



## Tree faller injured by falling branch



### INCIDENT

A 39-year-old tree faller with 10 years experience suffered a fractured shoulder and four broken ribs when a limb torn from a tree beside the one he was felling hit him across the shoulder.

### CIRCUMSTANCES

The tree faller was felling a row of 40-year-old radiata pine on a farmer's block. The tops of some of the trees were entangled. He failed to observe that a branch from the tree beside the one he was felling was in front of that tree.

When the tree began to fall, he moved approximately 4 metres behind the tree to what he thought was a safe place. As the tree fell, it broke off the branch and it hit the tree faller's shoulder.

### INVESTIGATION

The investigation determined that the accident was caused by:

- A poor tree assessment.
- Not moving a sufficient safe distance from a falling tree.
- Not looking up as the tree fell.

### DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR ADVICE

- Before felling commences, a careful check shall be made to discover if there are any branches which, if dislodged, could cause injury to persons working in the area.
- An escape route should be prepared and used as necessary.

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

- Forestry

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