the site where the conference was hosted. Below is the snapshot of the Target.

Quantified Tree Risk Assessment Ltd, 9 Lowe Street, Macclesfield, SK11 7NJ, United Kingdom

T: +44(0)1625 618999 E: admin@qtra.info W: www.qtra.info

Events Calendar

United Kingdom

QTRA Training

07 Oct - Liverpool

13 Oct - Monmouth

21 Oct - Exeter

28 Oct - Glasgow

03 Nov - Warwick

Visual Tree Assessment - Estimating Probability of Failure Training

08 Oct - Liverpool

14 Oct - Monmouth

22 Oct - Exeter

29 Oct - Glasgow

04 Nov - Warwick

VTA Field Trips

12 Sep - Duncombe Park

13 Sep - Chatsworth

24 Oct - Escot Estate

If you would like to attend our training workshops but your area is not included in these dates, please get in touch and we will look at scheduling training near you.

Being unfamiliar with the typical value for young alligators (the highest value Target), a discussion with someone who knows better (the guy that feeds them), and a quick search online ensued. As is often the case, it enabled David to immediately dismiss four of the six Target ranges, and narrow it down to Range 4 or 5, depending on the number of alligators

Here's the tree in question.

The Fig tree is growing out of landscaped rock outcrop about 5m above the alligator pool and clearly in trouble. The symptoms warranted a closer look at the base of the tree because there was talk of possible fungal colonisation by a *Ganoderma* species. With the aide of a local guide it was possible to go off piste,

David accepted the 'risk transfer', and scaled the rocks over the alligator pool with a Thor 710 hammer held between his teeth, where he established there was no obvious indications of extensive decay. Can you guess two of the likely causes of decline?

QTRA User's Newsletter Articles

It would be great if Users could add to the content of future newsletters by sending articles that they think others would benefit from reading . Send them to admin@qtra.co.uk

---

Quantified Tree Risk Assessment Ltd, 9 Lowe Street, Macclesfield, SK11 7NJ, United Kingdom

T: +44(0)1625 618999 E: admin@qtra.info W: www.qtra.info