

Are the wheels coming off?

“...On average, seven people a year are killed and 45 seriously injured in crashes involving a light vehicle towing a trailer.”

NZTA [Guide to safe loading and towing for light vehicles](#).

Similarly, PF Olsen receives reports on one or two serious trailer incidents each year! Fortunately these incidents have not resulted in any serious injury, however, they have no doubt left the drivers shocked and the rest of us thinking about what could have been.



Learning from trailer incidents:

In two recent incidents, a wheel came off each of the trailers while being towed. In one incident, the wheel came loose as the trailer was passing through a corner in the middle of a small township. In the other, a tandem trailer lost a wheel while it was being driven in a log yard. Both could have resulted in harm to people in the vicinity.

What have we learnt and of what factors do we need to be mindful?

- While most items of plant or equipment receive a regular inspection (using a checklist), trailers tend to miss out except for the regular warrant of fitness checks.
- Trailers are often left out in the elements and can be used carting small boats or other equipment to the beach in the summer. It is a good idea to use a check list that encourages frequent (weekly) cleaning and maintenance.
- Know how much weight your vehicle and trailer can safely tow.
- Load your vehicle and trailer safely and keep the ‘overhang’ to a minimum – see [NZTA Guide to safe loading and towing for light vehicles](#).
- Know safe towing practices and keep to the speed limit – 90 kph is the maximum!

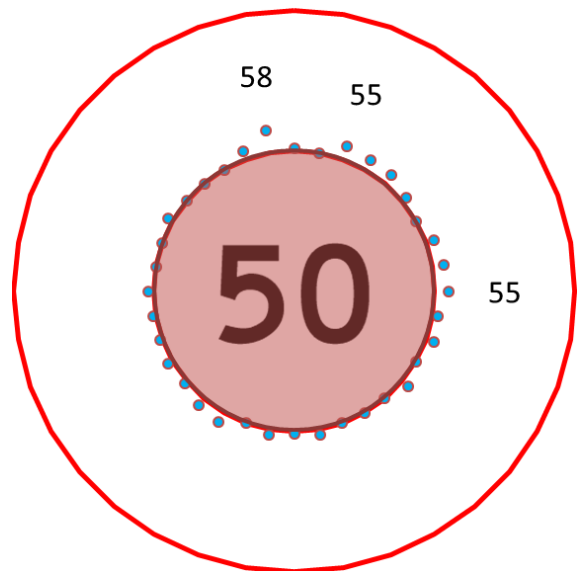
Watch Your Speed – Dial it Back!

In-forest driving behaviours have greatly improved! We are very appreciative of the efforts made by drivers to adjust driving behaviours, especially with speeding. The purpose of this section is not to detract from that effort, rather to encourage a small improvement, particularly in our thinking and approach to speed! Many will be aware that PF Olsen has fitted its vehicles with GPS and monitors over-speed events. Many staff have found it beneficial to think about setting cruise control a few points under the limit rather than where things had been i.e. a few points over.

Time to Recalibrate?

The graph to the side shows a small snapshot of forest driving speeds, recently measured by an independent contractor.

The picture is slightly different from the previous snapshot when most of the dots were located inside the 50kph sign – indicating that driving speeds were mostly clocked at less than 50kph (in a range between 45 – 48kph). This graph shows a slightly different picture – with most of the speed points either on 50 or slightly over, and some definite over-speeds!



This graph shows a **small adjustment** may be required! Try 'recalibrating' – driving a **few points under** the limit.

PF Olsen Safe Ops – what's our position!

From our Safety Management System p. 45: "...It is the Company policy to have full compliance with the Regulations and Approved Codes of Practice (ACoP). These are our primary sources of safety rules. Best Practice Guidelines (BPG) contain 'proven' method statements, training techniques and hazard controls that shall be followed unless suitable alternatives (offering the same or better outcomes) are in place. Rules in the Regulations, ACoP and BPG's are not repeated in this document. Where these lack coverage, the Company's 'general safety rules' and 'Safe OP' shall be followed."

OPS – Operator Protective Structures



Incident Raises Questions

FIPS 8483 7/12/2016 – Medical Treatment:

Description: A tethered feller buncher operator was walking the machine up a hill when the 21mm poly-carbonate screen dislodged from its frame and fell backwards into the cab, hitting the operator on his head. This caused a laceration that required stitches.



Investigation: The investigation found that the nylon rollers that held the window in the track to allow the window to open were no longer fitted. The most likely cause of them missing would have been vibration given the front window had not been opened for some time. With the rollers missing there was extra play in the mounting of the window. This steep angle of the slope plus forward motion allowed the window to drop out from the top mounts and to come forward on to the operator.



Operator Protective Structures (OPS):

- Whether fitted after-market or factory fitted, OPS on forestry machinery must meet and remain compliant to the standards.
- Compliance shall in all cases be measured against the [ACOP for Operator Protective Structures on Self Propelled Mobile Mechanical Plant](#) (ACOP).
- Additional information is usually provided during the Contractor Induction, including the 'OPS Audit Sheet. We require that this sheet is completed for all machinery at the work-site and thereafter used to record any new additions or alterations.
- **In regard to slopes**, all operations that have machinery working on steep slopes should take care that the machines:
 - Have an engineer's approval in relation to the slopes they will be working on, and
 - Are regularly and thoroughly inspected to determine if the OPS and guarding still meet the standards for the work intended. Any machine not meeting these criteria must be **taken out-of-service** until such time it does.



Machine Rollovers – What’s Going On?



“Safety is a guerrilla war that you will probably lose (since entropy gets us all in the end), but you can still do the best you can.”

James Reason “The Human Contribution” – 2008.

Proper Planning and Communication...

Those words remind us that we “...cannot prevent all accidents, but we can prevent a substantial part if we want, and work systematically and structurally.”

Already this year we have reported three machine rollovers. All three were preventable!

The machines were working on moderate to steep slopes meaning that the operators should have been operating the machine under a ‘steep slope policy’. Such a policy ensures that machine operators take adequate time to properly assess ground conditions and the terrain features they will be working on. In two of the cases the operators carried out work without proper planning and communication with the crew foreman. Completing a proper risk assessment, using the forms and process found in the PF Olsen **Safe OP – Working Machinery on Slopes** would most likely have prevented the rollovers!