

BUSH BULLETIN

Bush fatalities and serious accidents - July 1994

Logging

Fatality

A feller was crushed by a dead snag (spar, keg) he was cutting after his saw went through a hidden rotten section and the snag slid off the stump.

Serious accidents 23

| Activity | Cause | |
|-------------------|--------------------------|-----------|
| Felling | 7 Hit by falling object | 3 |
| Trimming | 3 Hit by moving object | 8 |
| Breaking out | 2 Contact object carried | 2 |
| Skid work | 8 Misjudgement | 1 |
| Driving/operating | 2 Slip/slide | 1 |
| Work preparation | 1 Trip/stumble | 2 |
| | Kickback | 5 |
| | Contact liquid | 1 |
| | | <u>23</u> |

| External agency | Type of injury | |
|-----------------|----------------|-----------|
| Chainsaw | 8 Fracture | 8 |
| Branch | 1 Dislocation | 1 |
| Log | 4 Laceration | 9 |
| Tree | 1 Bruise | 2 |
| Terrain | 1 Crushing | 1 |
| Hand tool | 2 Burn | 1 |
| Rigging | 2 Puncture | 1 |
| Vehicle | 1 | |
| Dead spar/top | 3 | |
| | | <u>23</u> |

| Body part | | |
|-----------|------------|-----------|
| Head | 4 Knee | 1 |
| Arm | 2 Leg | 2 |
| Hand | 4 Foot | 6 |
| Back | 2 Multiple | 1 |
| | | <u>23</u> |

Forestry and tree work

Fatality

A farmer clearing trees suffered fatal injuries when a tree being felled slid downhill and struck him where he was standing in the work area.

Serious accidents 15

| Activity | Cause | |
|---------------------|-------------------------|-----------|
| Land preparation | 1 Hit by falling object | 1 |
| Pruning | 6 Hit by moving object | 1 |
| Thinning | 1 Hit object | 2 |
| Access | 3 Slip/slide | 5 |
| Plotting/survey | 2 Trip/stumble | 1 |
| Fire protection | 1 Lifting/stretching | 2 |
| Railway maintenance | 1 Fall | 2 |
| | Contact object carried | 1 |
| | | <u>15</u> |

| External agency | Type of injury | |
|------------------|-----------------|-----------|
| Chainsaw | 2 Fracture | 4 |
| Branch | 1 Sprain/strain | 5 |
| Tree | 1 Laceration | 2 |
| Shrub/vegetation | 4 Bruise | 1 |
| Vehicle | 1 Crushing | 1 |
| Ladder | 3 Puncture | 2 |
| Terrain | 2 | |
| None | 1 | |
| | | <u>15</u> |

| Body part | | |
|-----------|--------|----------|
| Head | 3 Back | 1 |
| Shoulder | 3 Knee | 1 |
| Hand | 2 Leg | 2 |
| | Trunk | 3 |
| | | <u>3</u> |

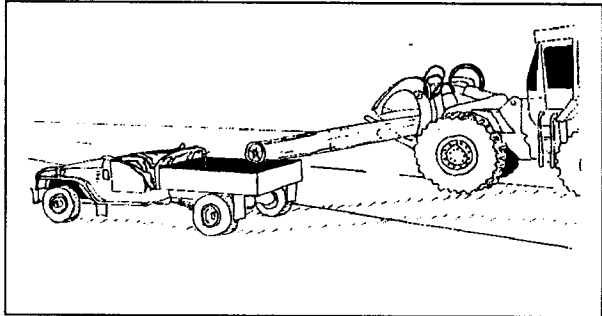
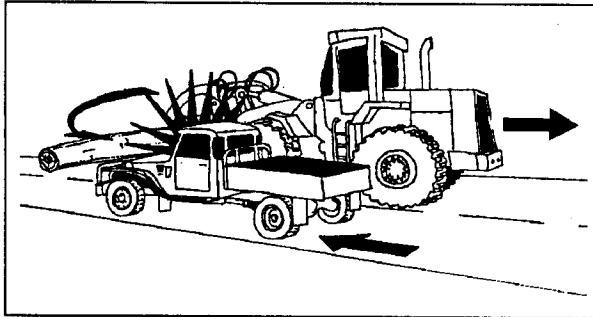
The above accidents were reported to health and safety inspectors (forest operations) during July 1994. This will be the last monthly report of accidents. In future we will summarise three-monthly intervals. The next summary will be for the three months ending 30 September 1994.

In logging operations, there was a large number of accidents involving people working on skids. Most were caused by chainsaw kickback while cutting or trimming, or being hit by moving logs. Correct chainsaw techniques and awareness to possible log movement are essential.

On the reverse side we look at a fatal accident involving a log barrier being placed to control traffic on a logging operation.

Poor or incorrect ladder techniques and slipping and sliding caused most pruning accidents. We discussed slipping and sliding in a recent bulletin. In ladder pruning, make sure your ladder is against the trunk on the uphill side with a firm footing. Do not overreach while on a ladder.

Log barrier tragedy



A roading contractor was fatally injured when he drove into a log being placed as a traffic barrier.

What happened

A logging gang was working alongside a private forest road. They were preparing to block off the road so that they could fell trees close to the road. The logging contractor went at one end to place signs to warn oncoming traffic. At the other end a log was to be placed as a barrier. A front-end loader was to put the log in place. As the loader went to shift the log into position, it reversed into the right hand lane of the approaching vehicle. The log stuck out over the left hand lane. The approaching vehicle hit the log at about cab level and the driver suffered fatal injuries.

Accident cause

Failure to place warning signs of a road closure.

Prevention

Section 19 of the *Safety Code for Forest Operations — Part 3: Logging* covers precautions to be taken when closing roads or felling trees within two tree lengths of road traffic. It is not recommended to place physical barriers when closing roads. It is important, of course, that signs be in place before any work starts in the area. The steps can simply be explained as:

1. Display the road closed sign:



2. Display tree felling sign.



3. Run high visibility tape across the roadway.

Comment

Three parties were charged over the accident.

1. The loader driver was charged with causing the death of the roading contractor by carelessly using a motor vehicle (front-end loader). The defendant was found guilty. His licence was disqualified for the statutory six months and he was fined \$1500 and costs.
2. The contractor was charged under section 11A of the Bush Workers Act for failing to display appropriate signs or have flagmen in place as required. The contractor was found guilty and convicted and fined \$250, ordered to pay Court costs of \$95 and a contribution to prosecution costs of \$500.
3. The company that owns the forest was charged that as an employer it had not taken "reasonable steps to prevent an offence". The company was convicted and fined \$250 and \$500 in Court costs. This decision was appealed against and the appeal was successful.