

FORESTRY OPERATIONS INFORMATION SHEET

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Overview

This Information Sheet provides advice on managing the risks of forestry operations.

A forestry operation is work done in the forestry industry to:

- form, develop and regenerate forests
- obtain forest products
- load, transport and unload forest products, and
- assess finished operations and establish, maintain and upgrade roads, tracks and log landings.

Forestry operations also include work associated with these activities including clearing, fencing, trenching and draining.



What are the risks?

Many hazardous activities carried out in forestry operations can result in death or serious injury if not managed correctly. The risks common to most forestry operations include:

- roll over of mobile plant
- being hit by falling objects or mobile plant
- laceration and amputation from powered hand tools including chainsaws
- being crushed by felled trees or falling branches
- slips, trips and falls
- fatigue
- noise, and
- exposure to extremes of temperature.



What do I need to do?

You must manage the risks of the forestry operations carried out at your workplace.

You should start by identifying potential hazards at the workplace. You can do this by considering the physical work environment, the machinery, materials and substances to be used and the work tasks to be carried out. You can also ask your workers about any problems they encounter.

Once you have identified the hazards at your workplace you need to think about the risks – the likelihood of somebody being harmed by the hazard and how serious the harm could be.

You then need to take action to control the risk. If possible consider whether hazards can be completely eliminated. For example, eliminate the risk of electrocution when felling trees close to electric lines by having the electricity supply authority turn the power off to the effected lines.

If it is not possible to completely eliminate the risk, then risks can be minimised by:

- substituting the hazard for something safer e.g. use mechanical felling processes rather than manual felling
- isolating the hazard from people e.g. use a machine to shield workers from hazards on a log landing
- using engineering controls e.g. using a roll over protective structure (ROPS) and falling object protective structures (FOPS) to protect the operator from the risk of a machine overturning or objects falling on them
- using administrative controls e.g. rotate jobs and vary tasks to minimise the risks associated with repetitive manual handling tasks, or
- using personal protective equipment (PPE) e.g. safety eyewear, hearing protection, safety helmets, cut-resistant leg protection or reflective, high-visibility clothing.

Further information is in the *General guide for managing risks in forestry operations* and the series of specific forestry guides on:

- growing and managing forests
- cable logging
- coupe access and preparation
- timber harvesting operations
- log landings
- log extraction
- loading, transporting & unloading logs
- infield processing of forest products
- plant and equipment for forestry, and
- other common hazards in forestry operations.

These guides provide information on the potential hazards of forestry operations and provide practical examples of ways you can control the risks associated with them.

The [General Guide and supporting specific guides are available here](#).



For further information see the [Safe Work Australia](http://www.swa.gov.au) website (www.swa.gov.au).