Don't Light Up! – Smoking

What happened? A skidworker was seriously burnt when his cigarette (or perhaps lighter) ignited fuel that had spilt from the chainsaw onto his clothing and body.

Caution: Smokers may think… 'This will never happen to me!' However, this type of incident is common enough to warrant that we all give this subject serious thought!

Background Information:

After refuelling, the skidworker waited in the safe zone while the loader completed various sorting tasks including laying out a new deck of stems.

Receiving the 'all-clear', the skidworker walked back onto the skid. It was then that he noticed that fuel had spilt from the loose fuel cap. A few moments later, he was on fire!

The Root Cause here is smoking while using petrol (or a petrol powered device). Thinking that the risk of a fire is low, some workers may be lulled into a false sense of security. The facts are 'fuel-spills' are common and 'fires' have occurred on several occasions. Clearly, the risk of harm is present when workers smoke around fuels!

Fuel and Smoking – Reminders: Both the Approved Code of Practice at 4.1.6 and our contracts have basic rules that cover refuelling and smoking – **please follow these**!

Employers together with employees would be wise to consider (perhaps at the next safety meeting) what 'additional steps' to implement, to ensure everyone stays safe.

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Decisions… When Things Change!

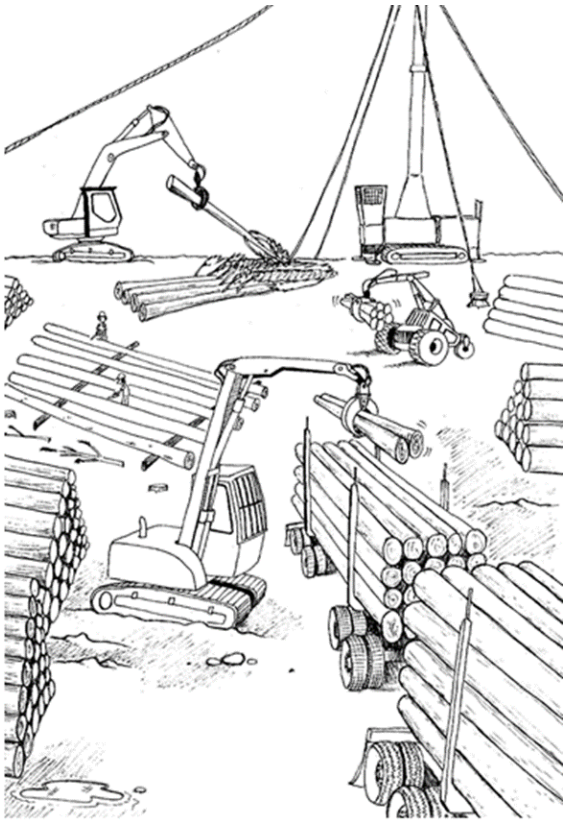
Upset Conditions…

"…The common point between on-the-job safety and worker injury is decision-making prompted by an **upset condition** – any event that interrupts a normal process and leads a worker to make a choice outside his or her routine"

Peter Lineen adds, "There are always higher risks whenever people must deviate from normal working routines."

NB: Incident reviews suggest that workers are up to 35 times more likely to be injured working during an upset condition than during normal operating conditions!

Peter Lineen is the Chief Operating Officer, for the BC Forest Safety Council (British Columbia).



FIPS 7049 High Potential Incident – Man vs. Machine!

Description: A skidworker started work on a stem. At the same time, the skidder operator reversed over the stems' head while turning to exit the skid. This caused the butt of the stem to move and knocked the skidworker over. The skidder operator had been leaving to the right of the skid – changing direction (and the plan), this time he drove to the left and effectively caused an 'upset condition'.

Skid-sites are busy places where ground-workers are especially prone to contact – especially when things **do not go to plan**! While the rules (**see ACoP** s. 6.2; 13.3) are very clear, managing change is just as important. We all know that circumstances arise. If we want to change the plan, then it is essential to '**STOP WORK**' and first use your '**RADAR**'!

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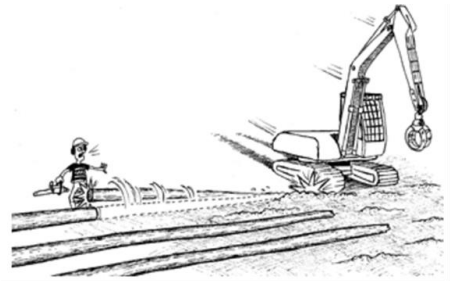
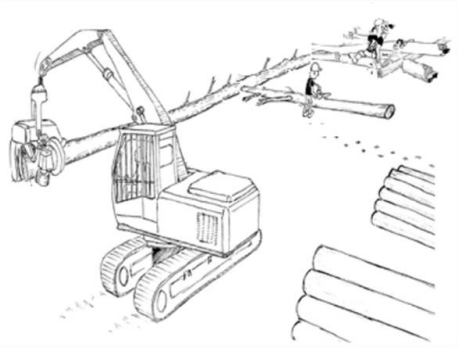
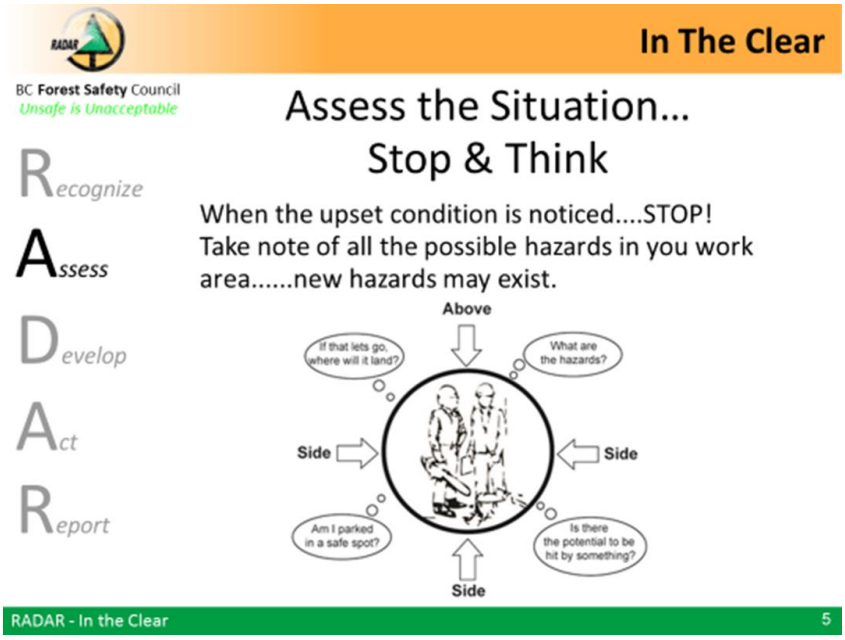
Upset Conditions! Stop Work – Use RADAR!

The ACoP Safety and Health in Forest Operations – (amendment s.18, pages 12-13) states that the employer's '…**documented health and safety system…' should include '…stop-work processes for …upset conditions'**!

A useful process in this respect – published by the **British Columbia Forest Safety Council** – and known as RADAR includes separate Power Point presentations covering silviculture, harvesting and trucking operations. It is certainly worth a look!







The British Columbia Forest Safety Council website notes: "…Here you will find resources and information to help improve your worker's skills in identifying and controlling the hazards they face on the worksite. …You may want to use the resources on this page as a check of your own current system, or just to increase your hazard awareness by looking at things a bit differently. Whether you are a contractor, manager or supervisor, using the RADAR tools can certainly help reduce the risk of injury or illness in your operation."

The "RADAR approach" can be found here: http://www.bcforestsafe.org/RADAR

A 'RADAR' on change – the key to success!

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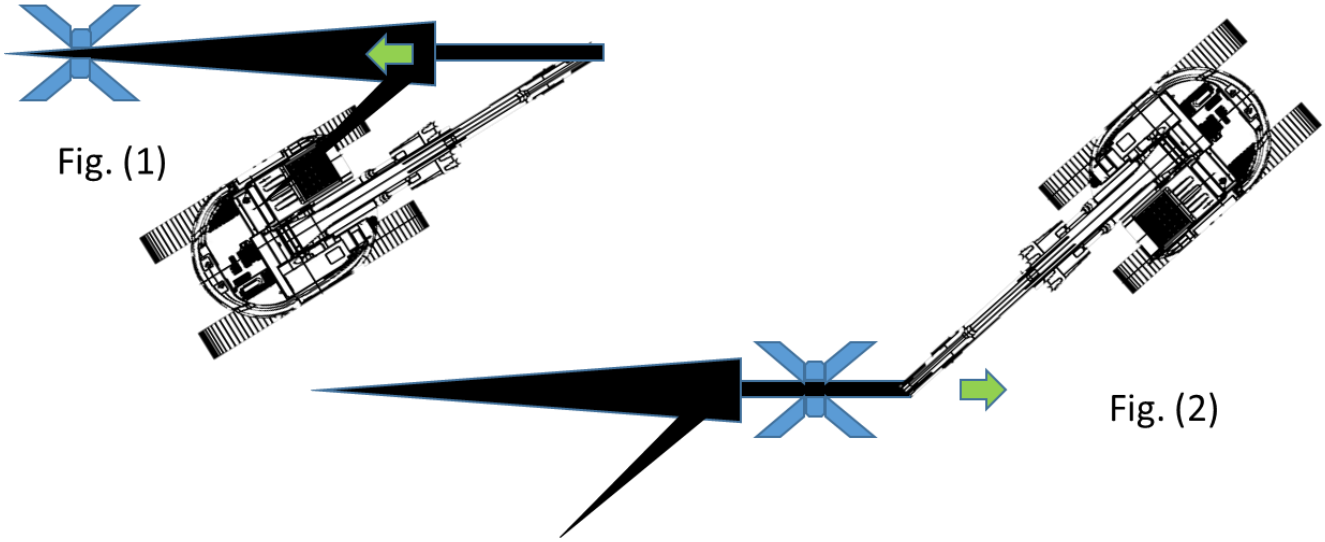


PPE & Operator Protective Structures (OPS)

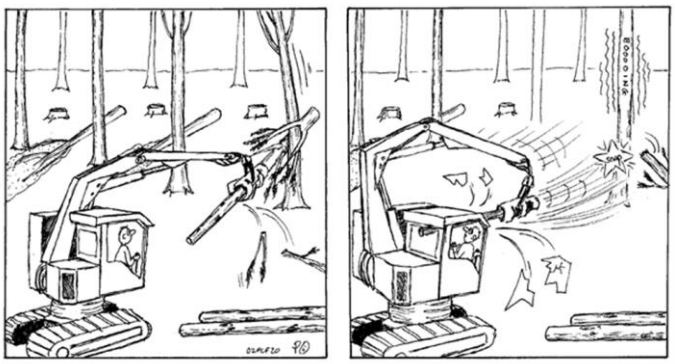
7097 26/05/2015 – Lost Time Injury

When using a static delimber the machine operator places the large (butt) end of the stem into the delimber (blue) then pulls the stem through to its small end – (see Fig. 2)
NB: Delimbers are not generally designed to remove large or heavy branching.

In this incident, a machine operator was attempting to delimb a heavily branched stem by **<u>pushing</u> the stem through**[1] **the delimber** (see Fig. 1) – whereas the heavy branches should have been removed with a chainsaw.

A large branch entered the cab[2] of the machine – Fig. 1 – and struck the operator on the leg resulting in a fracture!

NB: The reason for not cutting the branches off with the chainsaw may lie with the fact that the operator was not wearing safety boots on the day!



<u>There is no Substitute for Best Practice</u>!

[1] This is both dangerous and very hard on the equipment. It also results in poor log quality e.g. large holes as the branch is ripped out of its socket.
[2] WorkSafe NZ issued an improvement notice, on the employer, for failing to ensure that the operators' cabin frontal area was protected by safety glass.

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May 2015 – Our High Injury Count!

FIPS 7051 22/05/15 – LTI

Description: While clearing native scrub from around the base of a tree, the chainsaw kicked-back downwards cutting through the tree fellers L4 chainsaw boot and into his foot.

This incident should not distract our attention away from wearing L3 (or better) chainsaw boots. Actually, the cut could have been much worse had these boots not acted to limit the severity!

NB: The manufacturer is currently analysing the boots in question and will report in due course.

FIPS 7068 01/05/2015 – LTI

Description: Late Report 25/03/15: A winch handle (twitch) kicked-back while the driver was re-tightening his load. He suffered a sprained jaw. The doctor gave him two days off work to recover.

NB: This incident reminds us of the need to report on time and in full so that there is no confusion about what has happened, where and to whom.

Timely reporting and management can prevent minor injuries turning into 'lost time' injuries.

FIPS 7065 26/05/2015 – MTI

Description: A planting auditor found that a splinter lodged in his finger had infected. This required a visit to the doctor and antibiotics.

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Additional Controls – Vines & Undergrowth!

FIPS 7051 17/05/15 – MTI

After cutting the tree, the tree feller retreated down his escape route (approx. 3-4 meters) to watch it fall to the ground.

A bush-lawyer vine, entwined in the head of this tree had its origin somewhere behind the feller's viewing position. As the tree fell, the vine pulled up and across his neck and chin. The tree feller sustained a 5cm cut along the right hand side of his chin, which required several stitches.

The photograph above shows a wind-damaged stand with thick undergrowth, including lawyer vines growing in profusion. While felling always requires careful planning, some additional controls may also be necessary in stands such as these.

- Where possible, fell with a machine or use a suitable (protected) machine to clear excess undergrowth and vines.
- Thoroughly clear vegetation from around the tree and along the escape route – maximise your vision and spend extra-time looking for over-head hazards.
- Extend the length of the escape route – move quickly to the end of your escape route!

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