

RE: REPAIR & MAINTENANCE: Hauler Near-Miss

Background:

- A Mechanic, Hydraulic Engineer and an Auto Electrician were working on a Hauler to get the drive motors replaced and hydraulic system upgraded and operating. The harvesting crew were working on another setting (in the same forest) doing a groundbased area.
- The hauler had been out of action for some time - everyone involved was working hard to get it operating again in time for starting work on the next hauler setting.
- In the final stages of testing, the Mechanic has started the hauler and attempted to operate the hydraulics to the drive motors. He was unaware that he had accidentally knocked the tail clutch into gear which has disconnected power to the hydraulic pump and engaged drive to the tailrope drum.
- The mechanic applied power to the machine, but when the drive motors didn't turn he has stopped and turned the machine off, then restarted it. He did this twice more, but on the last attempt when the drive motors didn't operate he applied more power.
- This has caused the tailrope to be tensioned, but it was shackled to the hauler. As a result the rope tensioned around the end of the tower which has caused a 2kg bushing to be pushed free which then flew through the air. This landed very close to the Hydraulic Engineer, narrowly missing his head as it fell.



Responsibilities (ACOP):

- *2.3.1 Every person undertaking forestry work shall be either under documented training and close supervision, or deemed competent*

Learnings / Solutions:

- The party organising the work are responsible for planning R&M tasks, including assessing people's competencies and deciding who will be able to undertake specific tasks.
- In this case the Mechanic had limited knowledge in operating the machine. A better approach here would have been for a competent machine operator from the crew to be on site or available when the testing was required.
- All R&M tasks must have a clear plan developed prior to starting and everyone needs to be part of the discussions. Ensure everyone's role is clearly understood, job intentions are discussed, when additional assistance should be called for, and timeframes and expectations agreed upon.