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## Chain Shot: A High Level of Risk to Forest Workers



### Details

“Chain shot” is the term given to the pieces of saw chain that separate from the chain when it breaks during operation. Chain shot whistling through the air has as much kinetic energy as a rifle bullet. In the unfortunate event of chain shot hitting the machine operator or anyone else in the area, serious injury can result.

Recently there have been a number of incidents in the forest industry involving chain shot.

Investigations into these incidents have identified that:

- the saw chain failed
- this failure resulted in chain shot
- chain shot presents a high level of risk to anyone in the vicinity.

The Forestry Research Institute of Sweden carried out extensive research into chain shot, and identified that:

- chain shot is less likely to occur if the saw chain is in good condition. If damaged and/or worn chains are found and discarded, then the risk of chain shot would be greatly reduced.
- however, because many chains fail at the instant they are damaged, chain shot cannot be totally avoided.

## Recommendations

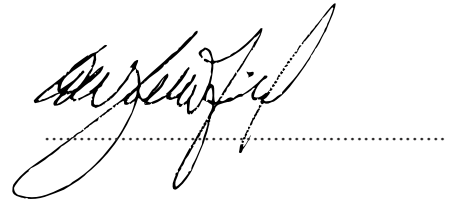
Owners are to provide any information, instruction, training and supervision reasonably necessary to ensure that machinery users are safe from injury and risks to health.

Owners and users of machinery that has saw chain must:

- ensure the appropriate chain, bar and sprockets that are used conform to the manufacturer or supplier's guidelines
- follow the recommended maintenance practices for the chain, bar and sprockets
- ensure the chain has adequate lubrication
- always maintain the chain in a sharp condition
- inspect chains regularly, including before sharpening and during use
- replace chains and components at the appropriate time.

If you would like further information contact Workplace Standards Tasmania on:  
Telephone: **1300 366 322** (inside Tasmania) or (03) 6233 7657 (outside Tasmania)

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