

# BUSH BULLETIN

## Bush fatalities & serious accidents April 1994

### Logging

#### Fatalities 4

- In a pine logging operation during February, a dozer rolled down a steep bank. The operator, who was not wearing a seat belt, was thrown around in the protective canopy and received fatal injuries. The canopy was undamaged.
- A tree being felled hit the head of a previously felled tree causing it to kick up from behind a stump, slide down another felled tree and hit the feller from behind.
- An agricultural contractor died in hospital six weeks after being hit by a broken off, falling branch while felling macrocarpa for sawlogs.
- A self-employed person was forming firebreaks and service tracks. The dozer went backwards over a very steep bank and the operator was thrown out with considerable force, receiving fatal injuries on contact with the ground.

#### Serious accidents 7

Activity	Cause	
Felling	5 Hit by falling object	4
Trimming	2 Hit by moving object	1
	Contact object carried	1
	Kickback	1
	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>

External agency	Type of injury	
Chainsaw	2 Fracture	1
Branch	1 Laceration	3
Tree	2 Crushing	2
Part of tree	2 Multiple	1
	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>

Body part		
Hand	2 Foot	2
Trunk	1 Multiple	2
	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>

### Forestry and tree work

#### Serious accidents 4

Activity	Cause	
Pruning	1 Hit by falling object	1
Thinning	1 Hit object	1
Driving	1 Slip/slide	1
Firewood	1 Kickback	1
	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>

External agency	Type of injury	
Chainsaw	1 Fracture	1
Branch	1 Laceration	1
Vehicle	1 Bruise	1
Terrain	1 Petrol	1
	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>

Body part		
Hand	2 Back	1
Multiple	1	1
	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>

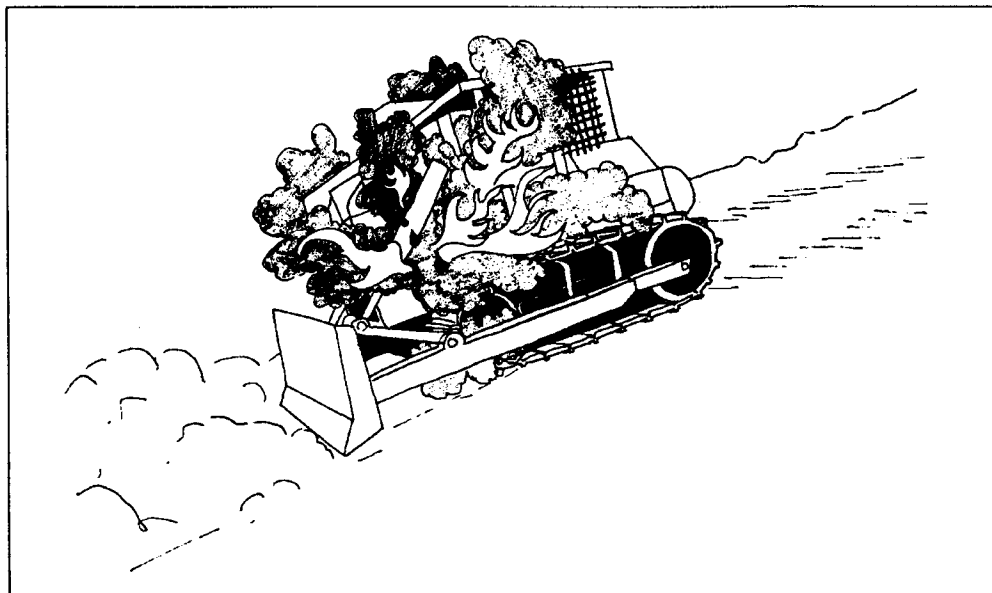
The above accidents were reported to Health and Safety Inspectors (Bush) during April 1994.

It is pleasing to note a drop in the number of accidents from previous months. However, it appears that some returns may be a little late and will be included in next month's summary. It will be interesting to follow the trends over the next few months as we move into the colder winter conditions. Let's hope the trend continues.

**You are the people who can make this happen.**

It is tragic to record the four fatalities. Two were caused by dozers rolling, one by a common cause of accidents — material falling into the work area and the other by a tree sliding on previously felled stems.

# Dozer operator burned by hydraulic oil



A bulldozer operator suffered severe burns to his face and hands when hydraulic oil was ignited.

## What happened

The operator was contracted to roller crush an area prior to planting. The roller had been detached and the operator proceeded to open up new ground.

He had been blade crushing for about 45 minutes and was working down a moderate slope when the left front hydraulic line burst. Oil sprayed along the side of the dozer onto the motor and into the operator's compartment. He slowed the engine down for about 20 seconds and then shut the motor. However, he became concerned at the rising water temperature and decided to start the motor and let it run at a slow idle. He sat in his seat watching the gauges after the restart. After about 20 seconds, a ball of flame erupted from the front of the machine and engulfed him as he sat in his seat.

## Accident cause

A hydraulic hose burst spraying oil which ignited on the hot motor.

Usual daily maintenance was carried out and the operator had complied with general safety standards in that the machine was equipped with a fire extinguisher and plenty of clean water and a radio telephone was available. An observer was also present.

Emergency procedures were in place and a serious accident and potentially serious situation were soon under control. The forestry company and the contractor are to be complimented on this.

## Prevention

Burst hoses are not uncommon but the consequences in this case were severe.

The operator made the following recommendations:

1. Carry out a frequent visual inspection of hoses and replace any that are worn or damaged.
2. Do not stay in the machine in the event of a burst oil hose line.
3. Keep the idle time as short as possible.