

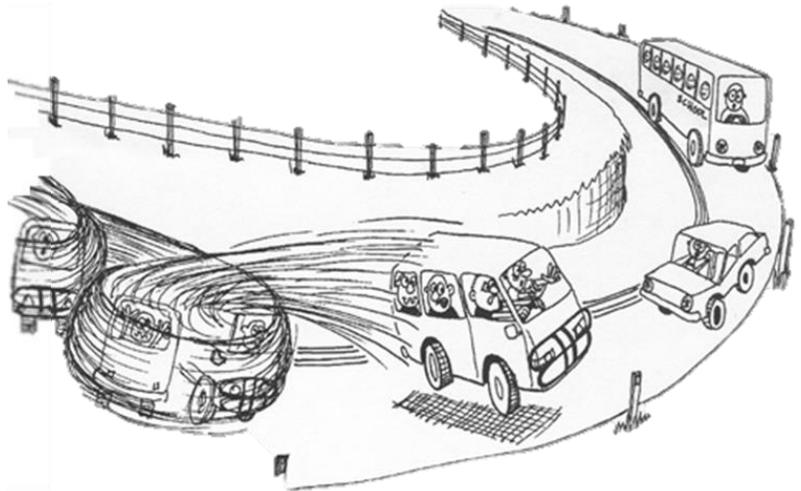


# -Black Ice-

During July there were four similar driving incidents involving frosty conditions or black ice. One involved a member of the public losing control of their vehicle and crashing into our Dunedin branch office. Fortunately, there were no employees present at the time! Two of the incidents fall into the **high potential incident category** as they involve crews of workers and/or multiple vehicles.

In one of those incidents, three vehicles following each other through the Rotoma hills hit black ice and lost control. It is not hard to see the potential for serious harm!

With **NIWA advising a few more frosty periods this winter** – drivers need to be alert to (black-ice) conditions and take extreme care!



## So... Here's a few tips!

- Always pre-check your vehicle for the correct tread depth and tyre pressure.
- Properly de-ice your vehicle before setting off – **to ensure all-round visibility!**
- Leave **extra distance/space** between you and other road users; however, keep an eye on vehicles ahead that may suddenly swerve for no apparent reason.
- Avoid over-steering and **heavy braking** – **drive slower** in a lower gear.
- Black ice usually forms without creating bubbles, 'blending' with the underlying road.
- Ice forms in **sheltered areas** e.g. under trees and readily on bridges – due to the cool air beneath and on top of the bridge.
- The good news is that ice sheets (patches) average less than 6 metres in length. If you skid or lose traction, stay calm – **do not brake** – and only gently steer the vehicle.
- If you start going off the road, try to **steer the vehicle** to the safest place. Following a crash, **evaluate quickly** whether it is safer to stay in your car or to get out of it.

# Normalisation of Deviation!

## What does this mean?

“...There is a tendency, over time, to accept defects, faults ...and shortfalls as normal or as a part of normal practice.” – The **Harvard Business Review** calls this ‘the normalisation of deviation’.

Think about this in terms of a worker that uses a ladder with broken rungs; the more times he climbs the ladder, without incident, the safer it seems to him. So climbing a faulty ladder becomes his ‘normal’ practice!



In addition, when people carry out a bad practice, and nothing bad happens immediately their natural tendency is to ignore the rules designed to keep them safe! That bad practice may go uncorrected until it **combines with enabling factors** – and then WHAM!

## FIPS 7268 Lost Time Injury (Lacerated hand)!

**Description:** A skidworker was undertaking QC attempting to flush-up a log end. Warm starting his chainsaw with the throttle-lock ‘on’ the spinning chain made contact with the log end causing kick back. The bar flew up and lacerated his right hand, which was still in the air after pull starting.

**Normalisation of deviation:** Incorrect warm starting procedure (throttle lock on), incorrect stance (having the saw bar directly out front – rather than pointing left).

**NB:** Readers are encouraged to refer to the [BPG – Chainsaw Use p. 10, 13-14](#)

**Enabling Factors:** Starting the chainsaw in close proximity to the log ends where the tip of the bar could make contact before the chainsaw was under full control.

# PPE – Is Yours Up to Scratch?

The **ACoP Safety and Health in Forest Operations** – (s.3, page 28) states that the “...employer shall provide all appropriate personal protective equipment (*PPE*) to protect employees from harm due to any hazard at the work area, and shall ensure it is used correctly, inspected and maintained to fulfil its protective function.”

A recent review of PPE, notably of chainsaw boots and high visibility (Hi-Vis) clothing shows that we need to **give our attention to PPE... and recalibrate our thinking!**



The figures above, marked (1) through (3), clearly demonstrate three important lessons:

- Figure (1) – Shows Hi-Vis clothing that has clearly degraded, through use, to the point that the garment no longer serves as an ‘**alert to a worker’s presence**’.
- Figure (2) – Displays part of a Hi-Vis jacket fitted with ‘**retro-reflective**’ tape. This garment, photographed in poor light, is near new. Can you notice the difference that the **Day/Night (D/N) tape** makes, as it catches and reflects a light source?
- Figure (3) – Shows a Level 4 chainsaw (cut-resistant) boot, manufactured in January 2014. It did not prevent a laceration to the operators’ foot (see Safety Bulletin #92).

The technical analysis report notes, “...the sole has worn down to the upper in parts and the upper rubber has suffered extensive cuts across the toe, vamp and forefoot.” This allowed “**moisture damage to the protection system and delamination.**” In short, this “...boot was compromised...” and no longer able to fulfil its protective function!

## New Rules<sup>1</sup> for Hi-Vis, Boots & Chaps!

- Hi-Vis clothing shall display AS/NZS 4602 or NZFOA labelling and be, in all cases 'Class D/N' i.e. having 24-hour (both day and night) visibility.  
**NB:** This includes wet weather/rainwear.
- Hi-Vis clothing shall be checked regularly (a minimum daily) against an approved swatch (or chart) and replaced immediately when non-compliant.
- Chainsaw cut-resistant boots shall be replaced when cut or holed.
- Chainsaw cut-resistant legwear (chaps) shall have the purchase date recorded either on the garment or in the PPE register and replaced after six months continuous (daily<sup>2</sup>) use.



## Best Practice for Maintaining PPE...

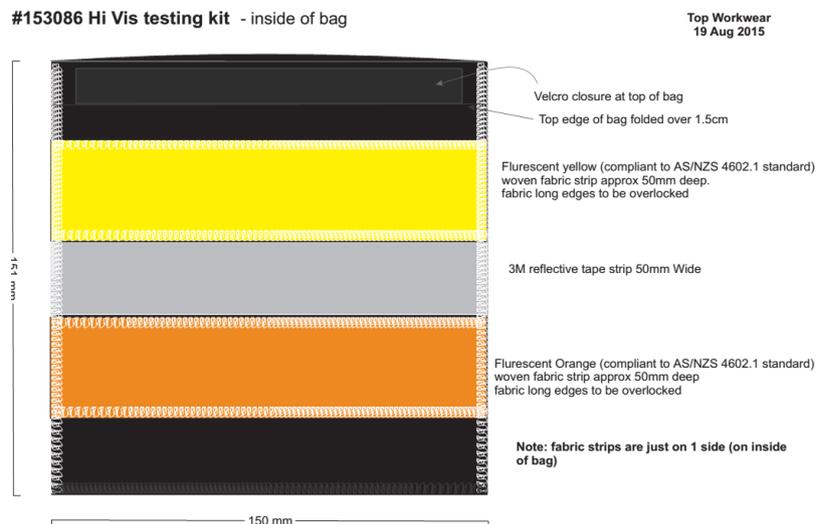
The [BPG for Personal Protective Equipment](#) on **page 3** notes, “a hi-vis garment that is dirty or faded will be less obvious to other workers and thus will provide less protection to the wearer. Garments should be washed regularly to preserve their high visibility. If washing does not restore high visibility, the garment should be replaced.”

On **page 7**, the BPG notes, “Leather boots should be treated with a water resistant seal before being worn” ...and “every 2-3 months” thereafter. Importantly it notes that “any work boot, **but particularly chainsaw cut-resistant gumboots, should be replaced when cut.** A cut gumboot does not provide adequate protection and can be a hazard in itself if it catches on something.”

On **page 5**, the BPG notes, “Getting oil on your protective legwear is common” and “if too much soaks into the protective layers, they bind together.”

Therefore, it is recommended, “That leg protection is replaced after 6 months’ continuous<sup>2</sup> use... or after a total of 0.5 litre (one chainsaw tank) of oil has been spilt on to them.”

<sup>2</sup>Pertaining to ‘daily use’ e.g. skidwork.



**NB:** The ‘Hi Vis testing kit’ as illustrated above is a prototype of a ‘swatch’ – designed to assist wearers of Hi-Vis clothing.

<sup>1</sup> These rules are for **immediate implementation** (1 September 2015) for all new purchases of Hi-Vis clothing. We do understand that the new rules (for more general implementation) will require a grace-period in order for Contractors to complete a full retrofit of crews. In view of that, the date for **full compliance has been set for the 1<sup>st</sup> November 2015.**