

# BUSH BULLETIN

## Bush serious accidents - June 1993

### Logging — serious accidents 25

There were no reported fatalities during the month.

However, the number of serious accidents reported rose considerably. This was due, in

part, to the receipt of late returns for May. The statistics table has been altered slightly to fit in with the OSH "Record of Serious Harm" forms.

**Erratum:** Bulletin No. 65 June 1993 - Statistics box read "May" instead of "April".

Serious accidents for June 1993 — logging			
Activity		Cause	
Felling	4	Falling object	3
Trimming	9	Moving object	9
Crosscutting	2	Hit object	2
Hauling	3	Object carried	2
Skidwork	3	Trip/slip/fall	1
Driving/operating	2	Lifting /stretching	1
Log cartage	2	Repetitive movement	1
		Kickback	5
		Mechanical malfunction	1
	25		25
External agency		Type of injury	
Chainsaw	9	Fracture	7
Branch	4	Sprain/strain	3
Log	3	Laceration	7
Tree	4	Bruise	3
Part tree	1	Crushing	2
Rigging and gear	4	Multiple	3
	25		25
Body part			
Head	2	Trunk	2
Shoulder	2	Back	1
Elbow	2	Knee	1
Arm	4	Leg	3
Hand	5	Foot	1
		Multiple	2
			25

There were nine accidents while trimming. Over the page we look at the reasons for these and some measures to try and reduce these types of accidents.

The above accidents were reported to Health and Safety Inspectors (Bush) during June 1993.

■ **Chainsaw kickback (4) - lacerations to fingers - 3**  
- lacerations to leg - 1

Cold hands due to wet, winter conditions mean the operator's grip may not be as secure as normal. Woollen mittens or chainsaw gloves can assist to keep hands warm and do not interfere with saw control.

To reduce the likelihood of kickback:

- Hold the saw firmly with both hands;
- Wrap the left thumb under the front handle and in the safety mitt if fitted;
- Always know the position of the bar tip;
- Use plenty of bar to avoid bar tip contact;
- Be especially careful when cutting small limbs or light material that may catch in the chain;
- Do not overreach;
- Use safety chain and the correct bar and chain combination; and
- Tension, sharpen and set depth gauges to the manufacturer's specifications.

■ **Mechanical malfunction — chain broke**

Inspection and preventative maintenance can reduce the possibility of chain breaks.

- Look for, and replace, any cracked side or drive links;
- Check the chain for any unusual or excessive wear in side or drive links and use manufacturer's troubleshooting guide to remedy;
- Tension, sharpen and set depth gauges to manufacturer's specifications; and
- Ensure lubrication is adequate.

■ **Cut tensioned branch - branch hit face**  
- saw thrown in face

Use correct technique to prevent these types of accidents from happening.

- Stand on the side away from the tension and release with two cuts - the first on your side and then on the other side.

■ **Fell off tree while trimming — fractured ribs**

Trimming from on top of a tree can cause back strain and result in trips and falls.

- Wherever possible, trim from the ground alongside the tree; and
- Wear spiked boots. Studies show they reduce the frequency of trips and slips.

■ **Repetitive movement (bending) — Strained back**

How can we reduce back problems from continued bending while trimming?

- Bend your knees — not your back;
- Where possible, trim from the ground standing alongside the tree and use correct techniques;
- Let the tree take the saw weight; and
- Do this exercise 3-4 times daily:

Stand erect, place hands in small of back, bend backwards to curve lower spine, hold briefly and then back to erect. Repeat ten times.

Back injuries are very serious and can cause life-long pain and suffering. With a little care, some of these injuries can be avoided, and recurring back problems reduced.

*The All Blacks exercise — why not you?*