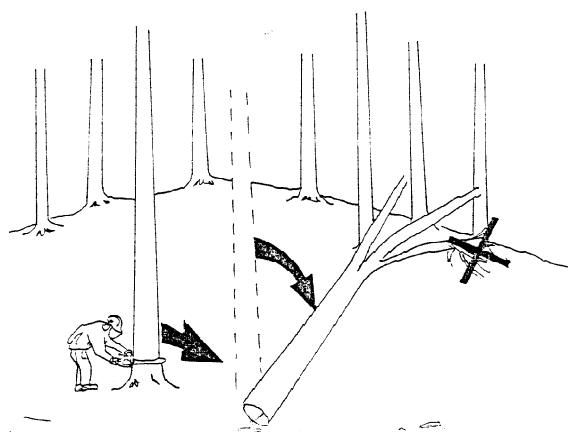
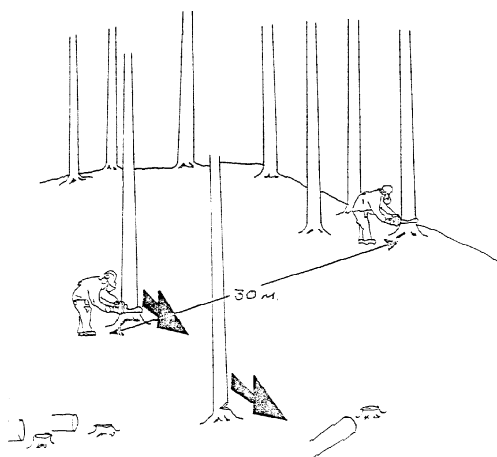


# Forestry Bulletin

## Think and Think Again—"Two Tree Lengths"



Working within two tree lengths resulted in a faller being hit by a tree felled by a fellow worker.

### What happened

A start back after a long work break meant the crew of a radiata clearfelling operation were to fell trees.

Due to lack of fuel containers, the two involved in the accident decided to work together using the tree-for-tree system. Felling is carried out by each in turn with only the felling chainsaw running. Once trees are on the ground, both can proceed to carry out the delimiting.

After working this method for some time, they decided to split up and work at either end of the felling face. There was a low ridge between them so they could not see each other but were still within two tree lengths.

One faller had a tree sit back on him and he was not able to get a wedge in the felling cut. As it was windy, he was worried about his mate's position and moved to check this. He was not able to hear him and he went back to his work area and started to scarf a driving tree to get the cut-up tree down. However, before he could start the drive, the cut-up tree was effected by the wind and fell uphill and across the ridge top. It struck the other faller who had by then started to scarf another tree.

The tree struck the faller on the head, shattering his

helmet on impact and causing concussion and a wound which required stitching.

### Cause

- Faller not ensuring that the two-tree-length area was clear before commencing felling.
- Fellow worker moving into the two-tree-length zone while felling was taking place.

### Prevention

Sounds simple—Observe the two-tree-length rule.

There was obviously a lack of work organisation when the two workers separated and the presence of the small ridge cut off their sight of each other. However, there is no excuse for working in or entering the two-tree-length zone. Over the past few years there have been a number of fatalities due to people ignoring this simple rule.

### Outcome

The faller was found guilty under Section 19 of the Health and Safety Employment Act 1992 for "not taking all practicable steps to ensure that no action of the employee while at work causes harm to another person".

He was convicted and fined \$1200.

**Remember**—he also injured his fellow worker.

# Don't Overload ATVs

The driver of an ATV was thrown under the machine when it tipped backwards.

## What happened

A work vehicle was unable to reach a work site due to a bridge collapse. In order to get men to work, an ATV was loaded with planting gear and two passengers climbed aboard and proceeded up the access track.

It had climbed only 60 metres when it tipped backwards. The two passengers were able to jump clear but the driver was thrown under the machine suffering back injuries that resulted in hospitalisation.

The machine continued on and rolled into a swamp.

## Cause

Overloading the ATV with equipment and passengers.



## Prevention

ATVs are single rider machines. Unless specifically allowed and provided for by the manufacturer, passengers shall not be carried.

When fitted with carriers to convey loads, the manufacturer's recommended loadings and instructions must be followed.

# Recent Court Cases

## Working on a dozer which was being used as mobile anchor

An employee was asked to replace a starter motor of a dozer being used as a mobile anchor in a cable logging operation. The employee had finished fitting the replacement starter motor and was attempting to start the dozer when it was dragged about 18 metres and the employee catapulted into a dry creek bed.

The Judge accepted that, as a matter of common sense, the company should have not have used the cable while maintenance work was carried out.

The company, charged under Sections 6 and 50(a) of the Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992—  
“Being an employer, failed to take all practicable steps

to ensure the safety of an employee.”—was convicted and fined \$750 with Court costs \$95.

## Access into unguarded area

A worker's arm was broken when caught in an unguarded trapping area of a log clamp which was part of a chipper incline conveyor feed.

The company was charged under Sections 6 and 50(a) of the Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992 for “failure to take all practicable steps to ensure the safety of an employee.”

The Judge convicted and fined the company \$4000; Court costs \$95; solicitor's fee \$750. The injured worker was awarded \$2500 of the fine.

## Erratum

In *Forestry Bulletin* 117, we stated that the third logging fatality involved a skidder. This should have read loader. The error is regretted.