

Date Issued: 11 June 2009

To: Contractors

Important notice relating to loading operations – Reviewed

(This Alert replaces a previous Alert issued on 7 May and has been reviewed by the VicForests Harvest and Haulage OH&S Committee)

Issue

On 21 April 2009 a truck driver was seriously injured when he was pinned between a log and the back of the chock tray during a loading operation.

Correct Loading Procedures

All contractors and sub-contractors must ensure that their loading procedures comply with the Industry Standard: Safety in Forestry Operations.

In particular, contractors and sub-contractors must ensure that their procedures comply with the following principles with the intent that no one is injured by being struck by a log or the excavator during loading operations:

- Every coupe must have a designated safe area for the truck driver and all other workers on site to be located while loading is in progress.
- No persons are permitted within the working area whilst loading is in progress (ie when the boom is not grounded).
- There must be a pre-arranged designated safe area, for the truck driver, outside of the work area of the loader, in the loader operator's line of sight.
- The designated safe area for the truck driver shall be, as a minimum, the length of the boom plus half a log length from the excavator cabin (as per the Industry Standard). 12 paces from the pivot point of the excavator is a good guide.
- Once a truck is in the working area to be loaded, the loader operator is then in charge of this area until loading is completed.
- The designated safe area for the driver shall be:
 - Documented on site,
 - signed off by all operators prior to loading or unloading operations commencing,
 - clear of obstructions,
 - prominently identified with a safety sign (e.g. "DRIVER SAFE AREA" or similar) and the limits of the safe area defined by a line or barrier to secure the area.
- The Industry Standard states that, "the driver must not stand or sit on any part outside of the truck or load during loading".

- The loader operator must be able to see and be aware of where the driver is at all times.
- There must be working communications operating between the truck driver and the loader operator.
- Where the truck driver is accompanied by other operator(s), additional (individual) operational communication (eg UHF radio) must be provided and used.
- Other ways of managing this hazard may be used as long as the minimum distance from the loading operation is complied with and the truck driver is visible to, and in communication with, the loader operator. Inside the truck cabin is still considered a suitable designated safe area.
- A further control, that can be considered where practical, is to pre-tag a full load of sawlogs prior to loading.
- All the controls must be documented as part of the contractor's OH&S management system and there must be evidence that all people who may be in the vicinity of loading operations are aware of, and understand these controls.

Actions

Failure to comply with safety and occupational health and safety procedures is a serious breach of occupational health and safety laws and a contractor's contract with VicForests.

Contractors must ensure that their employees and sub-contractors are aware of, and understand, these requirements.

Any non-compliance with the Critical Safety Issues will result in immediate action and suspension of coupe operations and may result in the issue of a breach of contract notice.

Operations will recommence when it can be demonstrated that the contractor can comply with its safety procedures.

| | |
|---|---|
| Author: | Endorsed: |
| Bill Paul Safety and Risk Manager 9608 9548 | Ross Runnalls Manager Forest Contracting |