

Bush fatalities and serious accidents July - September 1994

Logging

Fatalities 3

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

A self-employed farmer was felling trees, one of which fell backwards and slid downhill onto him.

A tree uprooted by a slight wind struck a skid worker from behind while he was preparing logs. **Details of this fatality are covered on the reverse side.**

Serious accidents 50

Activity	Cause	
Felling	11 Hit by falling object	6
Trimming	10 Hit by moving object	20
Breaking out	4 Contact object carried	6
Stropping up	1 Slip/slide	6
Hauling	1 Trip/stumble/fall	3
Skidwork	11 Kickback	6
Access	1 Mechanical malfunction	1
Maintenance	1 Contact liquid	1
Driving/operating	6 Misjudgement	1
Transportation	2	
Splicing	1	
Work preparation	1	
	50	50

External agency	Type of injury	
Chainsaw	13 Fracture	15
Branch	4 Dislocation	1
Log	10 Sprain/strain	5
Tree	4 Laceration	16
Spar/top	3 Bruise	2
Terrain	2 Crushing	7
Hand tool	3 Burn	1
Rigging	4 Puncture	3
Vehicle	1	
Trailer	2	
Wire rope	4	
	50	50

Body part		
Head	6 Knee	5
Arm	3 Leg	12
Hand	9 Foot	9
Trunk	1 Multiple	2
Back	3	
	50	50

Forestry and tree work

Serious accidents 34

Activity	Cause	
Land preparation	3 Hit by falling object	1
Roading	1 Hit by moving object	4
Pruning	12 Hit object	2
Thinning	6 Contact object carried	5
Spraying	1 Slip/slide	10
Fire protection	1 Trip/stumble/fall	6
Felling	1 Lifting/stretching	3
Access	7 Repetitive movement	1
Plotting/survey	2 Vehicle movement	2
	34	34

External agency	Type of injury	
Chainsaw	6 Fracture	12
Branch	2 Sprain/strain	7
Tree	4 Laceration	9
Shrub	4 Bruise	1
Hand tool	3 Crushing	1
Vehicle	1 Puncture	3
Ladder	5 RSI	1
Terrain	6	
All-terrain vehicle	2	
None	1	
	34	34

Body part		
Head	5 Trunk	3
Shoulder	3 Back	4
Elbow	1 Knee	1
Arm	1 Leg	6
Hand	4 Foot	4
Multiple	2	
	34	34

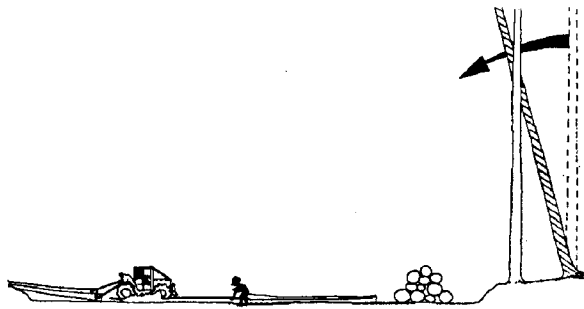
The above fatalities and accidents were reported to Health and Safety Inspectors (Forestry) during July - September 1994

This is our first three-monthly summary of reported accidents. If the current trend continues, the number will be considerably higher than last year.

In logging, felling, trimming and skidwork are the main areas where accidents occur. Many accidents involve being hit by trees, logs and branches. There are also a number of accidents involving chainsaws.

Pruning remains the main danger area in forestry. Slipping, falls, trips, stumbles and accidents with ladders are the main causes resulting in fractures, lacerations, sprains, strains and eye punctures.

Tree uprooted by wind fatally injures skid worker



A skid worker was measuring logs when a tree, uprooted by wind, struck him from behind.

What happened

The gang was clearfelling in 24-year-old radiata pine.

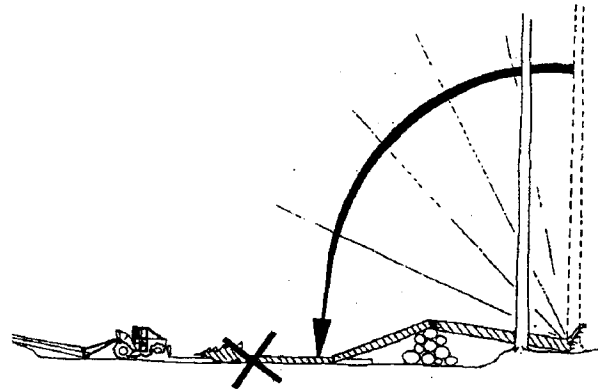
They were working twin skids. When hauling and processing was being done on one skid, felling and loading out would be done on the other.

The deceased was grading and measuring logs for processing. The skidder operator saw the tree falling and yelled to the deceased, but with the noise of the machine and wearing hearing protection, the warning was not heard and the tree struck the skid worker from behind causing injuries from which he died a short time later.

Accident cause

A strip of trees about 20 metres wide had been left adjacent to the skid and marked the boundary of two work areas. Beyond this strip, the area had been clearfelled by another contractor.

The tree which was uprooted and struck the skid worker was part of the strip of trees that had been left standing. Wind velocity recorded at a nearby remote weather station averaged between 14 and 25 kph. However, at about the



time the tree was blown over, a gust of 43 kph was recorded. Prior to the wind gusting, the inspector (forestry), who was in the area on the day, did not consider the wind to be a significant hazard.

The tree fell across the logs laid out on the skid, breaking into sections with the impact. The deceased was struck from behind by the top section.

Prevention

The forest has a history of wind throw.

The group of trees adjacent to the skid, after 24 years in a forest situation, were left exposed to wind because of the clearfelled area behind them.

An examination of the windblown tree showed that it had a shallow root structure in contrast to other stumps exposed in forming the skid site. This could have contributed to the tree toppling over.

The inspector recommends that when:

Clearfelling: Remove any trees within one tree length of any skid site or processing area before starting the block.

Production thinning: Remove all root-damaged, leaning and dangerous trees within the reach of skid sites or processing areas before starting thinning.