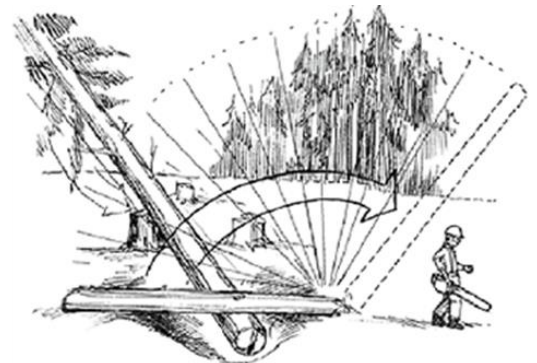


Felling – Pay Attention to the 7 Harms urges WorkSafe NZ !



Reporting on a [2017 forestry death](#) WorkSafe NZ comments as follows: “the wider area of (the victim’s) felling did not show poor technique and the drive tree was felled with correct technique...” Notwithstanding “...the immediate area showed poor felling techniques for four trees and small cuts, thick hinge material left in place and minimal to no back cut.” It further added: “The escape route was blocked by a previously felled tree.”

Graham Bates, the Chairman of the North Island Forestry Champion’s Group recently noted ‘manual tree felling’ heads its Top 5 concerns.

He encouraged those in charge (contractors in particular) “...to check on tree fellers; that they understand the plan for the day and that they are doing what they are supposed to...” This advice is vital when it comes to the ‘Seven Key Causes of Harm’ in tree felling!



Important – Identify the 7 Harms!

- | | |
|---|---|
| [1] Working too close – ACoP 11.4.3-4 | [2] Incorrect felling technique – ACoP 11.5 |
| [3] Broken limbs or tops during felling | [4] Hung-up/cut-up trees – ACoP 11.6 |
| [5] Stem movement or rebound | [6] Felling dead trees or spars |
| [7] Feller struck from behind (object or a tree). | |

Two – Serious Felling Incidents!

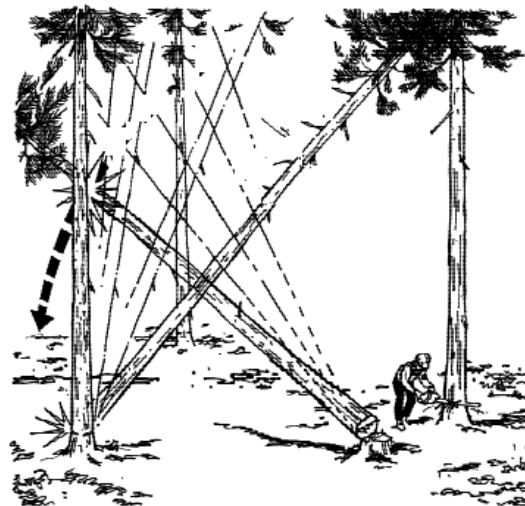
NOGGIN INC835 13/02/2018 – LTI

Training – L4 tree feller with an observer.

Description – A large tree sat back before the feller could wedge it. With no obvious driver tree immediately available, he skirted about felling other trees, to get himself into position. While walking to the selected driver tree the un-wedged cut-up tree broke off its stump and fell onto him.

Injuries – Fractured pelvis and femur.

7 harms – Number 2 (incorrect technique) and 4 (hung-up/cut-up trees).



Approved Code of Practice (ACoP) – While circumstances have a bearing on the decisions a tree feller makes, the ACoP outlines a time proven series of steps to follow.

Clause **(11.6.1)** states that “...A hung-up or cut-up tree shall be **brought to the ground immediately** (e.g. using a re-cut – see 11.6.2) or the **hazard managed** until such time as it can be brought to the ground. If the cut-up tree is to be brought down (by a tree drive), refer to **section 11.7: Tree driving.**”

The steps outlined in this section (see **11.7.5**) direct that “A holding wedge shall be inserted in the backcut of each tree to be driven.” The importance of following this rule is very clear!

NOGGIN INC903 13/02/2018 – LTI

Description – While thinning to waste, a felled tree (a regen) has fallen in an unexpected direction resulting in it hitting another worker on the back of his helmet.

Injuries – Headache and continuing headaches.

7 harms – Number 1 (working too close) and 4 (incorrect technique).

Approved Code of Practice – Clause **11.4.3** directs that “...no person shall be closer than two tree lengths to a tree being felled.” We can only speculate on the injury that a larger tree would have caused in this case. Notwithstanding, this incident shows how vital it is to have and follow a plan that keeps workers organised and properly spaced apart.

An Unexpected Release of Energy!

What happens when an unsafe twitch combines with a non-conforming extension bar in a constricted area?

NOGGIN INC980 27/04/2018 – LTI.

Description – A truck driver was re-tensioning his load before entering onto the public road and pulled down on the belly chain twitch. As he levered the twitch it came up against the dolly wheel, which prevented the twitch from locking. When the driver tried to remove the bar, the twitch was still under tension and it flung back and hit him in the forehead above his eye.

Injuries – Laceration to forehead (5 stitches) – secondary infection, ongoing dizziness.



Benefit from Industry Best Practice...

The Log Transport Safety Council (LTSC), in conjunction with the forest industry, has gone to great lengths over the last 3 to 4 years to improve safety around the task of load tensioning, to the extent it designed and manufactured a safer device which has been in use for several years now. The resulting recoilless twitches and ratchet type tensioning systems are recognised as safer solutions than the type of device that was in use on the truck in question at the time of the incident.

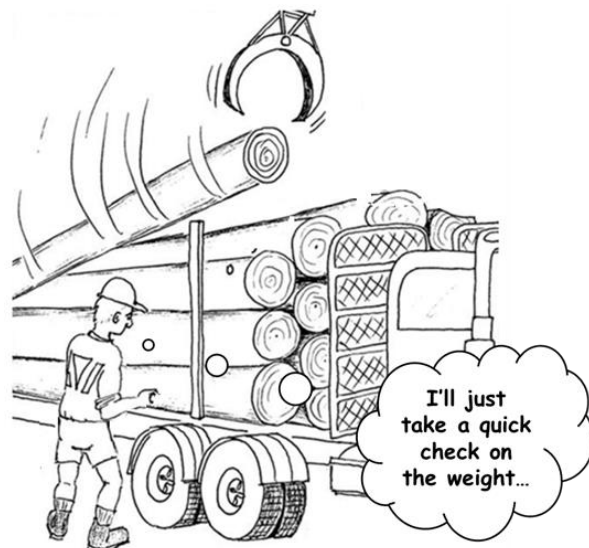
A recent audit of 286 Central North Island based logging trucks found six (2.1%) without recoilless twitches and two (0.7%) with non-compliant extensions. Of interest was the fact that the non-compliance was mostly found in older vehicles entering the local system from other regions. The conclusions are as follows:

- The use of non-compliant plant and equipment often leads to poor safety outcomes!
- There is always a risk around older plant entering our system – check and correct it.
- The LTSC is doing a great job – we should be quick to apply its recommendations.
- If unsure about the status of plant – undertake an audit of it.

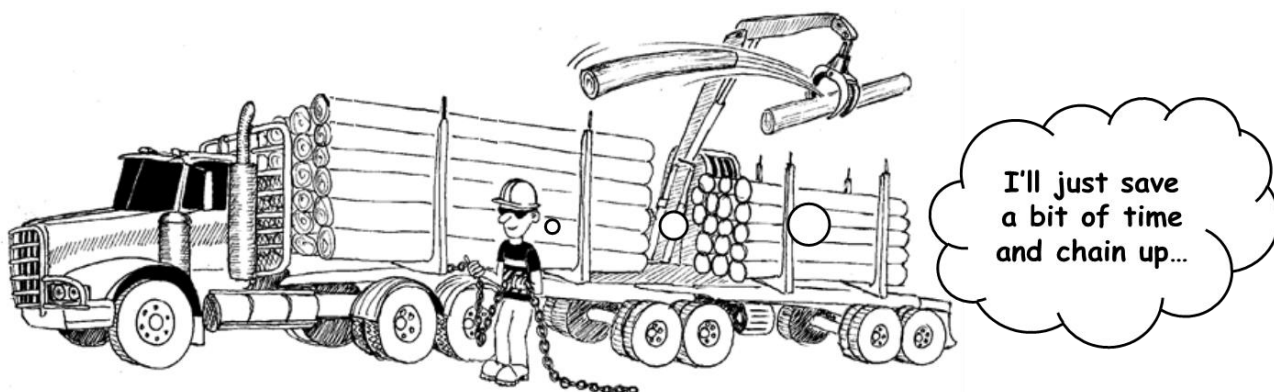
Complacency and Distraction!

Safe Loading of Logs – Embedded? Well, think again...

A few years ago, PF Olsen, in conjunction with our many excellent trucking companies, set about designing and implementing the 'Safe Loading of Logs' programme. This highly effective educational initiative almost zeroed loading incidents overnight. This needed to happen given the very high number of near-hit reports and serious harm injuries – lest we forget the log loading fatality!



In recent times, we have seen a small resurgence in reporting and one very serious log loading incident that very nearly proved fatal. This has been despite the drivers concerned undertaking re-inductions under the programme noted above! While the issues seem to rest with the individuals concerned; everyone should be concerned about complacency!



NOGGIN INC987 09/05/2018 – LTI:

Description – A loader operator and truck driver agreed on the safe position and the driver hopped back into his truck cab. As the truck packet was almost fully loaded, the driver exited the cab to check the scales without notifying the loader operator. The loader operator continued to load, and a log came off the truck and struck the driver across the back before pinning him on the ground.

Injuries – 6 fractured ribs and bruising.