



Tree faller dies after being hit by a cut-up tree



INCIDENT

A 38-year-old trained and experienced logger was killed when he was struck by a tree.

CIRCUMSTANCES

A multi-leader radiata pine tree had been scarfed and back-cut. Only a small section of holding wood had been left. The heads of the multi-leader appear to have been caught in a tree forward of the multi-leader and this prevented it from falling.

The tree faller walked forward to fell the tree that had prevented the multi-leader from falling. Positioned with his back to the cut-up tree, he began to make his felling cuts.

It is thought that as the tree faller was cutting the obstructing tree it moved and released the cut-up tree. The tree fell on him and he was fatally injured.

INVESTIGATION

The investigation determined that the accident was caused by:

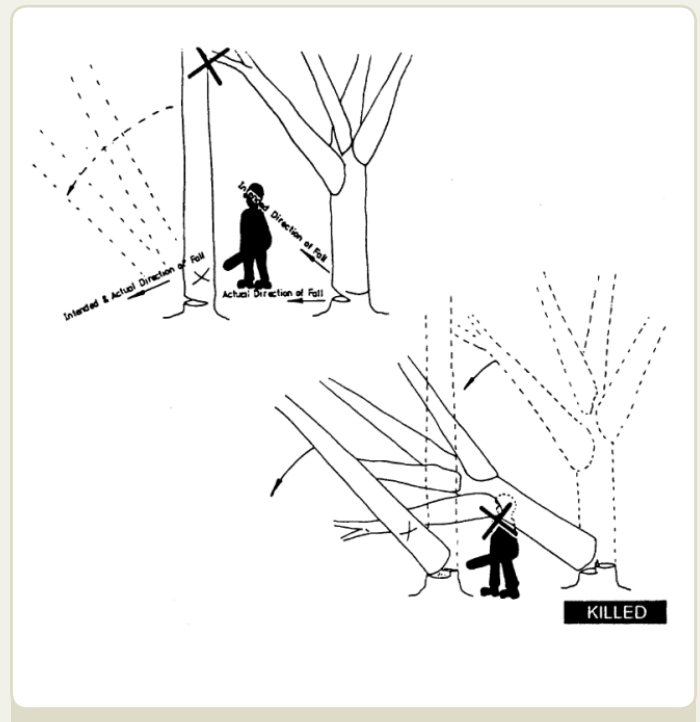
- Working forward of a cut-up tree.
- Felling aids not being used.
- Scarf cut too deep with not enough holding wood left.
- A failure to clear round the base of the cut-up tree. The tree faller was unable to gauge the depth of the back-cut.
- The tree forward of the multi-leader should have been felled first.
- The multi-leader should have been driven out with another tree.

DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR ADVICE

- Never work forward of a hung-up or cut-up tree.
- Never turn your back on a cut-up tree.
- Use a machine to release lodged or cut-up trees.

TO WHICH INDUSTRIES/SECTORS OR MATTERS WILL THIS INFORMATION BE RELEVANT?

- Forestry
- Mobile Plant



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.

