



Poleman injured when skyline rope broke



INCIDENT

A poleman was badly injured – and left with a permanent disability – when a skyline rope broke and hit him.

CIRCUMSTANCES

The logs being hauled failed to move. The 28mm skyline rope being used to haul the logs broke 70 metres from the head spar. The broken end of the rope whipped back around the skyline block and struck the poleman who was sitting on the steps of the hauler.

INVESTIGATION

The investigation determined that:

- The breaker-out had attached the logs to a bull-rigging that was not set up so that it would break out when placed under extreme pressure.
- The tensioned skyline had insufficient deflection
- Due to their inexperience, neither the hauler-operator nor the breaker-out recognised the potential risk created by the extreme tensions that had been generated by the faulty bull-rigging.
- Positioning the hauler just 15 metres from the head spar was ill advised
- The hauler should not have been operating while someone was sitting on its steps.

DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR ADVICE

At no stage during operations shall any person be positioned on a hauler, or under or in the bight of tensioned ropes.

A poleman must always observe from a safe position during both the in and out haul stages of an operation.

Note: This material has been prepared using the best information available to the Department of Labour at the time of publication. Information may change over time and it may be necessary for you to obtain an update. This material is also only intended to provide general advice and does not constitute legal advice. You should make your own judgement about action you may need to take to ensure you have complied with your workplace health and safety obligations under the law.

